

own security and government so that the phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq can begin by year's end.

As we all know, I think the Republican majority rejected the Levin-Reed proposal on a straight party-line vote. One courageous Republican voted with us. The rest were all no votes. Even though it represents our best chance at making sure our troops succeed in Iraq, and Iraq as a country succeeds, and, secondly, even though it is consistent with the plan of our top military commander in Iraq, on a straight party-line on the floor last week the Republicans voted against the Levin-Reed proposal, even though it was very much like General Casey's proposal.

By rejecting this amendment—the Democratic amendment—the Republicans made clear that they were content to stay the course and to stay forever in Iraq. I wonder how the majority feels today now that General Casey's plan is in the open, now that it is clear that the congressional Republicans stand alone in opposition to troop redeployment, apart from the American people, even though their stand is contrary, I repeat, to the American people, even though the Republican stand is contrary to the military commanders, those who are in the battlefield in Iraq, and even though the Republican majority vote last week was contrary to the Iraqi Government.

Did they disagree with General Casey? Do they disagree that we need to begin ending the open-ended commitment in Iraq? Do they, the Republican Senators, believe a plan for reducing our troop levels, as they said last week with the Levin-Reed proposal—do they believe that what General Casey suggests is defeatist and that he is unpatriotic? Do they have a plan now of their own—the Republican majority—or do they still want to stay the course?

These are questions the American people are going to demand that the Republican majority answer.

The open-ended commitment the majority advocates is simply not sustainable, as seen through the eyes of General Casey, as seen through the eyes of the Iraqi Prime Minister. We must transform the United States mission in Iraq and begin the responsible redeployment of U.S. forces this year. That is what the Levin-Reed amendment said last week that the Republicans defeated.

The war is now costing the American people about \$2.5 billion each week. Our military has been stretched thin, with every available combat unit in the Army and Marine Corps serving multiple tours in Iraq, and our equipment needing \$50 billion or \$60 billion to be in the shape it was when we went to war in Iraq. We have lost more than 2,500 American lives, 15 just last week. We have seen more than 18,000 wounded and a third to a half of them grievously wounded. Iraq, according to a new report in Sunday's L.A. Times, has lost at least 50,000 of its citizens since 2003.

We cannot continue to pay these costs, nor can we continue to try to engage growing threats such as North Korea, Iran, and Somalia with engagements in Iraq tying one hand behind us.

The phased redeployment this year will put Iraqis in charge of their own security and allow many of our troops to be redeployed. Some will come home and some will be available to deal with other crises, such as Afghanistan, where the resurgent Taliban threat must be eliminated, and where those responsible for attacks on this Nation still roam free basically.

It is time for a new direction. General Casey realizes this. The American people realize this. The Iraqi Government realizes this. And it is time for the Republican majority in the Congress to realize this as well.

We don't need a September or October surprise with the President and Republicans proclaiming victory and announcing troop redeployment just in time for the mid-term elections. We need a nonpartisan approach that provides Iraqis and our troops with the best chance for success now, in June, 2006.

We are in the fourth year of this war. It is time that the direction is changed. It is time to end this game of partisan politics, of blindly rubber-stamping the White House, and of publicly rejecting ideas that are being embraced in private, and now in public, by our military leaders. Our troops in Iraq are too important to fall victim to these political games.

This leads me to another important subject the Senate must consider, which has also fallen victim to partisan politics—amnesty for terrorists who have killed our troops.

I have come to the floor many times in recent weeks to discuss Iraq granting amnesty to terrorists. Rumors are no longer valid. These are not rumors. The Prime Minister himself has submitted an amnesty plan. So it has turned into fact. But I still have very serious concerns.

According to the news reports out of Baghdad over the weekend, the Prime Minister will pardon those who engaged in legitimate acts of resistance. Against who, Mr. President? What does that mean? Does it mean that these are legitimate acts of resistance when we have soldiers trying to free someone who is being detained by a kidnapper? What are legitimate acts of resistance? Against a Nation that liberated that nation from a brutal dictator? Is it a sniper who shoots at a soldier who is trying to restore power and electricity to a Baghdad neighborhood? Is it placing a roadside bomb next to a convoy that was trying to repair a road in the Sunni triangle or fix a school? Is it detonating an improvised explosive device against a team of U.S. soldiers who are attempting to build a hospital in Iraq? I think not.

Just who is this resistance? What are they resisting? Are they resisting free-

dom or democracy? Why should they be given immunity for acts that have been perpetrated against the United States and against coalition forces? Why? The concept, I believe, is outrageous and an insult to all of the brave American soldiers who serve with distinction every day.

President Bush needs to forcibly tell the Iraqi Prime Minister that his amnesty plan, as reported, is not welcome. The Senate had the chance to send this message last week. The majority strenuously resisted the attempt of us Democrats to send a clear message to Iraq. In spite of the attempts to minimize our amendment, it passed. We carried the day.

I hope Republicans will revisit their opposition in light of the latest developments, and I hope President Bush will stand up for our troops by demanding the Iraqis drop any intentions they may have to let the terrorists go.

I support reconciliation in Iraq; however, not at the expense of our American troops, those who have sacrificed and those who are there now. They have sacrificed too much to see their service dishonored or their safety put at risk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alaska.

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#### VISIT TO THE SENATE BY MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN SENATE

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I have the honor of presenting the Speaker of the Canadian Senate, Noel Kinsella, and Canadian Senator Colin Kenny and Senator Donald Oliver who are visiting us today.

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#### RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a moment of recess so we may be able to introduce the Senators and the Speaker to our distinguished leaders.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:15 p.m., recessed until 2:21 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. BURR).

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

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#### ENERGY AND HEALTH CARE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, with the Senate heading for the break for the Fourth of July recess, obviously, there will not be many more days left in this year's schedule. I am going to spend