

enemy, never knowing friend, never knowing foe, until they started shooting. As in Vietnam, our soldiers are once again confronted with the deadly situation of trying to ferret out insurgents in a population that is willing—listen—a population that is willing to hide them.

In each war, we went in thinking of ourselves as liberators. We came to be seen by the people we were supposed to be liberating as the invaders. In each war, where it was so necessary for us to win the hearts and minds of the people of the country, our presence there, instead, alienated the people of the country and turned them against us. In each war, both the White House, yes, and the Pentagon, yes, grossly and tragically underestimated the determination and the ferocity of our opponents.

Bring them on, bring them on, President Bush chided the Iraqis and terrorists on July 2, 2003. Do you remember that? I do. He said “bring ‘em on.”

In the time since he made that statement “bring ‘em on,” we, the American people, have lost more than 2,800 troops in that war.

Yes, “bring ‘em on.” “Bring ‘em on.” And so they brought them on. We have lost more than 2,800 troops in that war. As of today, 3,062—get that—3,062 Americans in total have been killed in Iraq. And for what? And for what, I ask? As of today, 3,062 Americans in total have been killed in that war.

Yes, “bring ‘em on,” President Bush chided the Iraqis and terrorists on July 2, 2003. So I will say it once more. We have lost more than 2,800 troops in that war since President Bush said: “bring ‘em on.”

Former Senator Max Cleland—do you remember him? I remember him. He used to sit right back there. Max Cleland, bless his heart, recently pointed out that American forces have now “become sitting ducks in a shooting gallery for every terrorist in the Middle East.”

Although Congress should have learned important lessons from the Vietnam war, there are now ominous indications that a path to a new military confrontation is being created right before our eyes. Just this month, the President announced his intention to “interrupt the flow of support from Iran and Syria” into Iraq.

What does this saber-rattling comment really mean? Hear me. Does the President seek to expand the ongoing war beyond Iraq’s borders? Does he? Does this comment really mean that? Or are we already on a course to another war in the Middle East? Are we? Will Syria or Iran be the Cambodia of a 21st century Vietnam? Will Syria or Iran be the Cambodia of a 21st century Vietnam?

In the State of the Union Address last night, the President called out Iran no less than seven times. Was the speech the first step in an effort to blame all that has gone wrong in the Middle East on Iran? Was the focus on

Iran during the President’s address an attempt to link Iran to the war on terrorism, and, by extension, start building a case that our response to the 9/11 attacks must include dealing with Iran?

I fear—and I hope I am wrong—that the machinery may have already been set in motion which may ultimately lead to a military attack inside Iran or perhaps Syria, despite the opposition of the American people, many in Congress, and even some within the President’s administration.

Wise counsel from congressional leaders to step back from the precipice of all-out war in the Middle East is too easily disregarded. To forestall a looming disaster, Congress must act to save the checks and balances established by the Constitution.

Today I am introducing a resolution that clearly states that it is Congress—the Congress, the Congress, not the President—that is vested with the ultimate decision on whether to take this country to war against another country.

This resolution, which I hold in my hand—here it is—this resolution is a rejection—hear me—a rejection of the bankrupt, dangerous, and unconstitutional doctrine of preemption. Let me say that again. This resolution, which I hold in my hand, is a rejection of the bankrupt, dangerous, and unconstitutional doctrine of preemption, which proposes that the President—any President—may strike another country before that country threatens us, before that country threatens us. That is the doctrine of preemption: We may strike, we may attack, we may invade another country before it threatens us.

Now, this resolution, which I am going to introduce, returns our Government to the inspired intent of the Framers, God bless them, of the Constitution who so wisely placed the power to declare war in the hands of the elected representatives of the American people.

If there exists a reckless determination for a new war in the Middle East, I fear that the attorneys of the executive branch are already seeking ways to tie this war to the use of force resolution for Iraq, or the resolution passed in response to 9/11. But the American people need only be reminded about the untruths of Iraq’s supposed ties to the 9/11 attacks to see how far the truth can be stretched in order to achieve the desired outcome.

If the executive branch were to try to prod, stretch, or rewrite the 9/11 or the Iraq use of force resolutions in an outrageous attempt to apply them to an attack on Iran, on Syria, or anywhere else, this resolution of mine is clear—clear as the noonday Sun in a cloudless sky—this resolution is clear: The Constitution says that Congress—we here and those over there on the other side of the Capitol—the Constitution says that Congress, not the President, must make the decision for war or peace. The power to declare war resides in

Congress—resides here—and it is we—we, the elected representatives of the people—who are the “deciders.”

Congress has an obligation to the people of the United States. With so many of our sons and daughters spilling their blood in one costly war, Senators and Representatives have a moral duty to question whether we are headed for an even more tragic conflict in the Middle East. But in order to question this administration—in order to fulfill the duties entrusted to us by the Constitution, to which we have sworn to support and defend—Congress must first insist that the powers given to this body—the Congress, the Senate and the House—are held sacrosanct. We must insist that these powers, including the power to declare war, are not usurped by this President or any other President who will follow.

The resolution, Mr. President, which I am submitting today, is an effort to protect the Constitution—an effort to protect the Constitution—from the zeal of the executive branch, whose very nature is to strive for more and more power during a time of war.

It is time now for Congress to put its foot down and stand up for the Constitution. Our Nation did not ask to be put into another Vietnam. Let us not deceive ourselves that we are somehow immune to another Cambodia. Let us stop a reckless, costly war in Iran or Syria before it begins by restoring the checks and balances that our Founders so carefully—so carefully—designed.

I send, Mr. President, the resolution to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The resolution will be received and appropriately referred.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, let the title be read, please.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the title will be read.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 39) expressing the sense of the Senate on the need for approval by the Congress before any offensive military action by the United States against another nation.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair, and I thank the clerk.

I yield the floor.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 4—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS ON IRAQ

Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. BAYH, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. NELSON of Florida, and Mrs. MCCASKILL) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 4

Whereas, we respect the Constitutional authorities given a President in Article II, Section 2, which states that “The President shall be commander in chief of the Army and Navy of the United States;” it is not the intent of this resolution to question or contravene such authority, but to accept the

offer to Congress made by the President on January 10, 2007 that, "if members have improvements that can be made, we will make them. If circumstances change, we will adjust;"

Whereas, the United States' strategy and operations in Iraq can only be sustained and achieved with support from the American people and with a level of bipartisanship;

Whereas, over 137,000 American military personnel are currently serving in Iraq, like thousands of others since March 2003, with the bravery and professionalism consistent with the finest traditions of the United States armed forces, and are deserving of the support of all Americans, which they have strongly;

Whereas, many American service personnel have lost their lives, and many more have been wounded, in Iraq, and the American people will always honor their sacrifices and honor their families;

Whereas, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps, including their Reserve and National Guard organizations, together with components of the other branches of the military, are under enormous strain from multiple, extended deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas, these deployments, and those that will follow, will have lasting impacts on the future recruiting, retention and readiness of our nation's all volunteer force;

Whereas in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, the Congress stated that "calendar year 2006 should be a period of significant transition to full sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq;"

Whereas, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1723, approved November 28, 2006, "determin[ed] that the situation in Iraq continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security;"

Whereas, a failed state in Iraq would present a threat to regional and world peace, and the long-term security interests of the United States are best served by an Iraq that can sustain, govern, and defend itself, and serve as an ally in the war against extremists;

Whereas, Iraq is experiencing a deteriorating and ever-widening problem of sectarian and intra-sectarian violence based upon political distrust and cultural differences between some Sunni and Shia Muslims;

Whereas, Iraqis must reach political settlements in order to achieve reconciliation, and the failure of the Iraqis to reach such settlements to support a truly unified government greatly contributes to the increasing violence in Iraq;

Whereas, the responsibility for Iraq's internal security and halting sectarian violence must rest primarily with the Government of Iraq and Iraqi Security Forces;

Whereas, U.S. Central Command Commander General John Abizaid testified to Congress on November 15, 2006, "I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the Corps Commander, [and] General Dempsey. We all talked together. And I said, in your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they all said no. And the reason is, because we want the Iraqis to do more. It's easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future;"

Whereas, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki stated on November 27, 2006 that "The crisis is political, and the ones who can stop the cycle of aggravation and blood-letting of innocents are the politicians;"

Whereas, there is growing evidence that Iraqi public sentiment opposes the continued U.S. troop presence in Iraq, much less increasing the troop level;

Whereas, in the fall of 2006, leaders in the Administration and Congress, as well as recognized experts in the private sector, began to express concern that the situation in Iraq was deteriorating and required a change in strategy; and, as a consequence, the Administration began an intensive, comprehensive review of the Iraq strategy, by all components of the Executive branch;

Whereas, in December 2006, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group issued a valuable report, suggesting a comprehensive strategy that includes "new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region, and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly;"

Whereas, on January 10, 2007, following consultations with the Iraqi Prime Minister, the President announced a new strategy (hereinafter referred to as the "plan,") the central element of which is an augmentation of the present U.S. military force structure through additional deployments of approximately 21,500 U.S. military troops to Iraq;

Whereas, this proposed level of troop augmentation far exceeds the expectations of many of us as to the reinforcements that would be necessary to implement the various options for a new strategy, and led many members to express outright opposition to augmenting our troops by 21,500;

Whereas, the Government of Iraq has promised repeatedly to assume a greater share of security responsibilities, disband militias, consider Constitutional amendments and enact laws to reconcile sectarian differences, and improve the quality of essential services for the Iraqi people; yet, despite those promises, little has been achieved;

Whereas, the President said on January 10, 2007 that "I've made it clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended" so as to dispel the contrary impression that exists;

Whereas, the recommendations in this resolution should not be interpreted as precipitating any immediate reduction in, or withdrawal of, the present level of forces: Now therefore be it—

Resolved, by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) The Senate disagrees with the "plan" to augment our forces by 21,500, and urges the President instead to consider all options and alternatives for achieving the strategic goals set forth below with reduced force levels than proposed;

(2) The primary objective of the overall U.S. strategy in Iraq should be to encourage Iraqi leaders to make political compromises that will foster reconciliation and strengthen the unity government, ultimately leading to improvements in the security situation;

(3) The military part of this strategy should focus on maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying international terrorists a safe haven, conducting counterterrorism operations, promoting regional stability, and training and equipping Iraqi forces to take full responsibility for their own security;

(4) United States military operations should, as much as possible, be confined to these goals, and should charge the Iraqi military with the primary mission of combating sectarian violence;

(5) The military Rules of Engagement for this plan should reflect this delineation of responsibilities;

(6) The United States Government should transfer to the Iraqi military, in an expedi-

tious manner, such equipment as is necessary;

(7) The Senate believes the United States should continue vigorous operations in Anbar province, specifically for the purpose of combating an insurgency, including elements associated with the Al Qaeda movement, and denying terrorists a safe haven;

(8) The United States Government should engage selected nations in the Middle East to develop a regional, internationally sponsored peace-and-reconciliation process for Iraq;

(9) The Administration should provide regular updates to the Congress, produced by the Commander of United States Central Command and his subordinate commanders, about the progress or lack of progress the Iraqis are making toward this end.

(10) Our overall military, diplomatic and economic strategy should not be regarded as an "open-ended" or unconditional commitment, but rather as a new strategy that hereafter should be conditioned upon the Iraqi government's meeting benchmarks that must be specified by the Administration.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, Senator NELSON of Nebraska and Senator COLLINS and I have worked for some time to put forward a resolution embracing the very serious, heartfelt sentiments of Senators with regard to the President's plan that he enunciated on January 10.

That plan—and I credit the President for the in-depth study and preparation that went into it, the consultations; I was privileged to be a part of three consultations with the President in that period—it is that plan about which a number of us here in the Senate have some thoughts.

The President, in his statement on January 10, laid down the invitation for Members of Congress to come forward and provide their thoughts. And that is the vein in which the three of us, together with a series of cosponsors, have adopted this first draft, which is identical to the draft we put into the RECORD some nights ago. We purposely have not changed a comma or a period or any other word in it because a number of colleagues, in a very thoughtful and proper way, have come to us with suggestions and ideas. But at this time, we believe we should lay this down, such that other Senators who might wish to be cosponsors may do so. The Senate works its will each day, and we are always here to consider ideas from other colleagues, but at the present time this is the format. We purposely waited until after the Foreign Relations Committee worked on its resolution, which I understand will soon be working its way to the calendar.

So for that purpose, we put in ours. We find some differences—very significant, in my judgment—between ours and the resolution offered by the distinguished Senator, Mr. BIDEN, and others—Senator LEVIN, indeed, Senator HAGER.

We believe we have put a greater emphasis on urging the President to consider other options, given that we have a general disagreement with the very

significant level of troops that are specifically set forth in the President's plan.

We also feel very strongly about the issue of sectarian violence and how that must be the primary mission of the Iraqi forces. The American GI simply should not be, in my judgment—whenever possible, the rules of engagement should provide that the Iraqi forces should deal with the sectarian violence issue. They understand the language. They understand the cultural differences, which precipitate the animosity between the Sunni and the Shia and, indeed, the most distressing aspects of it: the Shia upon Shia and Sunni upon Sunni. We recognize that sectarian violence is undermining, in many ways—the level of it—the efforts of this Government under Prime Minister Maliki to go forward and exercise the full reins of sovereignty and that it is in those interests that sectarian violence has to be dealt with. It is an important mission, but I believe strongly it is a mission that should be given primarily to the Iraqi forces.

We concur with the President, who said many times, including in his statement on January 10, that to allow this Government to fail and to allow the accomplishments toward sovereignty through free elections by the Iraqi people to be lost and this country to simply be plunged into chaotic situations is not in the interests of peace in that region and, indeed, peace in the world.

Our resolution does not provide for a reduction in any way or suggest the level of U.S. forces there now. It does not provide a timetable. It simply urges the President to consider all options and sets forth in there the primary missions as we interpret them to be in the interests of our country. Those primary missions track in large measure the Baker-Hamilton report.

We also stress the need for benchmarks to be spelled out with clarity. And should the operations in Baghdad go forward under the Commander in Chief—and we recognize fully and in no way try to contravene the authority of the President to act under the Constitution as Commander in Chief—should that go forward, it will be done in an incremental fashion, as we have been told by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and others.

So when the first operation takes place, we should carefully set forth the benchmarks and see if the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi armed forces fulfill those benchmarks; namely, do they all come in the numbers that they were supposed to under that plan? They failed to do that when a similar augmentation for the Baghdad operation was initiated this summer. Will the political structure in Iraq resist, refrain, and in every other way allow the military commanders, both U.S. and Iraqi, to carry out the missions as they see fit and employ such tactics as they deem necessary to achieve those missions without being called by the Gov-

ernment and told: Stop this, withdraw here, or do not take that prisoner, but if you have him, then release him. We cannot go in under that guise.

Thirdly and most importantly, we have to see how the Iraqis perform. Will they take the point? Will they take the lead? And in such tactics, will they then be the primary—the primary—if not the essential force that deals with sectarian violence, such that the rules of engagement spell out: Whenever necessary, the coalition forces and namely the United States shall not be utilized.

At this time, I would invite my colleagues to express their views, and I will ask each to name those cosponsors whom we have gotten from each side of the aisle.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, first of all, I thank the senior Senator from Virginia for his considerable work in drafting this resolution and working over the weekend with us and our staffs, who worked very closely together to prepare this Iraq resolution.

I think it is important to say as well that I respect the work done by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee today in considering the resolution submitted by, supported by their chairman, the distinguished Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN. I have a great deal of respect for Senator BIDEN's work.

This is an area where there can be more than one idea about how to approach something, but at the end of the day, it is going to be important to have a resolution that has broad bipartisan support.

I also appreciate the work of Senator COLLINS, who, as our colleague, has worked very closely on this resolution together with her staff to be able to submit it today in this fashion by putting it not only into the RECORD but on the floor so it can become part of the business of the Senate.

There will be some who would say: Why is there a need for a second resolution? Well, this resolution offers a new set of ideas, more broadly worded, and in some cases, clearly, more likely to be bipartisan for Senators to consider. Given the fact that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee resolution came out on largely a partisan vote, we think this resolution, because it is picking up bipartisan support, will be, in terms of content and support, consistent with an effort to bring about a bipartisan resolution with broad support.

The recommendations of the Iraq Study Group have not been followed to any significant extent to date. In some respects, they have been almost on a skyhook for future consideration. It was our feeling that many of these recommendations of the Baker-Hamilton study group should be included in a

resolution, and we included many of those recommendations in the body of our resolution.

We also worked very carefully to avoid political rhetoric or any kind of rhetoric that threatens the real objective. The real objective of this resolution is to stress to the White House that we disagree with the approach this plan takes by putting more men and women in our uniform in harm's way to fight, to do battle, to overcome the sectarian violence and the possible civil war of the Sunnis and the Shias and various subgroups within those religious and political elements. We also believed it was important to stress benchmarks and to empower the Prime Minister and the Iraqi Government to be able to meet certain objectives, certain goals, and to be able to deliver.

At the end of the day, we think it is important to send a strong but unified message to the White House and Iraq. The more support the resolution receives in the Senate, the stronger our message will be. So tonight I am very pleased and am certainly proud to be here with my colleagues to say that at the end of the day, we think the strength of this resolution to uphold our responsibility will be in the best interests of our country and our military and that our colleagues should join together with us in opposition to the surge of U.S. troops to be placed in Baghdad. It is the responsibility of the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi military to overcome the battles between sectarian groups within their own country and to seek less of a military resolution and certainly more of a political resolution to the problems that exist at the present time.

With that, let me say that I would like to see our unanimous consent be modified to include up to 10 minutes for Senator SALAZAR from Colorado to speak on the resolution afterward, if there is no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I certainly will not object. I wonder if I might have 2 minutes following Senator COLLINS to summarize before we receive the distinguished Senator from Colorado for his remarks. I ask unanimous consent that the unanimous consent agreement be modified so I can have about 2 minutes.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Sure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

If not, without objection, the unanimous consent agreement is so modified.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to now turn to Senator COLLINS, who has worked very closely with us. Before I do, I should indicate the cosponsors from the Democratic side are Senator SALAZAR, Senator BILL NELSON, Senator LANDRIEU, Senator BAYH, and Senator MCCASKILL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my two colleagues on the Senate floor this evening in submitting a very important resolution on what is perhaps the greatest challenge facing our country.

Let me first say it has been an honor and a privilege to work with the distinguished Senator from Virginia, the former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, as well as my friend and colleague from Nebraska, Senator BEN NELSON. We have worked very hard on this resolution, spending many hours wordsmithing the language of it, trying to get exactly the kind of serious policy statement we could bring before our colleagues in the Senate.

I am very pleased that on the Republican side, we are joined by two leaders on this issue, Senator COLEMAN and Senator SMITH. They, too, have had input to the resolution. That brings the number of us who are joining tonight as original sponsors of our resolution to 10 Members of the Senate. I would also note that based on conversations I have had with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, there are several more Senators who are very interested in our resolution and may well join in cosponsoring it at a later date or certainly in voting for it.

Yesterday the Senate Armed Services Committee held a very useful hearing on the nomination of an outstanding military officer, General Petraeus, whom the President has tapped to lead our forces in Iraq. Earlier today the Senate Armed Services Committee, I believe by unanimous vote, voted to report this vital nomination to the full Senate. General Petraeus is the ideal person to be taking over as commander of our troops in Iraq. If anyone can make what I believe to be a flawed strategy a success, it is he. But I had a very interesting exchange with General Petraeus. I talked to him about my concern that inserting more American troops into Iraq may well lessen the pressure on Iraqi leaders to take the long overdue steps that are needed to quell the sectarian violence.

I know the President believes the answer is more American troops, that that will provide the Prime Minister and other leaders with the space they need to take the reforms forward. I fear it is just the opposite. I believe it lessens the pressure on the Iraqi leaders.

Mr. WARNER. Would the Senator yield?

Ms. COLLINS. I am happy to yield.

Mr. WARNER. Did not the CENTCOM commander, who is still the CENTCOM commander, General Abizaid, testify before our committee and, in the precise words, said he felt that at this time added troops were not necessary, more troops would lessen the incentive of the Iraqis to pick up the burdens which we are trying to have them assume under sovereignty?

Ms. COLLINS. The distinguished Senator from Virginia is exactly cor-

rect. That is indeed the testimony that was brought before our committee a month ago. This was not ancient history. It was very reasoned testimony and it could not have been clearer testimony. Indeed, similar testimony was given by General Casey.

I asked General Petraeus if he felt we would be facing the widespread and deteriorating sectarian violence that threatens the entire country, but particularly the Baghdad region, if Iraqi leaders had amended their Constitution, had passed an oil revenue law that more equitably distributed oil proceeds among the groups in Iraq, if they had held provincial elections, if they had more fully integrated the Sunni minority into the Government power structures; would we be in the same place today? And he told me he did not believe we would be. I think that is significant, because I believe if Iraqi leaders had taken those steps, we would not be facing the widespread sectarian violence that has engulfed the Baghdad region.

I also talked to General Petraeus about a fascinating article he wrote a year ago in which he outlined 14 observations that he had, based on his previous tours in Iraq. The first and most important observation in this article in "Military Review" that General Petraeus had was to quote Lawrence of Arabia back in 1917, to say that it was a mistake for us to do too much, whoever the foreign force is, and that you had to let the Iraqis take the lead on these issues. Well, those words, true in 1917, are just as true today, as General Petraeus himself observed in this article.

The second observation in the same article, General Petraeus said an army like ours in a land like Iraq has a half life as liberators, that they are quickly seen as an army of occupiers. I believe that is what has happened in Iraq and that confirms what my own observations were during a trip a month ago to that land. Our delegation met with a British commander in Basra who described to us a declining consent line. He said at first when the British arrived in Basra, they were greeted as liberators. But as time has gone by, their presence is more and more resented and less and less tolerated.

The observations General Petraeus had in this article offer us good guidance and, indeed, reflect in many ways the concepts we have worked hard to include in this resolution.

There is one final point I want to make this evening. Some have said if we pass this resolution, we show that America is somehow divided and not supportive of our troops. Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is every Member of this body is united in support of our troops. Every Member of this body wishes General Petraeus all the best and hopes he will succeed in this very difficult mission. But the fact is, Americans are deeply divided over the strategy we should pursue in Iraq. It is part of the health of our American

democracy that we debate these issues, and we do so because we care about the brave men and women in uniform who are representing us in Iraq, who are on the front lines, who are sacrificing so much. That is exactly the motivation for the resolution that the 10 of us are introducing tonight.

Let me close my remarks by again saying it has been a wonderful experience to work so closely with the senior Senator from Virginia and the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. BEN NELSON. Both of them have worked so hard. They care so much about this issue. It has been a great pleasure to join with them.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I thank my colleagues, the Senator from Nebraska and Senator COLLINS. It is important that we have taken this initiative because a number of colleagues—10 now—wish to be recognized. But believe me, there are 10 more and 10 more who will soon come forward, hopefully, and support this resolution. I also want to stress, as both of my colleagues did, I hope as this debate progresses, it will not be a question of who is the most patriotic, who is the strongest supporter of the American troops. I pride myself with having had a relationship with the Armed Forces of the United States, modest though it may be, since late 1944–1945. I had the privilege of working and learning. I often feel the Armed Forces did far more for me than I have done for them. In my years, now 29 years, here in the Senate on the Armed Services Committee, I have done everything I could to repay the Armed Forces for what they did for this humble person, to provide for them in a way that meets the sincerity of their commitments and that of their families.

So it is not a question of who is the most patriotic or a question of who is trying to be confrontational with the President. These are heartfelt, closely held views we have about one of the most serious episodes in contemporary American history. I think the President has shown a measure of courage in this matter. But as has been acknowledged, we have made mistakes. And what we have tried to do is conscientiously say how we feel about the immediate future.

I asked for a change in strategy, I guess it was October, when I came back and said the situation, as I saw it, in Iraq was going sideways. That has been done. This is a change in strategy. I acknowledge that. We were invited by the President to make suggestions. We have done that in a courteous, respectful manner. I thank my colleagues.

I stress also the need for bipartisanship. I am not certain anyone can predict how this debate will go and what the outcome will be or how many resolutions come forward. I think it should be a healthy, strong debate and one in which the American public, which is

very much attuned to this situation and has strong views of its own—and we should respect those views—I hope that what debate and actions follow, whatever they may be by this Chamber on such final resolutions that may be voted on, earn the respect and the trust and the confidence not only of the Armed Forces but of the American public. Because we can only be successful in this operation to save the Government of Iraq, whether it is this one or a successor one, to save the people of Iraq so they can exercise sovereignty if there is strong public support and a strong and accurate bipartisan level of participation by the Congress of the United States. To have a vote all on one side and a vote all on the other side will not help this very situation at this time.

So one of the main goals—and we have achieved it—is bipartisanship, truly.

I thank my colleagues. I yield the floor. And I wish to, in so yielding, thank the distinguished Senator from Colorado for joining us in this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, let me first say I am pleased and honored to be here with Senator WARNER and Senator COLLINS and Senator NELSON. It was about a year or so ago that Senator LEVIN and Senator WARNER led a CODEL of Senators into Iraq and Afghanistan. I had the great fortune of traveling with both Senator WARNER and Senator LEVIN on that CODEL. I learned a tremendous amount from them in terms of what it is they had seen in Iraq and Afghanistan, the observations they made about where we were on the levels of violence in Iraq. I came away from that CODEL with them feeling as if they truly had the best interests of America at heart. As they have sponsored these resolutions today, what they are acting out here is in the best fashion of what a Senator should do, and that is trying to do the best for our country.

Let me say, first of all, with respect to the resolution that was heard earlier today in the Foreign Relations Committee, sponsored by Senator LEVIN and Senator BIDEN and Senator HAGEL, I very much appreciate their leadership and thinking and the passion they brought to the debate and to this issue.

When I sat down and compared the resolution considered in the Foreign Relations Committee to the resolution that is now being introduced by Senator WARNER and other colleagues, I thought there were a great number of similarities between the two resolutions.

Let me just comment about my own involvement and give part of my rationale for becoming an original sponsor of this resolution. First and foremost, I think what this country needs today more than anything else is a sense of unity. I think we have had a great deal of divisiveness in this country over the last 6 years. I think in the

long run, when one looks 10, 20, 30, 40 years down the road at these very difficult times that are very challenging to our country—very challenging to our men and women in uniform and the other men and women of America—we will be judged as to whether we in this Congress were able to unify a direction in Iraq that ultimately was a successful direction in Iraq.

I have called for a new direction in Iraq because I believe we need that to get us to success there. I don't believe we can get to success in Iraq if we have a divided country in terms of how we move forward.

With respect to the resolution that is before us, in my own conversations with the President and with members of his administration in the past, I have told them that, in my view, with all due respect to our Commander in Chief, we need to move forward in a new direction.

When I returned from Iraq and Afghanistan with the Levin-Warner codeL, one of the things I told the President we needed to do was to enhance our diplomatic efforts in the region; that the countries in the area have as much, if not more, at stake than the United States. I saw them doing very little.

Today, I see Saudi Arabia, with all its wealth, doing very little to help in the reconstruction of Iraq. The same thing could be said about Kuwait and many of the neighboring countries. That effort has to be enhanced because they simply, in my judgment, are not doing their part to contribute to a successful outcome in that region.

I have also spoken to the President and members of his administration about the importance of the effort of reconstruction and making sure that there are other countries besides the United States putting their shoulder to the wheel on the reconstruction efforts that are underway in Iraq.

The way I see this debate unfolding is that we essentially have the plan of the President, which I call plan A. His plan is that we do a lot of what we have been doing but, in addition, that we move forward and add an additional 21,500 troops to the war effort in Iraq. That would be what I call plan A. There is another plan out there, plan B, from some Members of Congress and others that say we ought to bring our troops home and bring our troops home right away; that we ought to engage in an immediate withdrawal from Iraq and from that region. My own view of that plan, plan B, is that is not a good plan either. At the end of the day, no matter what criticisms we make about the original decision to invade Iraq, about the way the war has been mishandled, the fact is we are in Iraq today; there is a mess in Iraq and in the Middle East. So the question for me becomes: How do we as the United States of America, working in the Senate, working in the House of Representatives, working with the President, how do we put Humpty-Dumpty

together again? It seems to me that Humpty-Dumpty has fallen off the wall, and it is up to us to try to figure out, in some united way, under difficult circumstances, how to move forward together to create the unity that will allow us to succeed in Iraq.

When I look at the possibility of plan B, which is a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq, it seems to me that will create tremendous dangers not only to the Middle East but to the long-term interests of the United States. I, for one, want us very much to succeed in Iraq and, because I want to succeed, I want to see whether we can create a kind of unity on how we move forward.

I think this resolution introduced by the senior Senator from Virginia, the Senator from Nebraska, and the Senator from Maine is a good direction for us to go in. I want to point out what I consider to be four central points of this resolution which, in my view, are also reflected in the Biden-Levin-Hagel resolution. The first of those points is that there is a disagreement with the President's decision to move forward with a surge of 21,500 more troops. I think both resolutions say that equally and clearly. Why, in this resolution, is that conclusion reached? Why was it reached in the other resolution heard in the Foreign Relations Committee?

In my view, it is because of what our military commanders have said. General Abizaid said it a few weeks ago, in November. He said an increase in troops was not the way to go because it sends the wrong signal about the ultimate responsibility to quell the sectarian violence in Iraq. It is not the right way to go because when you look at what happened with the surges we have had over the last 6, 7 months in Iraq, they themselves did not work. When operations going forward started in June, there was a sense that it might quell some of the sectarian violence going on. It didn't work. We came back in August and did another operation going forward. It did not work.

The Iraq bipartisan study commission, chaired by former Secretary Baker and Lee Hamilton, found, in fact, that those surges created an escalation of violence by 43 percent during that time period. In a matter of 6 months we saw a 43-percent escalation of violence there. Regarding putting more troops in, it seems we have the laboratory of experience where it hasn't worked in the past, and there is nothing I have seen that indicates that moving forward in that direction will work at this time. I agree with the resolution and making a statement that we disagree with the President's decision moving forward in that regard.

As to the second part of this resolution, also reflected in the alternative resolution in the Foreign Relations Committee, I think there is unanimity of opinion. I bet you that we can get 100 Senators to vote for the position that the Iraqi Government needs to assume responsibility for a functioning government that will provide security

to the Iraqi nation and to the people of Iraq.

When Senator WARNER and I visited Iraq with Senator LEVIN, I still remember meeting with the Iraqi Ministers and with our own forces responsible for helping with the training of the Iraqi police. Mr. President, 2006 was supposed to be the year of the police in Iraq. This is the year where the Iraqi security was supposed to be taken to the point where they could move forward and assume the responsibility for their own security. Yet that handoff hasn't occurred and the sectarian violence has continued to increase.

I very much agree with the spirit of both resolutions that says if we are going to move forward and be successful on this issue, it is the Iraqi Government and people who need to move forward and assume responsibility for their security.

The third thing in this resolution that I think is important is that we contemplate that there is going to be some continuing involvement of the United States in Iraq, without limitation. Nobody knows for how long. But our efforts to engage in counterterrorism in that area will be a continuing and important role of the United States of America. Our efforts to attempt to restore the territorial integrity of Iraq and to stop the weapons flowing into Iraq from Iran and Syria are important measures that I believe the U.S. military can address. I agree with those aspects of the resolution as well.

Finally, as I said earlier in my comments, at the end of the day, this is not a United States of America problem alone. When one looks at the Gulf States and other countries in that area, such as Egypt, there is a huge problem that belongs to them as well. We have our hands on the tar baby as the United States of America. They, too, as countries have a huge stake in the success of Iraq and also have to get their hands on the tar baby. I believe the resolution put forward by Senator LEVIN and my other colleagues is a step in the right direction in that it creates a framework for how we ought to be moving forward in Iraq.

In conclusion, again, I say how much I respect the senior Senator from Virginia. I remember well the work that we did just a year or so ago in the so-called Gang of 14. I see that Senator NELSON and Senator COLLINS and Senator WARNER are back again trying to pull the Members of this body together on what is a very contentious issue. I wish them well, and I am delighted to be part of the effort.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I wish to thank our colleague from Colorado and pick up on the theme that he closed and talked on earlier—unity.

Yes, there is great unity among the American people and a depth of concern about the loss of our forces and the wounding and suffering of the families. We have not lost our resolve. Our

President has been firm. But this institution, the great Congress of the United States, a coequal branch of the Government, now must rise and show our commitment to fulfill the wishes and hopes and prayers of the American people, and do so in a bipartisan manner. That is the very heart of the effort of our 10 colleagues who thus far have come forward and put their names into the public domain as supporting the provisions of this resolution.

They do resemble, in many respects, the provisions in the Biden-Levin-Hagel resolution. When that first came out, so much of the rhetoric surrounding that resolution was disturbing to many people. That gave rise to the efforts that we have put forth, culminating in placing this document into the RECORD tonight.

I hope others will consider joining us because it is important to show unity and bipartisanship in the Congress in saying that we, in fact, understand the hopes, wishes, and prayers of the American people and the Armed Forces of the United States.

I thank my colleague and yield the floor.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 176. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 152 submitted by Mr. ENSIGN (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) to the amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 177. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 153 submitted by Mr. ENSIGN (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CRAIG, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. COLEMAN) to the amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 178. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 154 submitted by Mr. ENSIGN (for himself, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. COBURN) to the amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 179. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 180. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 143 submitted by Mr. SESSIONS and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 181. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 144 submitted by Mr. SESSIONS and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 182. Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. VOINOVICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 183. Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. VOINOVICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 184. Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. VOINOVICH, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 185. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 118 submitted by Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. BURR) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 186. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 187. Mr. KERRY (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SUNUNU, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 112 submitted by Mr. SUNUNU to the amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra.

SA 188. Mr. OBAMA submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 189. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 141 submitted by Mr. SESSIONS and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 190. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 142 submitted by Mr. SESSIONS and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 191. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 192. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 193. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 194. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 195. Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. DEMINT, and Mr. COBURN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 196. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 197. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 198. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 100 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. BAUCUS) to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.