

gave the Iraqi people a chance for free elections and a chance to write their own Constitution. Those successes which did occur were the result of great determination by our troops in uniform and many brave Iraqis who stepped forward and risked their lives to move their nation forward.

But we all know the situation today. As of this morning, we have lost 3,057 American soldiers. We know that over 23,000 have returned from Iraq with injuries, almost 7,000 with serious injuries—amputations, blindness, serious burns, traumatic brain injury. Those are the realities of what we face.

We also know that the situation on the ground in Iraq is very difficult for most people to understand. When the Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Maliki, says to the President: We don't need additional troops, and the President says we are sending them anyway, when the generals in the field say that if America continues to send troops, the Iraqis won't accept the responsibility of defending their country and the administration says we are going to send troops anyway, I think that is evidence that this administration's policy is not connected to the reality of what is on the ground in Iraq. And certainly for the Vice President to characterize that sad and tragic situation in Iraq today as an enormous success is not in touch with the reality of what our soldiers face and our country faces.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LINCOLN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR GEORGE A. SMATHERS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, on Monday I have the great privilege of delivering the eulogy at the funeral for Senator George Smathers in whose office I had the privilege, as a college student, of interning. As I greet each of our interns in our Senate offices as they rotate, I always tell them the story of being an intern, how it had a profound influence on my life because that summer, interning for Senator Smathers, I met his son Bruce. Bruce and I then became college roommates. After law school and the military, Bruce introduced me to my wife, and I returned the favor and introduced Bruce to his wife. And his son, little Bruce, is my godson. So over the years, I have had the privilege of having my life intersecting with the Smathers family, so much so that when I came to the Senate, I requested that I have the desk of George Smathers.

It is with that background that, indeed, it is a great honor for me that the family has asked me to deliver the eulogy. It will be a great privilege for me, next Monday, to recall the great life and times of this great American and great Floridian. I will just mention a couple of things in his career. I will elaborate at greater length and will introduce that eulogy into the RECORD of the Senate after I have given it.

I wish to mention that was a Senate which had giants with whom all of us in my generation grew up—Symington of Missouri and Johnson of Texas and Dirksen of Illinois and Mansfield of Montana and, from my State, Smathers and Holland.

Johnson really relied on Smathers—so much so that when there was a vacancy as the assistant majority leader, he asked Smathers to fill in temporarily. And when Senator Johnson, the majority leader, ended up having his heart attack and was out of work for 7 months, George Smathers stood in as the acting majority leader. Upon Senator Johnson's return, he asked Senator Smathers to be his permanent assistant majority leader. LBJ was not someone who was accustomed to having someone tell him no, but his friend from Florida told him that he should not do it.

I will just mention one other fact. George Smathers, as a young Congressman, met Fidel Castro in 1948. Fidel Castro told him that he was going to take over Cuba. That was 11 years before Castro ousted the hated dictator Batista. Smathers was always leery of Fidel Castro, and he often warned people, before Castro took over and, in fact, after Castro was in. When so many in the world thought he got rid of the hated dictator Batista, Smathers said: Watch out, he is going to consolidate power and he is going to become a problem. He was prophetic. That is exactly what happened.

That was the kind of leadership he had. It is the passing of an era. America has lost one of her great leaders, and Florida has lost one of its great sons. It is my privilege to bring these remarks to the Senate.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTIONS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, for a week now we have had this speculation, the rumors, and then finally the deliberations in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of a resolution disapproving the President's increase of the forces by 21,000 in

Iraq. A resolution was passed out on a vote of something like 12 to 9 yesterday. It was bipartisan in the passing, but it was basically a partisan vote. Save for one member of the minority on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, all of the minority voted against the resolution. But almost to a person, all of the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, both sides of the aisle, had expressed their dissatisfaction, individually in their statements in front of the committee, with the President's intention to increase the number of troops, which is already underway, as we know, as we have been reading the commentary in the press.

So we have that resolution. Then we have a resolution introduced by Senator WARNER. This Senator from Florida looks at these two resolutions, and they are almost identical. So this Senator is one of several Senators who has cosponsored both resolutions. This Senator is one of several Senators who has been trying to bring the two together to be folded into one, since it basically, in substance, is the same thing in both of them. Yet for one reason or another, that has not been accomplished.

Therefore, next week, we expect both of those resolutions to come in front of the Senate. At this moment, it looks as if it will be the Senate Foreign Relations Committee product that will then be amendable and I suppose with a substitute amendment. Then we go through all the amendatory process. Now, that may be the way the Senate will work its will, but it is not necessarily the way it could be done the easiest, if we could have great minds come together in a bipartisan way on two resolutions that virtually say the same thing.

I bring this up simply to say we get so wound around the axle and so worked up over the particular number of troops when, in fact, looking at the underlying conditions in the Middle East and in Iraq, where there is so much at stake for our country: The oil and gas in that region, the east-west trade routes that go through the area, all of the international capital investment that is in that region of the world, and all of the capital that is produced that flows out of that part of the world—all of that instability in the region, brought about as a result of instability in Iraq, is going to have a major global impact.

The former commander, the former combatant commander of the U.S. Central Command, General Tony Zinni, a now retired 4-star Marine general who served as the head of Central Command back under the Clinton administration, has written extensively on this, and he points out that there is a complexity we have unleashed by going into Iraq that is not only the Sunni-Shiite conflict but also the Arab-Persian conflict. General Zinni, in his upfront, blunt-talking way says:

There are three options in Iraq: Fix it, contain it, or leave it.