

There is no doubt we face extremely difficult challenges in Iraq. We have not made enough progress. Citizens of Iraq must be willing to fight for their own freedom. The President recognizes this, and his new plan is the result of increased commitments from the Iraqi Prime Minister. The President has developed a new plan with new leadership. We should not jerk the rug out from under those we have put in charge in Iraq.

I ask my colleagues to reject this bill and let us craft a clean funding bill that will meet the priorities and needs of our men and women in Iraq.

Mr. President, that concludes my remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I want to follow on the remarks of my dear friend from Colorado related to the current situation in Iraq. It appears some movement has been made on the war supplemental. Unfortunately, it is a flawed piece of legislation, one the crafters of it well know will be vetoed by the President. It will be vetoed for good reasons—because it contains completely unacceptable language, as was just being pointed out.

It is impossible for us to micro-manage what is happening in the field. It is a bad idea for politicians in Washington to tell generals when and how they can move forces in a battle. It is a bad idea for us to slow-bleed our military as they face an unrelenting enemy. It is a bad idea for us to simply not have the wherewithal to stick with the fight at a time when it is difficult. The President this week again reiterated his commitment that he would veto a bill that had artificial timetables for withdrawal and that would empower the enemy. It gives the enemy hope and an opportunity to wait us out. There is no question about that. A deadline simply tells the enemy by what date they need to know that the American commitment is over.

Imagine the confusion for someone in Iraq trying to make a decision whether to cast their lot which, in fact, may mean the death of himself or herself, and their family, to support our effort there toward a democratic country. If they had no anticipation that our commitment was equal to theirs, they might simply wait it out. So how can we ever turn the political tide in our favor in Iraq if we don't show the commitment the people of Iraq must have in order to make a commitment to our stated goals?

General Petraeus is here. He met with the President yesterday; he will be meeting with Members of Congress. It is important that we ask him his assessment of the current situation.

I know there are many who would be ready to suggest that the surge is not working. In fact, the full surge is not in place because all of the troops are yet to be deployed for the surge, but some who already said it wouldn't work are now saying it hasn't worked.

I wish to have General Petraeus's assessment of it. I want to know what the general on the ground—not a politician in Washington—thinks about the effort of success we are meeting with our effort at this point in time.

The Iraq Study Group has been mentioned. Congress should drop fixed deadlines for withdrawals of U.S. forces. As Commander in Chief, the President needs flexibility on draft deployments. This is from the cochair of the Iraq Study Group, Democrat Lee Hamilton.

It is important that we recognize the Iraq Study Group not only when it is convenient but also when it might be inconvenient.

I think it is very important that we not sound the voice of defeat. Imagine the surprise that must have come to our enemies—and whether we like it or not, we have enemies—imagine the delight that must have come when, from the halls of the Congress, from the leader of the Senate, they were told that they had, in fact, won; that the war was lost.

This is not the right thing to say at a time when our troops are engaged in battle. Nine U.S. soldiers lost their lives in the last 24 hours alone. This is a difficult time. It is not a pleasant time. It is not an easy assignment. So for us to simply tell our troops in the field they have been defeated when they in fact have not, and for us to tell our enemies that in fact they have won when in fact they have not, is not a good idea. I believe it is terribly important that we attempt somehow in the midst of this rancor and debate that is so classic of modern day Washington that we find it within ourselves to look beyond the current moment of politics, beyond the political advantage that might be gained at any one moment or another, and seek within the depths of our souls the opportunity for us to begin to work together to try to find a solution to this very difficult problem.

It is a sure thing that we, in fact, have a problem on our hands, that Iraq is a difficult situation. There is no question they must reach a political settlement. There is no question that they must do—the Iraqis themselves—the hard work of peace. However, as we do that, we need to also find it within ourselves to find a way of shaping a political consensus, for us to find a way to begin to talk to one another, not past one another, about how we resolve the issues in Iraq in a way that will enhance America's strength. It is not about defeating a point of view. It is not about defeating President Bush. A loss in Iraq would be a defeat for the United States of America. So how do we find a way to empower America to be a stronger country, to be a united country as we seek to defeat the enemies of our country, which surely are there, continuing to fight against us, wishing us to be unsuccessful, and wishing for our country to be defeated? We should pull together, Republicans and Democrats all, to try to find the

common ground that will bring us to a sensible solution, to a sensible outcome, so America is not defeated, but the enemies of America are defeated.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

BIPARTISANSHIP STARTS AT THE TOP

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I say to my good personal friend and colleague from Florida, if we want to solve this and other problems, we have to have some genuine bipartisanship, and that bipartisanship has to start at the top. There has to be an atmosphere of mutual respect and willingness to work together, and it has to start in the White House.

I have shared these comments publicly and privately. Whenever you face something as contentious as the matters we face—matters of war and peace, the making of Medicare financially solvent, the question of prescription drugs and their cost—you simply can't do it by taking a unilateral position over and over on either side of this aisle; it has to be that people have to come together and work it out. There also has to be a sense of mutual trust, of people telling the truth to each other, of doing what the standards were in the old days where a man's word was his bond. Until we get that, we are going to continue to have difficulty.

We see the problems right now in a war that is certainly a difficult one. We all share the same goal: that the interests of America are furthered if we can stabilize Iraq. How do we get there? There has been so much mistrust and suspicion that has been bred because of all the inconsistencies and lack of information and misinformation and massaged information. But that is then; now is now. What do we do? Thus far, it looks as though the White House and the leadership in Congress can't come together. There is too much distrust.

I have said before and I will say again, thank goodness the Secretary of State is out on a new diplomatic initiative. It is not catty to say it is about time, because there certainly have been those forces within the administration that have wanted this much more in the past, but I think the Secretary of State is making a very valiant effort now, because you are not going to solve the problem in Iraq unless you can get all the neighbors in the region involved to make a political solution stick.

Is a political solution viable? This Senator cannot say at this point that it is a viable prospect because of the sectarian hatred we have seen play out over these last several months. But this hasn't just been going on for months; this has been going on for 1,327 years, ever since the Battle of Karbala. I say to my colleague, who is my friend, and the two of us work together very well all the time, that a lot less rhetoric coming from both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue would help this

problem, but I don't see it changing right now. I think that is a sad commentary on the state of affairs.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Will the Senator yield for a moment?

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Certainly.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I appreciate the Senator's comments, and I so much value our relationship and our ability to work across the aisle, because we seem to get a lot done when we do that. It is an encouraging sign on one of the very difficult issues of our day, which is immigration, that we do seem to be working in a bipartisan way, and it is amazing what can be accomplished when we do work bipartisanship.

I can't help but be shaped by my own life experience, and I remember as I came to America and was learning the ways of this country, and I admired so much this new land of mine, that I would marvel at the phrase: "Politics ends at the water's edge." That used to be the standard. There were these towering giants of another day who occupied these very desks we now use as ours who seemed to find it within themselves to reach a little higher to work across party lines in those post-war years, in the Cold War years when it was so essential.

I think what we need to adopt as a country is the understanding that this struggle against this enemy is long term, that we are going to be in this fight for a long time, probably the time of your service and mine. I hope not, but perhaps. If we are going to be successful in that endeavor, we have to set politics aside. We have to find a way that we can think of America first and whatever label we wear in a secondary way. I am not preaching to my colleague from Florida or anyone in particular. Frankly, the blame lies on both sides of the aisle, with Republicans as well as Democrats. We have to find a way we can move beyond the momentary gain we might make over a 24-hour news cycle for the longer term good of the Nation and the longer term good of what America stands for to the world.

Anyway, maybe the Senator and I began a rare moment here this morning in talking about Iraq where we are not yelling at each other and we are actually talking about how we can bridge our differences and find consensus as something that will help the American people.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I say to my colleague, work in your sphere of influence and this Senator will try to do the same. What we have is an approaching train wreck, because if the Congress passes this emergency funding bill for the war that has this language in it, if that passes this week, then the President is going to veto it next week and that is going to leave us right back where we are, with both sides making a lot of noise and a lot of rhetoric, but that doesn't get us any closer to where we are going. So I say to my colleague, look over the horizon beyond this week and see where we can come together.

I thought the most promising prospect was when Jim Baker and Lee Hamilton came down with the Iraq Study Commission report. They showed, in a bipartisan way among very prominent people of both parties, how you should approach this Iraq situation, and yet, that was last November or December when it came out, and here we are 4 months later and still we have not come together in common ground. So I would encourage my colleague to keep working.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I thank the Senator.

KIDS AND CAR SAFETY ACT

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I want to talk about a sad situation we can do something about. A year ago this little girl, Veronica Rosenfeld, and her mom were walking in their Boca Raton neighborhood. This little girl, Veronica, was about 5 feet ahead of her mother on the sidewalk when a neighbor, not seeing little Veronica, backing out of the driveway, backed out over her and killed her. Her mother was right there, and there was nothing she could do about it. It is every parent's nightmare to certainly see their child die, but how much more horrible to lose them and be totally helpless in preventing a senseless accident—an accident that could be prevented.

Let's talk about that, the prevention of the accident. Look what has happened in the last 6 years. There has been a 138-percent increase in the last 6 years in the number of children killed in these noncrash fatalities in which people back over a child because they can't see the child. Several children are killed every week in the United States, and sadly—and this is why I bring it up again; I have brought it up several times to the Senate—this past weekend in Florida, two more children died in their driveways. In Hollywood, FL, a 3-year-old died when her father accidentally backed over her with his cargo van, and in Fort Myers, a 5-year-old was killed by her 16-year-old brother when he was parking the family car.

Mr. President, this month alone, April, there have been 11 children backed over and killed in this country. These injuries and deaths continue to occur, even though we have the technology to prevent many of them. But we need legislation to put this technology to use. In April alone—and we are not even to the end of April—they have happened in Indiana, New York, Georgia, three in Florida, two in Texas, two in California, and one in Hawaii thus far. And it is only April 24.

This is why a bunch of us have gotten behind the Cameron Gulbransen Kids and Cars Safety Act. It is a bipartisan bill that would provide drivers with the means of detecting a child behind their vehicle. This bill would also ensure that power windows would automatically reverse direction to prevent a child from being trapped and mandate a car's service brake to engage to pre-

vent rollaways. We have this technology in a lot of vehicles. We have been in the vehicles where there is a signal that goes beep, beep, beep, and it becomes more frequent when an object is detected behind the car. The technology is there, and it is already being used. The same thing for windows. A child's head is in a window and suddenly the window goes up. It hits resistance and it reverses, and a parking brake automatically engages to prevent a rollaway on an incline.

Consumer groups have teamed with the parents of victims to suggest ways that are relatively simple and inexpensive in order to ensure that more parents won't have to endure the pain of losing a child. The technology is there. We all want to be safe behind the wheel of a car, especially when we back up. How many times, when we back out of our garage, do we have that nagging thought: Is there a child behind this vehicle I cannot see? Why go through this trauma anymore? Let's pass this Kids and Cars Safety Act, and then we can stop a lot of these needless deaths.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BIDEN. 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.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I will proceed in morning business. I believe I have time allotted to me.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority has 15 minutes.

IRAQ

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, President Bush has spent the last 2 weeks talking up the "progress" we are making in Iraq and talking down the Democrats and some of our Republican colleagues for trying to bring this war to a responsible end. But sometimes that is a problem because you have to deal with the facts. The facts are not as the President wants them to be but as they exist on the ground. The fact is, the President is totally out of touch with reality. He is out of touch with the American people and with America's interests in the region.

I have been here a while, and I can say I have never seen a President as isolated since Richard Nixon. The President appears to be totally removed from reality. He tells us that Attorney General Gonzales has done a great job, when anybody who watched it views it as one of the least impressive appearances of an Attorney General. He tells us that the President of the World Bank, an American, is doing a great job, oblivious to the damage being done to America's reputation around the world. And against the advice of some of the most gifted military men and women in a generation,