defended, to serve it, and to live or die for it.'';

Whereas the first military engagement of Casimir Pulaski with the British was on September 11, 1777, at the Battle of Brandywine, and his courageous charge in this engagement averted a disastrous defeat of the American Cavalry and saved the life of George Washington;

Whereas, on September 15, 1777, George Washington elevated Casimir Pulaski to the rank of Brigadier General of the American Cavalry;

Whereas Casimir Pulaski formed the Pulaski Cavalry Legion, and in February 1779, this legion ejected the British occupiers from Charleston, South Carolina;

Whereas, in October 1779, Casimir Pulaski mounted an assault against British forces in Savannah, Georgia;

Whereas, on the morning of October 9, 1779, Casimir Pulaski was mortally wounded and was taken aboard the American ship USS *Wasp*, where he died at sea on October 11, 1779;

Whereas, before the end of 1779, the Continental Congress resolved that a monument should be erected in honor of Casimir Pulaski;

Whereas, in 1825, General Lafayette laid the cornerstone for the Casimir Pulaski monument in Savannah, Georgia; and

Whereas, in 1929, Congress passed a resolution recognizing October 11 of each year as Pulaski Day in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Casimir Pulaski is proclaimed to be an honorary citizen of the United States posthumously.

DISCHARGE AND REFERRAL—S. 473

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 473 and that the bill be referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2009

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m., March 3; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus appropriations bill; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 to 2:15 p.m. for the weekly party conference lunches.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, under the previous order, at 11:45 a.m., the Senate will vote in relation to the McCain amendment.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that following the statement of Senator ALEXANDER, the Senate adjourn under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I express my appreciation to my friend from Tennessee for his courteousness, which is always the case.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader. On his comments about the omnibus appropriations bill, two brief points. One is that, of course, all Senators welcome the opportunity to debate and amend the bill. Senator BYRD has argued eloquently, as the majority leader himself has, that the opportunity to debate and amend bills is an important part of what makes the Senate unique. We often tend to argue that point more eloquently when we are in the minority. Amendments and debate are what make the Senate the Senate. It gives us a chance to represent the people who send us—the people for whom we work. All of us on the minority side appreciate that this year the majority leader has—as we believe he should, but nevertheless he has—tried to create an environment in which we can debate and amend. Obviously, amendments aren't going to always be amendments we agree with. I don't agree with all the amendments that come from our side either, but I appreciate that chance to offer amendments, and we would like to see the Senate function in a way that gives us a chance to represent the people who hire us.

Second, I suspect every member of the Appropriations Committee and most Members of the Senate hope we can get back to the practice of passing our appropriations bills one by one and acting on them before the beginning of the fiscal year, which is October 1. I would hate to think how much of the taxpayers' money we must waste each year by missing that deadline, but grouping these measures together into giant ''omnibus'' bills, and by passing continuing resolutions which don't take into account the differences of opinion among members of Congress and the administration about budget priorities. I would hope we could get back to the practice of finishing our work and taking the bills one by one as we did not so long ago.

I appreciate the majority leader mentioning the fact that we will be debating all week on this appropriations bill, to try and give this massive bill the scrutiny it deserves. It would have been much better if these nine appropriations bills had been enacted last year, before October 1, and we could take them into account when we voted on the stimulus bill last week. That is the way we should have been able to do that, but we weren't.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would say to my friend who has been Governor of his State and a Cabinet Secretary, ran for President, and now a Member of the Senate, I think he has a foundation of understanding how important it is that we move these appropriations bills. This is a difficult situation. We have done it quite a few times in recent years, and it is not the best way to legislate. The Senator from Tennessee and I agree on that.

I have to say to my friend, there are a number of people in my caucus who come to me and say: Why are you making us take these tough votes and why are you talking about more votes on this bill? Because in keeping with what the Senator from Tennessee said, I hope we can continue doing this. I think the Republicans have not offered some easy amendments—I wish they had been a little easier on us—but that is the way it is. That is why I wanted to spend a little time this evening talking about the range of amendments we already have which have been hard votes and perhaps hard for both sides in many respects.

I support the statement of my friend from Tennessee that we are all going to try to arrive at the same place. It is just that how we get there sometimes doesn't correlate.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the majority leader.

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN WARS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I have two topics I wish to speak about this evening: One on Iraq and one on higher education. First, on Iraq and Afghanistan. President Obama on Friday told marines at Camp Lejeune and the world how the United States plans to end the war in Iraq. The President's plan turns out not to be so different than the agreement President Bush signed with Iraq just before he left office. Add Senator MCCAIN's name to the list because on Friday he generally supported President Obama's decision. For the first time, I think it can be said we have a bipartisan consensus—and a consensus between the Congress and the President—about how to honorably and successfully conclude the war in Iraq.

Ironically, this is a bipartisan consensus that comes 2 years later than it could have. Because what President Bush and President Obama and Senator MCCAIN seemed to agree on today is also a course that is consistent with the recommendations of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group headed by former Republican Secretary of State James Baker and former Democratic House Foreign Affairs Chairman Lee Hamilton. That is not just my judgment. I asked Secretary Rice, the former Secretary of State, whether the agreement

President Bush signed with Iraq is generally consistent with the principles of the Iraq Study Group, and she said yes. I asked Secretary Gates, who has been Secretary of Defense both for President Bush and now for President Obama and who, for a little while, was also a member of the Iraq Study Group, whether the direction in Iraq that President Bush had agreed to go in is approximately the same as the principles recommended in December of 2006 by the Iraq Study Group, and he answered yes.

Unfortunately, instead of having, for the last 2 years, a consensus between the Congress—a Democratic Congress—and the President—a Republican President—we instead made it clear to our enemy and clear to our troops that we were divided in Washington about the course of the war and that we couldn't agree on how to conclude. I don't know whether we had reached agreement earlier by, for example, adopting the legislation that Senator Salazar and I and 17 Senators offered and that about 60 Representatives offered in the House, that would have made the principles of the Iraq Study Group the course upon which the United States would embark to successfully conclude the war in Iraq—I don't know whether, if we had done that in 2007, 2 years ago, the war would have been more successful or Iraq would have been better stabilized; if troops would have come home sooner and perhaps even American lives might have been saved; or if Iraqi lives might have been saved. I don't know about that. But I do know that we put in jeopardy—by our failure to agree between the Congress and the President over the course of the war in Iraq—we put in jeopardy the ability of the American people to have the stomach to see this mission all the way through to the end, which is an essential requirement, in my view, of any military endeavor in which the United States should engage.

President Bush, nevertheless, persevered, and it became, in the view of many Democrats and others, Bush's war, and it seriously damaged the Bush Presidency. It seriously divided the country. At least we can use this failure to agree, this failure to come to some consensus, as a guide about how to conduct ourselves in future conflicts, starting with the war in Afghanistan.

President Obama is sending 17,000 more Americans to Afghanistan. He is doing so after only a month in office. He says, quite candidly, he hasn't yet got a strategy, approved a strategy or, in his words Friday night in his interview with Jim Lehrer, an exit strategy. I assume that also means he hasn't yet decided upon what is even more important, which is a success strategy. The lesson of Iraq and of our failure to come to some agreement over the last 2 years is that we should give our new President time and support in his efforts to develop a strategy and then we should insist—we in the Congress—that we agree with him on a strategy; and if we can't agree with the one he comes up with, that he adjust it until we can, so we as a nation can have a compelling purpose, a clear set of goals, the money to supply more than enough force to reach those goals. So our enemies and our troops can hear clearly that the American people have the stomach to see the mission in Afghanistan all the way through to the end. In other words, it is important for our country not just for the success of the Obama presidency; it is important for our country that what some called Bush's war not be followed by what others might call Obama's war.

The Iraq Study Group was created by Congress in 2006. It had a remarkable group of members, including Lee Hamilton and Jim Baker who both cochaired it. Ed Meese, the former Attorney General for President Reagan, was there. Vernon Jordan was a member. Secretary Gates was a member for a while. The first President Bush's Secretary of State, Larry Eagleburger, was a member. Leon Panetta, President Clinton's Chief of Staff and now CIA Director, was there. President Clinton's Secretary of Defense was a member. Sandra Day O'Connor, former Supreme Court Justice, was a member. They spent many months and went to Iraq, and they talked to a variety of people. They tried to see if they could come to a consensus about how the U.S. could honorably conclude the war in Iraq. They were bipartisan and unanimous in their 79 recommendations, which would be boiled down to three major points.

I remember being very disappointed in early 2007 when, following that, President Bush didn't take advantage of the opportunity during his State of the Union Address to embrace the report. He knew then that a majority of Americans didn't support his strategy. He knew the strategy would have a more difficult time being sustained without their support. I think all of us knew, then, if he could get Congress to agree, the American people would be more likely to agree.

The President could have invited the distinguished members of the Iraq Study Group to sit in the gallery during his speech and, as Presidents do often, introduce them. The President could have said: This is not my recommendation, it is theirs. I accept it for the good of the country, and I ask the American people now to accept it.

If one goes back and reads the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group report made in December 2006, here is basically what it said we should do: Get the U.S. troops out of the combat business in Iraq and into the support business in a prompt and honorable way—maybe over the course of a year, they said. General Petraeus amended that to a little longer than a year. The Iraq Study Group said reduce the number of American forces in Iraq. The Iraq Study Group said there should be a limited military presence for the longer term in Iraq, and that would signal to the rest of the Middle East to stay out of Iraq. It said it would give support to General Petraeus and his troops for a military surge to make Baghdad safer. This was before President Bush authorized the surge.

It would expand diplomatic efforts to build support for Iraqi national reconciliation and sovereignty. The Iraq Study Group would recognize, as Prime Minister Blair said, that it is time for the next chapter of Iraq's history to be written by the Iraqis themselves.

Democratic Senator Ken Salazar—who is now a member of the Obama administration as Interior Secretary—and I wrote legislation that would make the Iraq Study Group recommendations national policy. As I mentioned, it attracted about nine Democrats and eight Republican Senators. In the House of Representatives, there were 27 Democrats and 35 Republicans.

At that time, we were having vote after vote on Iraq. Some Senators said there should be an immediate withdrawal. Others wanted victory of the kind we had in Germany and Japan. I thought the Iraq Study Group recommendations made the most sense; and, apparently, today, so does President Bush, so does President Obama, and so does Senator MCCAIN.

Now, it is fair to say each of those men I just mentioned could find something in the Iraq Study Group report with which to disagree. I would respect those disagreements. But the 17 of us in the Senate could find within that report a course to agree about, just like the Commission itself of widely varying Americans could find enough unanimously to agree about, so they could say to the troops, to the enemy, and to the world: Here is our course forward.

I suggest we would have been better off if we had done that. I pointed out that President Bush would not support the report. I respected that, but I disagreed with it. At the same time, Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leaders would not allow our amendment to come to a vote. We asked and asked—but their reaction was, ''No, no, we won't do that.'' I guess they had their reasons. We don't question their motivation. President Bush persevered in the war, and Democratic leaders persevered with their opposition to the war. They didn't allow the Iraq Study Group resolution to come to a vote. So then we had an election.

Senator Salazar said about the only way we could have united the President and the Democratic leaders was in their opposition to the Iraq Study Group—a set of recommendations that are now largely the principles upon which we are preceding as we seek to end the war in Iraq. But is the country better off for us not having had that 2 years of agreement?

Here are some lessons: One, the Iraq war reminds us that nation building costs many billions of dollars and many lives. Whenever possible, we

should use our military forces to defend America and use our ''shining city on a hill,'' which President Reagan talked about so often, as an example to spread freedom. If we must become involved in another country, as we are in Iraq and Afghanistan, then we must have a compelling reason, a clear mission, an overwhelming force to make certain we reach our goals.

The second lesson is this: In order to reach those goals, we have to persuade the American people to have the stomach to see the mission we have adopted all the way through to the end. It is much better if the President and the Congress, even if they are of different political parties, agree on that mission. Technically, the Commander in Chief can wage a war, leaving us not much to do but fund the troops, which almost all of us, regardless of party, do. We saw in Iraq the failure to agree between the President and the Congress—which made the war harder and longer and President Bush's presidency much less successful. We were in the position often of being the oldest democracy lecturing Baghdad, an infant democracy, for not coming up with a political solution when we ourselves could not come up with one.

Finally, we learned a lesson in Iraq about how to honor those who serve our country. Sometimes in airports now—unlike in the Vietnam era—passengers burst into applause when a group of service men and women appear. A great many Tennesseans have been to Iraq and Afghanistan. More are going this week to Afghanistan. Many have served two or three tours already—including men and women from the Tennessee National Guard and the 101st Airborne—and 100 have given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan. Hundreds have suffered wounds that will change their lives. They have performed heroically. I am glad to see that after 6 years, we finally seem to be united on a path which will bring the war to successful conclusion and hasten the time when most of those serving can come home. But it is disappointing that we did not take the advantage 2 years ago when we might have done it to agree on the principles of the Iraq Study Group. We had that opportunity. It might have shortened the war. It might have stabilized Iraq more rapidly. It might have saved lives.

We should remember that as we look ahead to Afghanistan. We do not want to succeed Bush's war with Obama's war. Whenever we go to war, it should be an American war and the President should make certain he has bipartisan support in Congress.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, during the 1960s, American Motors Corporation president George Romney warned Detroit's automakers, ''There is nothing more vulnerable than entrenched success.''

The big three paid no attention. They were building the best cars in the world—highly profitable gas-guzzling vehicles we were quick to buy. Meanwhile, their future Japanese competitors were perfecting smaller, fuel-efficient cars. And today we are bailing out the Detroit companies that did not listen.

American higher education would do well to heed the warning that George Romney gave the Detroit automakers in the 1960s. We have the best colleges in the world today, just as we had the best cars in the world then. But even brisk competition at home seems to have little effect on rising tuition costs.

To deal with rising college costs, I suggest, No. 1, colleges offer some well-prepared students the option of a 3-year baccalaureate degree, cutting one-third the time and one-fourth the cost from a college education; and No. 2, make community college free for well-prepared students.

This seems impossible when State community college funding is tight. In my State, Vanderbilt's endowment has declined 16.5 percent and Maryville College is under a hiring freeze. The University of Tennessee is trying to decide what positions to cut. Impossible, that is, unless college administrators are listening to students, States, and Members of Congress who are up in arms about rising tuition.

What I hear in Congress is: Every time we increase Pell grants, colleges raise tuition. In their exasperation, Members of Congress then piled new rules on already overregulated colleges. The former president of Stanford University estimates complying with these regulations—which today fill a stack of boxes 6 feet tall, which I have previously brought onto the Senate floor—adds 7 cents to every dollar cost of tuition. Last year, I even voted against the new higher education bill because it doubles those regulations.

The greatest threat to the quality of higher education, in my opinion, is not underfunding, it is overregulation. But to persuade other Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives to stop adding these stacks of regulations, colleges are first going to have to show that they know how to lower college costs.

Just as a plug-in hybrid car is not for every driver, a 3-year college degree is not for every student. But some well-qualified students may want to complete their work in 3 years—many today take 5 or 6 years—and in doing so save time and save money. This will require adjusting attitudes, faculty workloads, and using some campus facilities year round.

Five upper East Tennessee counties already are offering free tuition to qualified local students at Northeast State Community College. Federal Pell grants and the State HOPE Scholarship pay most of the $1,300 semester tuition. The five counties and private companies pay the rest. Sullivan County's bill last year was only $80,000 for its share.

These are very difficult times. We all know that here. But during the 1980s, when I was Governor of Tennessee, unemployment reached 11 percent, inflation reached 14 percent, and interest rates reached 20 percent. We were struggling then. Then the economy surged, as we hope it will soon again. Tennessee's higher education funding growth led the Nation for 3 consecutive years. This is more likely to happen again if higher education offers a 3-year college degree option and free community college tuition. That will help regain the support of legislators and families who are upset about colleges that seem able only to increase tuition every time legislators increase funding.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:45 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 3, 2009, at 10 a.m.