

I join the concerns of Senator WARNER and our Republican leader that we should proceed in consideration of a resolution and not proceed out of order on the Warner resolution. It was introduced as a resolution. It should be debated and voted upon as a resolution here in the Senate. I am pleased, because I think it does unite us now that we have had these types of changes that I think go a long way to making a strong statement with respect to the President's proposed strategy of increasing troops in Iraq.

I thank the Senator from Virginia for offering this resolution as modified so we can proceed and embark on the deliberations that not only consistently are the traditions of this institution but also are consistent with the views of the people of this country that this issue, which is the preeminent one of our time, deserves a full and open debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I thank our distinguished colleague from Maine. I share her views, as I expressed them with our leader here, that it was certainly always the intention of the Senator from Virginia that this matter should be kept in a resolution status, thereby precluding any necessity for the President to become involved in the sense of a legislative process. I feel confident that what we have put forth are recommendations—not orders to the President, not contravening the President's constitutional authority in any way, but they are the heartfelt thoughts of Senators as to how there could be further modifications in the new strategy in such a way as to hopefully lower the profile of the United States Armed Forces in the Baghdad operation and, thereby, hopefully, wherever possible, not inject them into this sectarian violence which can be better handled by the Iraqis, who understand the Iraqis, who have a far better understanding of the cultural dif-

ferences that give rise to so much of this sectarian strife today. I am optimistic that can come to pass and we can treat this in the resolution status and that Senators can work their free will. There may be ideas far better than what I have embraced in this resolution, together with my colleagues, Senator COLLINS and Senator BEN NELSON. We are open to ideas. It is best that those ideas be exhibited right here on the Senate floor in full view of all to determine their merit.

I thank my colleague. I am honored the Senator sees fit to join us as a cosponsor.

Ms. SNOWE. I want to express my appreciation to the Senator from Virginia, because I do think this resolution reinforces the position of those of us who oppose the troop surge. I couldn't agree with the Senator more about the concerns we have involving the sectarian strife, particularly at a time in which the Iraqi Government has not demonstrated the political resoluteness to confront its own militias, to disarm and demobilize them, to proceed with a political process that would advance in unifying the country. That is long overdue. The time has come for the Iraqi Government and its people to step up and assume those responsibilities. That is why I had for the last few months the deep concern about the increase in the level of troops at a time in which sectarian strife has enveloped the country.

It is time for the Iraqi Government, the Iraqi Army to begin to proceed to take responsibility for the internal problems that are developing. We obviously should move in a different direction and place the pressure on them to do what is right.

Mr. WARNER. I thank our colleague. I also note the Senator from Maine was present on the floor in the course of the colloquy between the distinguished Senator from Nevada, Mr. REID, and our distinguished leader, Mr. MCCONNELL. I think they are both working to-

ward trying to find the basis on which this matter can be treated as a resolution, which has been my desire from the first. I believe the Senator shares that view very strongly.

Ms. SNOWE. Absolutely. And I have indicated that concern about introducing this resolution in the form of a bill. I also understand that at some point that bill would obviously be converted to a resolution. But I think we should proceed in regular order and have a full and open debate, as the Senator from Virginia has recommended. I think that is consistent with the traditions and practices of the Senate. And certainly this issue is deserving of open debate for the American people.

Mr. WARNER. I thank the Senator. I am glad she, once again, pointed out that if it were to go into bill status, there is a point in time when I—and I presume you would join me—and others would move to try and have that bill status once again returned to the resolution status before any final action on this or other measures that may come before the Senate in this debate. Senator MCCONNELL all along to all his colleagues has said, me included, that he wanted to try to provide an opportunity for as many viewpoints to be heard, either by resolution or by amendment, as possible.

I also note the Presiding Officer was an original cosponsor on the resolution that I and Senator NELSON and Senator COLLINS put forward.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 1, 2007.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:27 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 1, 2007, at 10 a.m.