

Just try to talk to the people in the region so we can find some common solutions.

I know it is not going to be easy. It will be very difficult. But I know of no other alternative—no other alternative—but to give them a date and say: we are out of here; by this certain date we are going to start repositioning troops elsewhere in the region. We should tell them that so they sober up more—not just Prime Minister Maliki but the other principals in the country—and realize they have to start getting their act together. As I said, we need to have some very serious negotiations with groups in the region and also with countries in the region so we can manage the situation as best we possibly can.

This is one of the most serious issues I have confronted since I have been in the Senate in the last several years, and I commend my colleagues for addressing it so seriously. It is the right thing to do. But it is also the right thing to do to start debating this issue in the Senate. I think we will be doing the country a great service if we do.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I ask unanimous consent that for the next 30 minutes, I be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes and that Senator KYL be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes and Senator THOMAS be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

IRAQ

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to oppose the resolution, S. 574, the Senate will vote in relation to tomorrow. This resolution states simply that:

No. 1, Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq; and No. 2, Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional U.S. combat troops to Iraq.

Mr. President, the first paragraph of that resolution is a commendable one and one every Member of this body should support, and will. However, the second paragraph is simply inconsistent with a vote every Member has already made and should be opposed by every Member of this body. Therefore, the resolution as a whole should be opposed.

Exactly 3 weeks ago, on January 26, the Senate unanimously approved GEN David Petraeus for his fourth star and to be commander of multinational forces in Iraq. No Senator opposed his nomination. In my 12 years in the Con-

gress, I do not think I have seen Members of Congress express any higher confidence or support for a nominee for any position than they have for GEN David Petraeus. I have not heard anyone criticize him, and rightly so.

In his nomination hearing, when asked about his opinion of the President's plan for Iraq that he now has the responsibility of executing, General Petraeus said:

I believe this plan can succeed if, in fact, all of those enablers and all the rest of the assistance is in fact provided.

General Petraeus supports this plan. Now, the same Senate that voted unanimously to confirm General Petraeus is going to vote on whether they agree with the plan he supports and that they confirmed him to execute. That vote has not been taken yet, so obviously we don't know the outcome.

Some people would like to mislead the American people into thinking that Republicans are opposed to debating Iraq and the various resolutions in Iraq. In fact, Republicans welcome that debate, and that is why many of us are here today. However, Republicans rightfully oppose the Democrats' dictating what resolutions can be considered.

If Senators truly disapprove of this decision, they should be willing to vote for or against a resolution that clearly expresses their convictions, and that is exactly what Senator GREGG's resolution does. However, Democrats are not willing to do that. Senator GREGG's resolution expresses the sense of the Congress that:

No funds should be cut off or reduced from American troops in the field which would result in undermining their safety or ability to complete their assigned missions.

If Senators truly do not support the mission we are sending General Petraeus and our men and women in uniform to carry out, then they should be willing to have an up-or-down vote on the Gregg resolution.

For the record, let me restate my position on the proposed troop increase. Several weeks ago, President Bush addressed the situation in Iraq before the American people, and everyone was anxious to hear his plans for a new strategy. It is clear that Americans want a victory in Iraq; however, they do not want our presence there to be open-ended. I agree, and most importantly, I believe it is time for the Iraqi Government to step up and take responsibility. They need to take control of their country, both militarily and politically. I believe the Iraqis must deliver on their promises.

I come from a strong and proud military State, home to 13 military installations, and our service men and women have answered the call of duty and performed courageously. No one questions our troops' performance and unwavering commitment, and we will continue to support them. Many of our troops, including the 3rd Infantry Division based at Fort Stewart, GA, and

Fort Benning, GA, are preparing to head overseas, some for their third tour of duty in Iraq, as we speak today.

The President's decision to send additional combat brigades to Baghdad and Anbar Province in western Iraq is aimed at defeating the insurgency in those areas and increasing stability for the Iraqi people. However, we must also see an increased commitment from the Iraqis. This is also part of the new strategy, and I am committed to holding the administration and the Iraqis accountable in this area. Those of us in Congress have a responsibility to ask questions and seek answers on behalf of the American people when our strategy and tactics are not getting the job done.

I have expressed my concern and frustration with progress on the part of the Iraqis not only to the President and the White House advisers but to our military leadership testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee as well. In my conversations with the White House and with the Department of Defense leadership, I have made it clear that my support of any increase in troops is conditioned upon those troops being sent on a specific mission and upon the completion of that mission that they should be redeployed.

I firmly believe that just a large increase in troops without having a specific mission will only increase insurgent opposition and that a withdrawal of U.S. forces at this time would be detrimental to Iraq's security and extremely dangerous for American soldiers. That particular issue has been affirmed by every single individual in the U.S. military testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee. Failure in Iraq will result in expanded and intensified conflict in the Middle East, and that kind of instability is clearly not in the best interests of America or the international community.

Now that the President has taken serious steps to admit his mistakes, take responsibility, and revise the strategy, Americans do seek positive results. It has been said by many of my colleagues, as well as many of my own constituents, that the situation in Iraq requires a political and not a military solution. I strongly agree with that position. However, it is not possible, in my opinion, to have a political solution or to make political progress if citizens are afraid to leave their homes for fear of being shot or kidnaped or if they are afraid to let their children go to school because it is unsafe to do so. Some level of order and stability must be in place before a political solution can take hold.

In America, we take order and stability for granted because we are blessed to live in a country that is extremely safe, secure, and stable. However, Iraq is not the same as the United States. They do not live in a secure and stable society, and order and stability must be in place before there can be