Iraq, then he is miles away from the will of the American people whom he serves.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wisconsin is recognized. Only 1 minute remains on the Democratic side.

IRAQ SUPPLEMENTAL CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I strongly oppose President Bush’s statements that the Democratic leaders are trying to use the current emergency supplemental bill to make a political statement. Congress is acting on its mandate from the American people, who used their votes last November to register their opposition to the war in Iraq.

The President has repeatedly made it clear that nothing—not the wishes of the American people, not the advice of military foreign policy experts, not the concerns of members of both parties—will discourage him from pursuing a war that has no end in sight and that has no military solution. With her, heroic troops stuck in an Iraqi civil war, Congress must now act for the President to change course. We must change the course ourselves.

Once again, President Bush is staffing for time as he threatens to veto a bipartisan bill that could finally change the course in Iraq.

Although the conference report does not go far enough to end American involvement in Iraq, it requires the President to begin redeploying U.S. troops from Iraq, while permitting troops to remain in Iraq for defined and narrow purposes: To protect U.S. personnel and facilities, to engage in “targeted special actions” against al-Qaida and their affiliates, and to train and equip Iraqi forces. The vast majority of our troops would have to be redeployed, thus bringing to an end our current involvement in what may be the greatest foreign policy blunder in American history.

Some of my colleagues may still feel we should defer to the Commander in Chief. But these arguments disregard our congressional responsibilities. Congress authorized this war and we have the power and the responsibility to bring it to a close.

We have a responsibility to end a war that is taking away resources from our top national security priority—the global fight against al-Qaida and its affiliates. Let me remind my colleagues that this is indeed a global fight—for cusing so much of our resources on one country against an enemy that operates around the world is shortsighted and self-defeating.

I am not suggesting that we leave the Iraqis to their own devices. There are many serious and troubling political problems in Iraq that are driving the insurgency and sectarian struggle and they require the attention of U.S. policymakers. But they will not be solved by an open-ended, massive military engagement.

Instead, we need a strategic approach to realignment and a global strategy to defeat the threats posed by terrorist networks. As the President’s Iraq policy goes unchecked, our military will continue to put their lives on the line unnecessarily, our constituents will continue to pour billions of their dollars into this war, our military readiness will continue to erode, and we will be unable to develop a strategy to truly confront al-Qaida.

If the President vetoes this bill, he will be rejecting the wishes of the American people and the imperatives of our national security. I will oppose any efforts to send a weaker bill to the President’s desk and I will continue to speak out on this issue until the voices of the American people are finally heard in Congress and the White House.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, we have 30 minutes; is that correct?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct, there is 30 minutes remaining.

Mr. GRAHAM. Would the Presiding Officer inform me when 10 minutes have passed?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator will be notified.

IRAQ WAR SUPPLEMENTAL

Mr. GRAHAM. The President will veto this measure. He should. It is one of the worst ideas to ever come out of the Congress in the history of warfare that the United States has ever been engaged in. It sets a date for withdrawal. I think it is October. It intrudes on the President’s Commander in Chief role. It is letting the enemy know exactly what they have to do in terms of date and time to win in Iraq. Everyone who dies waiting will still die, what have they died for? What have they been injured for?

What I would like to point out is that we should talk about those who have lost their lives in Iraq wearing the uniform, and civilians included, who have been serving our country. But we shouldn’t use their deaths as a reason to withdraw from a war we can’t afford to lose—and we have not lost. We should be honoring their service and their sacrifice, because they are standing for our national security interests. Why do they serve? Why do they go to Iraq? Why do they keep reenlisting in the Iraqi theater and the Afghan theater at a higher rate than the military as a whole? What do they see about Iraq that people here in the Senate are blinded to? Why would they keep going back to a war they believe is lost? Why would they go three and four times? Why would they keep deploying beyond any other group in the military?

Because they know after having gone that if we win in Iraq, their children, their grandchildren, the Nation as a whole is more secure. And if we lose in Iraq, the war is not over. It just gets bigger, and the likelihood of their children being involved in a war in the Middle East goes up, not down. So that is why they are not withdrawing. That is why enlistments are up, not down, because they get it.

The Senate doesn’t get it. The Democratic leadership doesn’t get it at all. Blinded by a dislike of this President, they can’t see clearly what is going on in Iraq. Whether we should have gone or not is over; we are there. There are other people who are there who would like to win this war. Al-Qaida is there in large numbers, trying to kill this infant democracy, because they know if a democracy can flourish in Iraq, their agenda has taken a mighty blow.

How are they trying to drive us out? By killing civilians and coalition forces in as large a number as they can make it.

So is it going to be the foreign policy of the United States when it comes to fighting terrorism that if they can kill enough of us—whatever that magic number is—we leave? You win? Do you think for one moment declaring Iraq a success will make us safe from the kind of terrorist violence in Iraq, but there are plenty of people of the Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish persuasions that want the same thing for Iraq that we want. There are Shia extremists who want to align with Iran. There are Sunni extremists who want to come back in power and have the good old days of Saddam. They are in the minority. There is not open civil war in this country. There are extremist groups representing the Sunni and the Shia sects that are trying to change Iraq for their purposes, bend Iraq to their will, against the majority of Iraqis, and in the middle of these sects is al-Qaida. In the middle of these sects is Iran.

Iraq is playing so hard in Iraq. The biggest nightmare to this Iranian theocracy would be a democracy on their border, where different groups would live together, where a woman could have a say about her children, where people could vote for their leaders, not be dictated to from on high.

That is why they are playing in Iraq. That is why al-Qaida is there.

The question is, Why do we want to leave? It is tough to watch young Americans killed in the war. We can’t start this war. War is inevitably about young people getting hurt and getting killed. That is why the world—after so many thousands of years, it seems as if mankind would have learned that war is not the way, but we haven’t learned that lesson as mankind. The people who attacked us on September 11, 2001, there will never be a surrender document negotiated with them.

It is not just about replacing a dictator who was trying to make a joke of U.N. inspections, trying to make the world and his neighbors believe that he was acquiring weapons of mass destruction.
It was a dictatorship that was sending money to suicide bomber families in Palestine. It was a dictatorship that was making everything in the Middle East harder. It was a dictatorship that was shooting at American airplanes everywhere in the world. It was a dictatorship that was making it impossible for the United States to defend itself against the threats of U.N. resolutions. It was a dictatorship that is now in the ash dump of history. From this dictatorship we are trying to do something new and different for the Middle East, and it will inure to our benefit going forward.

We know who the winners are, the ex-Saddamites. This is the 1930s all over again. We are doubling the size of the combat capability in Baghdad, and it is working. Mr. President, 16 of the 21 sheikhs in Anbar Province.objected to al-Qaida and aligned with us. Six months ago, Al Anbar Province, where the Sunnis live, I would have written this. But now it is the greatest success story of the new strategy. We are still losing people in Anbar, but we are fighting along with the sheikhs to combat al-Qaida because they have seen what al-Qaida holds for them and they have said, no, they don’t want to live under the al-Qaida banner. They have tasted it and it doesn’t taste well. They are coming this way.

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