Those are not my words. That is what Golden Mosque in Samarra.

between Shia and Sunni is a result of the United States invaded and has not be divorced from its context—the same grievances. Iraq has a history of violence with its neighbors, which has fostered desires for vengeance and fomented constant clashes. Iraq shares resources and its neighbors' covet—oil being the most obvious, but important religious shrines also figure in the mix. There is a high degree of commerce and communication between Iraq and its neighbors, and its borders are porous. All of this suggests that spillover from an Iraqi civil war would tend toward the more dangerous and unstable region. The Brookings Institution—no big supporter of the President, I would add—argues, in their study, that:

Iraq appears to have many of the conditions most conducive to spillover because there is a high degree of foreign ‘interest’ in Iraq. Ethnic, tribal, and religious troops within Iraq are equally prevalent in neighboring countries and they share many of the same grievances. Iraq has a history of violence with its neighbors, which has fostered desires for vengeance and fomented constant clashes. Iraq shares resources and its neighbors' covet—oil being the most obvious, but important religious shrines also figure in the mix. There is a high degree of commerce and communication between Iraq and its neighbors, and its borders are porous. All of this suggests that spillover from an Iraqi civil war would tend toward the more dangerous and unstable region. The Brookings Institution—no big supporter of the President, I would add—argues, in their study, that:

Failure in Iraq will encourage further attacks against the United States and provide a base from which to plan and train for attacks. I must remind my friends, if you are going to push this legislation through, the strategy for defeat, you have a responsibility to tell the American people what the consequences will be and to tell them how you would respond. These are the burdens of being in the majority. These are the burdens of making the difficult decisions we make in this body.

I urge my colleagues to work together to develop a supplemental appropriations bill that President Bush can quickly sign, that will get the job done and give us the chance to give the strategy a chance to succeed so that the horrible consequences I have described will not be the result of our actions.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore, The Senator from Tennessee.

AMERICA COMPETES ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, last week, while the media covered Iraq and U.S. attorneys, the Senate spent 3 days debating and passing perhaps the most important piece of legislation of this 2-year session. Almost no one noticed. The America COMPETES Act, which was the name of the legislation, authorized $60 billion over 4 years to the introduction of the final proposal, and presented us with 20 specific recommendations to encourage the National Academy of Sciences task force that the United States successfully compete, prosper and be secure in the global community of the 21st century?

The Academy’s 21-member task force, headed by former Lockheed Martin chairman and CEO Norm Augustine and including 3 Nobel laureates, gave up their summer, reviewed hundreds of proposals, and presented us with 20 specific recommendations in response to our question. These 20 recommendations, along with the work of the Council on Competitiveness and the President’s ideas, gave us something to work with other than pet projects of various Members of Congress.

The second lesson is that bipartisanship is possible, even on complex issues. From the framing of the question to the introduction of the final legislation by the majority and minority leader, every effort was bipartisan. Mr. President, I am one of those that went to see President Bush, he invited Senator BINGAMAN, a Democrat, to go, as well as me, a Republican. Staffs worked so closely together that no one could say whether it was a Republican bill or a Democratic bill. And, finally, the last lesson is that, unfortunately, bipartisan success, even on the biggest, most complex issues, has an excellent chance of remaining a secret. Despite the size of the accomplishment, the votes of the 208-page America COMPETES Act were barely noticed by the major media. This is not a complaint, merely an observation. More than ever, the media,
outside interest groups, and party structures reward conflict and the taking of irreconcilable positions. There is little reward for reconciling principled positions into legislation.

Here is another example: The work of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group was consigned almost immediately to the shelf as a bookend. Somewhere, there is a letter to President Bush from 10 Senators, 5 from each party, offering to work together with him to help every American have affordable health insurance.

Although there is not much attention paid to this kind of legislative activity, I am convinced the American people and most Senators are hungry for it. I believe the last election was as much about the conduct of business in Washington, DC, as it was about the conduct of the war in Iraq. Americans are tired of what they perceive as Senators playing petty, kindergarten partisan games while there are big issues that remain unsolved by one party alone. Americans know we need a political solution to Iraq in Washington, DC, as much as we need one in Baghdad.

The irony is that last week’s culmination of 2 years of work on the America COMPETES Act demonstrates that the Senate is capable of tackling big, complex issues in a bipartisan way, but that we will have to look beyond the influences of the media, special interest groups, and the political party apparatus for encouragement to do it. Virtue, as ever, will be its own reward.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. 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. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator Webb be recognized following me for a period of 15 minutes in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator Webb be recognized following me for a period of 15 minutes in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ FUNDING

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, there is a lot of discussion today, and has been in the last week or two, and perhaps there will continue to be discussions about the funding for our troops in Iraq. I think it is important to say that the Congress has passed legislation that will go to the President that actually requests more funding than the President requested for the troops in Iraq. It also establishes a goal of hope that perhaps we will be able to extract our troops from Iraq in a year. There is not a requirement that American troops be pulled out of Iraq. It establishes a goal of hope to talk about today is the part of the bill that provides a higher level of funding for the troops than the President requested.

It is regrettable that in this country we have gone to war in Iraq and to war in Afghanistan. We have asked very much of our soldiers to go into harm’s way—3,300 plus of them have been killed in Iraq—but we have not asked for similar circumstances from the American people. We have not asked for a commitment from the American people. In fact, the very funding the President has requested, once again, as emergency funding is not paid for. The President says: Let’s have emergency funding and add it to the debt. We have not asked the American people to pay for the war. We sent the soldiers to war with the understanding that when they come back, they will inherit the debt and pay for this war. That doesn’t make sense to me.

Even more than that, the President says one can contribute to this country by going shopping, going to the mall. So we send soldiers to war, and we go to the mall. Where is the national commitment? Where is it that we have asked the American people to go to war against terrorism, to go to war in Iraq with the American soldiers?

I remind everyone that what we did in the Second World War—and by the way, this war has now lasted longer than the Second World War. But in the Second World War, our country mobilized. There was Rosie the Riveter. There were three shifts at the manufacturing plants. We had our capability humming in this country producing everything we needed for that war. We had rationing. We had factory lights on 24 hours a day.

William Manchester wrote a book, “The Glory and the Dream.” He describes what we did. He said this:

From an initial keel-to-delivery time of over 200 days, Henry Kaiser cut the average work time on a liberty ship to 40 days. In 1944, he was launching a new escort aircraft carrier every week, and they were turning out entire cargo ships. During the first 212 days of 1945, they completed 247 cargo ships, better than one a day.

We had this country’s productive capacity revved up full speed. When Stalin met with FDR and Churchill in the mid-1940s between the two World Wars, he is reported to have said: Thank God for America’s productive capability, America’s manufacturing capability.

Here is what they did. Manchester, in “The Glory and the Dream,” described this. I want us to think about this just for a moment. From 1941 to 1945. We went to war. In the last year of the Second World War, we were producing 4,000 warplanes a month in our factories. Contrast that with what is happening today.

The reason I ask these questions, the reason I come to the floor to ask those questions, is because of this picture. This is a picture of something called an MRAP, Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle, which is much safer than the humvee. This version of the MRAP is what the Commandant of the Marine Corps said we need in Iraq, 6,700 of them.

There have been 300 IED attacks in Iraq against this version of the MRAP. Not one death. Let me say that again. There have been 300 attacks by an IED against this vehicle in Iraq; not one death in those attacks.

We have had 3,342 U.S. troops killed in Iraq, 70 percent of them caused by IEDs, improvised explosive devices. The Commandant of the Marine Corps says this version of the MRAP will save three-fourths of the lives that are being lost. Eighty percent of the casualties from IEDs will be saved with this safer vehicle.

Why do I raise this question in the context of what we did in the Second World War? Because we have been producing about 45 of these vehicles a month. At a time when the Commandant of the Marine Corps says we need 6,700, why are we still production IEDs; not one death. Let me say that again. They say they want 6,700 in Iraq, and the President has requested less than a third of that amount. We wrote money in this appropriations bill, $1.2 billion, to substantially increase the number of MRAP vehicles that must be produced and must be sent to Iraq to save lives.

Let me read, if I might, James Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps, understanding I am talking about this MRAP:

The MRAP vehicle has a dramatically better record of preventing fatal and serious injuries from attacks by IEDs. The Commander of Multinational Force West estimates that the use of MRAP could reduce the casualties in vehicles due to IED attacks by as much as 80 percent.

This is from the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Why is it we could produce 4,000 warplanes a month at the end of the Second World War in support of our fighting men and women, and we produce 45 MRAPs a month in this country? Why is it we surge our troops on to the mall. Why is it we surge our troops there? Why is this less important? I don’t understand this at all. We go to war. It is just the troops, not the country?

There was a story in USA Today, April 19: