The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tem. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this week a historic discussion began between Congress and the White House about the way forward in Iraq. On Wednesday, a meeting occurred between the President and congressional leadership following the President’s veto of a spending bill that would have made America more secure, fully funded the troops, and changed the course in Iraq. It has taken almost 4½ years, but it appears the President finally is willing to consider what most Americans and Members of Congress have long known, that we must change course in Iraq and move toward a strategy that will make our country more secure.

It took 6 years and 3 months for the President to accept Congress as a co-equal branch of Government. Prior to last Wednesday, the President basically had ignored the constitutionally framed equal branch of Government, the legislative branch. From that perspective, it was a positive step forward.

During the first 6 years of this congressional term, the President basically ignored us. There was a big rubber stamp. Anything the Republican Congress thought the President wanted, they gave him. But yesterday, the mindset changed and I met with the President’s Chief of Staff Josh Bolton and the Majority Leader and I met with the President to accept Congress as a co-equal branch of Government. Prior to last Wednesday, the President basically had ignored the constitutionally framed equal branch of Government, the legislative branch. From that perspective, it was a positive step forward.

But the worst, [his wife] said, were the things. He was treated for major depression related to incident attending school, and 70 percent are suffering from symptoms of trauma and statistics to highlight the failures and high stakes of the war. We must also remember that behind each of these numbers—104 deaths during the month of April—is a personal story.

I noticed in the first week he wasn’t sleeping . . . he started to get a little snappy . . . he started crying and started throwing things.

We throw around a lot of numbers and statistics to highlight the failures and high stakes of the war. We must also remember that behind each of these numbers—104 deaths during the month of April—is a personal story.

Yesterday, a Las Vegas newspaper published an article about a 26-year-old Nevadan named John Shoup. After surviving 7 months in Iraq, John returned home to Nevada without apparent physical injury. Many of his friends in the Senate believe strongly that a change of course in Iraq strategy is needed, one that holds the administration accountable for real results. I know many of my Republican friends in the Senate believe strongly that a change of course in Iraq strategy is needed, one that holds the administration and the Iraqis accountable for real results. I know many of my Republican friends intend to be part of that solution on the way forward. I look forward to working with them, as I have the last few weeks. Work has been short, and we will work to reach agreement on a bill that fully funds the troops while providing a responsible new course that makes America more secure and leads to an early end to America’s involvement in the Iraq civil war.

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John told his wife about the four roadside bomb attacks he survived.

The article goes on to say, among other things:

"The President to change the mission, to doing everything we can to get the President to change the mission, to transition the mission in Iraq. Fifty-one months of what happened in Iraq has not been good for the country, certainly not good for the world.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the article from the Las Vegas Review-Journal. There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From reviewjournal.com, May 2, 2007]

IRAQ DEPLOYMENT CHANGED SOLDIER: POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER DELAYS RETURN

(By Keith Rogers)

When Army Spc. John Shoup came home on leave two months ago after serving seven months in Iraq, he wasn’t the same man his wife, Lori, had known since they married four years ago. “We noticed he was very different,” Lori Shoup said Monday, sitting on the porch of their Las Vegas condominium not far from where fighter jets take off from Nellis Air Force Base. “He started to get a little snappy and stuff . . . He told me he didn’t want to talk about it.” But John and Lori Shoup and all Americans deserve to know what our resolve to change course in Iraq will be. Our course cannot be one to waiver from doing everything we can to get the President to change the mission, to transition the mission in Iraq. Fifty-one months of what happened in Iraq has not been good for the country, certainly not good for the world.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the article from the Las Vegas Review-Journal. There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From reviewjournal.com, May 2, 2007]
Baghdad had set in. "He started crying and started throwing things," she said about her 26-year-old husband from Frackville, Pa.

Lori Shoup got a call from her 8-year-old daughter, Emily, from a previous marriage. "That really upset him. It was as if they didn't care."

With his mental problems persisting, John Shoup met with doctors at O'Callaghan Federal Hospital at Nellis Air Force Base. Doctors told him the same thing: "How's that different from the way you normally act? That really upset him. It was as if they didn't care."

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Her husband, Joseph Godlewski, a retired Army staff sergeant, has been trying to help his overseas unit, noting, "I believe that our job is done there. . . . I believe that our troops are doing a lot of good there. I back our soldiers 100 percent. I've heard it referred to as a modern-day Vietnam. I think getting uglier and uglier. It's really unfortunate because our society is going to suffer from it because there's a lot of fathers and sons and brothers who will never return. And some will never return the same people they were when they left."

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The THE ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The THE ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

YOUTHS AND FIREARMS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, often discussions about combating gun violence center around preventing criminal access to dangerous firearms. Another important component of the issue is the ability of our children and teenagers to access firearms. Most fatal firearm incidences occur when children and teens discover loaded and unsecured firearms in homes. Since 1997, accidental shootings and suicides have claimed the lives of thousands of young people. Sadly, many of these tragedies could have been prevented through common sense gun legislation.

On April 14, two 14-year-old boys were playing in one of their homes in Iosco Township, MI, when they found an unlocked .45-caliber handgun. After playing with it for a short time, the gun went off. The two boys were home alone, so no adult was aware of what happened until one of the boys called 911 and uttered the words, "I shot him." The other boy was pronounced dead after being airlifted to the University of Michigan Medical Center.

The very next day not far away in Battle Creek, MI, a 19-year-old accidentally shot and killed his 17-year-old best friend and cousin. The two were sitting on a couch in the living room, playing with an unregistered gun. They had removed the gun's clip but were not aware of the single bullet remaining in the chamber.

These are two examples of the misery gun violence can inflict. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have released some staggering statistics on gun-related deaths among young people:

In 2002 a child or teen was killed in a firearm-related accident or suicide every 9 hours.

On average, four children died every day in non-homicide firearm incidents between 1999–2002. From 1997–2002, more than 1,324 children were killed in firearm incidents. In 2004, 13,846 kids were injured by a firearm.

Over the last 10 years, an average of 1,213 kids committed suicide with a firearm each year; on average more than 135 each year were under the age of 15.

The overall firearm-related death rate among U.S. children under the age of 15 was nearly 12 times higher than among children in 25 other industrialized countries combined.

As adults, parents and grandparents, we have a responsibility to protect our children from gun-related deaths. Trigger locks and other sensible gun safety measures can have a significant impact. I urge my colleagues to wait no longer to act on such measures.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN MEMORY—ARTHUR H. GUENTHER, PH.D.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I note the passing away of Dr. Art Guenther on April 21, 2007.

Art Guenther was born April 18, 1931, in Hoboken, NJ. As a kid he loved the outdoors and became New Jersey's youngest Eagle Scout. He wanted to be a forest ranger and hoped to attend a college with a good forestry program, but those schools didn't accept out-of-state students. A teacher had noticed Guenther's aptitude in math and he got him into Rutgers. There he majored in chemistry, earning his bachelor's degree in 1953.

As a grad student at Penn State, he wanted to pursue optics. His thesis advisor asked, "Why optics? The cream is gone," meaning all the good research had been done. Guenther persisted, receiving his Ph.D. in chemistry and physics in 1957. He joined the Air Force and was sent to Kirtland Air Force Base. His mother wondered why they were sending him out of the country on his first assignment. After serving 2 years, he left the Air Force and became a civilian employee and a New Mexican for the remainder of his life. His optics work would pay off in 1960, after the very first demonstration of the Air Force, he established a laser program and later became chief scientist of the Air Force Weapons Lab, a