Mr. President, it is my understanding the debate will

start with our side. I encourage all Members who wish to be heard on

our side on any of these resolutions to come to the floor and be heard.

Let me share some thoughts. This is a rather awkward situation we

find ourselves in because we are debating three resolutions

concurrently. Frankly, one of the three I have not even seen yet, so it

is very difficult to debate something you have never seen. But I do

know from the past discussions the type of concerns people have, the

differences between, quite frankly, the Republican side and the

Democratic side. I know it is not right down party lines, but let me

share some concerns I have and some thoughts I have.

We heard from several Senators who expressed their concern over our

micromanaging the war from this body and from the body of the other

side. Five hundred and thirty-five people cannot be Commanders in

Chief. It seems as if that is what is happening. Also, I observe, and I

am only speaking for myself, that this thing has become highly

politicized. When the war first started,

the whole idea of weapons of mass destruction was the media trying to

make us believe that is what it was all about, but that isn't what it

was all about.

I was on the Senate Armed Services Committee during that time, both

before and after 9/11, and I observed what was going on. I observed

what was going on in Iraq for a long period of time. I had the honor

back in 1991 of going to Kuwait on what they called at that time the

``First Freedom Flight.'' There were Democrats and Republicans on that

flight. We were the first ones to land in Kuwait. The Iraqis didn't

even know the war was over at that time, and the oilfields were burning

in Kuwait. I remember Tony Coelho was one of the Democrats who was on

the trip, and Alexandria Hague was one of the Republicans on the trip.

He also had the Ambassador from Kuwait to the United States and his

daughter on the trip, going back for the first time to Kuwait to see

what damage was done by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait City. I remember so

well--I don't recall the age of the daughter; maybe she was about 8

years old. I remember so well that when we landed, the oil fields were

burning, Iraqis were still fighting, not knowing there had been an

agreement and fires should have ceased by that time. They were still

shooting at each other. When it calmed down, we went to their home.

Keep in mind the Ambassador to the United States from Kuwait was of

nobility and he had a daughter with women. They had a mansion on the

Persian Gulf, a beautiful place. We got there in time to see that their

house had been used as one of the headquarters of Saddam Hussein. His

young daughter wanted to see her bedroom, her stuffed animals and

things girls want to see. We found out her room had been used for a

torture chamber. There were body parts stuck to the walls, human hair

and hands, where the torturing had been taking place.

I think sometimes people forget about how bad this guy was. We hear a

lot about Adolf Hitler, and this guy was certainly the worst since the

brutality of Auschwitz and Hitler and, of course, the Holocaust. If you

had been there and looked down and seen the bodies in the open graves,

if you heard the testimony from others whose daughters could not get

married because they could not have weddings on the streets of Baghdad

because, if they did, people would come in, the Iraqis, and Saddam

Hussein's sons would come in and mob everybody and they would kill

people and take the pretty girls and rape them and bury them alive.

These atrocities that took place were inconceivable to people.

You don't hear about this in the media. They say they didn't find

weapons of mass destruction. Well, you know, that is a moot point.

There were weapons of mass destruction because they used weapons of

mass destruction. They used them in the northern parts of Iraq. Saddam

Hussein brutally, painfully murdered his own people, and the types of

gases used in these weapons of mass destruction were the most painful

kind that would torture people to death, burn them from the inside out.

All the time this was happening, we heard testimonials about how Saddam

Hussein was treating his people he thought perhaps were his enemies and

didn't follow him after the war in 1991, and how they would put people

to death, torture them, and drop them into vats of oil. The victims

would be praying that they would put them in head first because their

life would be over sooner. It was the same with the massive machines--

like what we call shredders in this country--where they would shred the

live bodies of these individuals. They used the most brutal types of

torture imaginable.

I thought once they get Saddam Hussein and once he is disposed of and

is dead, people will realize this monster is not coming back.

Unfortunately, there are other monsters who would take up the mantle.

These things have gone undiscussed, unnoticed. Even if there had not

been weapons of mass destruction--which there were, because they used

them, either chemical or biological, which is just as cruel as nuclear,

and effective, and it kills many people. Even if that had not been the

case, America could not stand by and watch that type of thing

happening.

I have had the honor of going back more times than any other Member

of the Senate. I will be going next week. It will be my 13th trip to

the area of responsibility in Iraq. Each time I come back, after seeing

the progress that is being made, I read the newspapers, the press

accounts, and there is no relationship between reality and the press

accounts we get.

I had the honor of being in Fallujah during a couple of the

elections. The Iraqi security forces--people are not aware of this, but

they allowed them to vote a day in advance of the normal voting that

took place. I was purposely at a couple of these elections in Fallujah

because that was where the problems were supposed to exist. That is

where our marines were. They conducted door to door and they did

incredible and great work at that time. The Iraqi security forces were

the first to go down and vote. I remember one night having them come

back and talk about the threats that had been made on their lives. Some

were shot during the process. They were willing to risk their lives to

vote and then to help the people vote the next day. The next day, the

other Iraqis came to vote. We all heard about the fingerprinting and

holding up with pride their stained finger, which would be a death

sentence on individuals. In this country, when such a small percentage

of the people vote, and we look at those who are willing to risk their

lives, I think how dear that privilege is and how we do not appreciate

it as we should.

Anyway, they voted and, of course, they knew when they were going to

vote, they would be in harm's way, and many were shot. There are heroic

stories of Iraqis going to vote where they would lay down their lives

and get in the line of fire to save somebody else. So these were

experiences that we had, the real reasons for being there.

As we approach these resolutions--I see my friend from Missouri is

here and I will soon yield to him whatever time he asks. As we discuss

the resolutions, I want people to keep in mind the one thing those of

us who believe the generals are more capable of running this war than

are the individuals in this body, the 535 Members of the House and

Senate--and of the 535, many of them want to be Commander in Chief;

many are running. The generals make these decisions.

At this time, I ask my friend from Missouri how much time he wishes.

Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Missouri. A lot

of people don't know it, but his family has made a personal sacrifice

in their efforts in this war. We appreciate that very much. The Senator

from Missouri outlined the consequences of surrender in a very

articulate way.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that any quorum calls during

the debate on the Iraq resolutions be equally divided.

Mr. President, I see no speakers on the other side, so I

will elaborate on my remarks. I appreciate the fact that the Senator

from Missouri talked about specifically what would be the consequences

of timelines or withdrawal. I can speak from personal experience,

having spent time in Iraq. As I mentioned before, I plan to take my

13th trip to AOR in a couple of weeks. I believe what is not understood

by people who are debating these resolutions is some of the good things

about the Iraqi security forces.

I had the honor of being in Iraq when some of the new leadership took

office. I remember Dr. Rubaie, who is the National Security Adviser,

and Dr. Jassim--I believe he was the Minister of Defense at that time--

they articulated in a very effective way that most of the differences

between the two major factors over there were Western concepts, were

Western ideas. It appeared to me that was the case.

As we debate these resolutions, we need to remember how we got in

there in the first place. Remember what happened prior to 1991,

remember the monstrous commissions that were made by Saddam Hussein and

the number of people, the volumes of people who died tragic, painful

deaths.

As far as the Iraqi security forces are concerned, it is pretty

obvious to me that these individuals want to be in charge. I get the

idea, when I listen to some of the people on the other side, that the

Iraqi security forces somehow are inferior, somehow they don't have the

knowledge and the capability, the potential to become great fighters.

Yet when I talk with them, they are the ones who are anxious to get

themselves in a position where they are going to be carrying the load

for us.

The whole idea of the embedded training is that we put our people in

the rear to advise the Iraqis on what to do and to train them while

they are actually embedded and fighting with them. This has worked very

effectively. It has been effective.

I happened to be there at a time when in one of the training areas

for Iraqi security forces, there was an explosion. Some 40 were killed.

What the people over here don't understand is the commitment the

Iraqis have to their own security. It happens that 40 families of those

who were killed in this blast all supplied another member of their

family to go in and carry the load for the deceased trainee.

These individuals are committed. They are as anxious as we are to get

to the point where they have the capability of offering the security

against the terrorists. From time to time, they have gotten that way.

There was a time when the entire western one-third of Baghdad was under

security control by the Iraqis themselves. They were just not in a

position to sustain that control.

We saw the commitment the Iraqis had in Fallujah, when a general who

had been the brigade commander for Saddam Hussein--this guy hated

Americans; he was a brigade commander for Saddam Hussein, until we went

into Fallujah with our Marines and they started the embedded training,

the embedded training referred to by my friend from Missouri. It was so

successful and they enjoyed each other so much that this man, this

general, his name is Mahdi, he looked me in the eyes and said: I hated

Americans before all this happened. I certainly hated the Marines. When

they came in and started embedded training, I learned to love them so

much that when they rotated out, we all got together and we cried.

This is the commitment the Iraqis have. When you get into one of the

helicopters and go from place to place, maybe 50 feet off the ground,

and you see the commitment of these individuals in the small towns and

the kids who are down there--a lot of times the people who are

supporting our troops send over candy, cookies, and this type of thing

don't realize that when our troops get them, they normally repackage

them, and then as they are in these helicopters going across the

triangle and other places, you can see the little Iraqi kids out there

waving American flags and our troops are throwing them candy and

cookies. This is the type of relationship we don't see in this country.

Mr. President, while we are calling to make sure that some of them

get down to the floor from both sides, let me suggest the absence of a

quorum.

First of all, let me thank the Senator from South

Carolina, who has been steadfast all the way through this, and who has

made such great contributions. In addition to what he said, I think it

is worth observing that this is working.

In this morning's Washington Post, there is an article about the

successes that are taking place. The top U.S. military spokesman in

Baghdad said the number of sectarian killings has dropped since the

operation began in mid-February.

Then on the other side, GEN Qassim al-Mousawi, who is the Iraqi

military spokesman, also offered an upbeat assessment of the Baghdad

security plan and how well it is working now. So I think, frankly, this

is sooner than I thought we would be getting some positive results.

Let me also make one observation before going on to the next

speakers. That is, after receiving rather late the resolution by

Senator Murray, 107, in reading it, unless I misread it, it appears to

me she is outlining some things that are pretty consistent with what is

in the Gregg resolution. So I do not know--with the three resolutions

we have--the order. That is going to be determined, but right now we

are not sure of it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from West

Virginia, Mr. Byrd, be recognized for 20 minutes, followed by Senator

Ensign for 7 minutes, followed by Senator Tester for 10 minutes,

followed by Senator Kyl for 7 minutes, then any intervening Democrat,

to be followed by Republican Senators Brownback, Warner, and Vitter for

7 minutes each.

Madam President, ironically, I agree with the Senator

from Washington, although I disagree with the characterization of this

resolution.

First of all, the resolution does essentially the same thing the

Gregg resolution does. No. 1, the Gregg resolution uses the language

that ``Congress should not take any action that will endanger United

States military forces in the field.'' That is exactly the same

language that is in the Murray resolution: ``Congress should not take

any action that will endanger the Armed Forces.''

The Gregg resolution talks about article II, section 2, of the

Constitution, in terms of the President's constitutional powers, and

article I, section 8 of the power of Congress; and the Murray

resolution does essentially the same thing, except it doesn't cite it.

It merely says Congress and the President should continue to exercise

their constitutional responsibilities.

So I am going to vote for the Murray resolution and vote for the

Gregg resolution. I don't see any difference in them. I think we are

supporting the President, and this is the right thing to do.