Mr. President, Senator Kennedy has 2 1/2 minutes, but he

is not here, so I will proceed to wrap up the debate.

My friend, the Republican leader, said nothing has changed since the

last vote. That is the whole problem, nothing has changed. Nothing has

changed in over 4 years of this bloody war in Iraq. One course. That

course has been followed from the very beginning and has never changed.

The choice tonight is very clear. It is as clear as it is important.

It is a choice between staying the course in Iraq and changing the

course in that faraway land. With their votes, Senators tonight can

send a message to the President that it is time to come with us, to

help find a new way and end this intractable civil war or Senators can

allow this course to continue, allow President Bush to commit more U.S.

troops in this open-ended Iraqi civil war.

After more than 4 years, the related deaths of 3,250 of our brave

soldiers, and the wounded tens of thousands of these men and women, it

is time we should change. This war is not worth the spilling of another

drop of American blood. As it stands, this emergency legislation before

this body tonight will send a signal to our President that it is time

for a new direction, it is time to set benchmarks, it is time to send a

signal to the Iraqi Government that they must take responsibility for

their own people, and it is time to start redeploying our troops and

recommitting ourselves to fighting al-Qaida and other terrorists around

the world.

If this amendment passes, sending a message to the President to

change course, that is the right way to go. If, however, Senators

decide to allow the President to continue along the line he has

outlined for more than 4 years, that would be a shame. That is what

this amendment is all about, whether this carefully crafted legislation

will be stripped from this bill. It would then turn out to be, instead

of a bill that demands the President change his policy, that we will

have a bill that gives the President a blank check and a green light to

continue the failed course we have had in Iraq.

Without this language in the supplemental, the President would be

free to keep U.S. troops in Iraq indefinitely, serving an impossible

mission of policing an acknowledged civil war. Staying the course in

Iraq will not lead to success. There are no military solutions. My

friend, the Republican leader, said ``some say.'' ``Some say.'' Well,

one person who says the war can't be won militarily is the man we have

commanding the troops over there, General Petraeus. He said 20 percent

of the war is military, the rest is political and diplomatic and

economic. That is the way it is.

The bill, without this amendment, offers a responsible strategy in

Iraq, which the American people asked for last November, a strategy

that will maximize our chances to succeed in Iraq and enhance our

ability to defeat al-Qaida. General after general after general has

said that is the right strategy. A group of patriotic Americans devoted

a year of their lives to giving the American people and this Congress

and the President the advice of their collective wisdom--and it was

wisdom--former Secretaries of Defense, Secretaries of State, college

professors, former Members of Congress. They came to the conclusion

that we have in this amendment. It is in this bill. The Iraq Study

Group agrees with what we have in this legislation.

It is time for the Senate to put a stamp of approval on people such

as Secretary Jim Baker. He is a man who is a card-carrying Republican.

He served as Secretary of State, Chief of Staff for the President of

the United States, and he has held other Cabinet positions. He is an

example of what that Iraq Study Group was all about. They did it

because it was the right thing to do. The reason we are having even

minimal contact right now with Iranians is because of Secretary Baker.

Secretary Baker said you do not only negotiate with your friends, you

have to negotiate with your enemies.

I have come to know very well a person who is part of my security

detail. He has traveled with me all over the country--has been to my

home in Searchlight. He is now headed for his third tour of duty in

Iraq. He has two little children. He is headed for Iraq. He leaves in

less than a month. I admire James for his courage and his patriotism,

but he should not be going back for a third go-around. He is a National

Guardsman.

I understand how some of my colleagues feel. In this Chamber is Joe

Lieberman. There is not a Senator for whom I have more respect than Joe

Lieberman. I know how passionately he feels on this issue.

John Warner, seated across from me, is one of my friends. I can say

that without any reservation or hesitation. We have served together for

many years. I was his subcommittee chairman in the Environment and

Public Works Committee. I know how he feels about this issue, how torn

he is as to what is the right thing to do, what is not the right thing

to do. I acknowledge the feelings of John Warner and Joe Lieberman, but

that does not take away from the way I feel about this issue.

I have said on this floor before and I will say it again, the

sparsely populated State of Nevada has lost 39 soldiers in Iraq. The

last one, I called his mother less than 2 weeks ago. Raul Bravo is

dead. He was 21 years old--a marine on his second tour of duty in Iraq.

His mother expressed to me what a tremendous loss this was. He was the

only man in her family, she said--she and her three daughters. I admire

Raul Bravo for going to Iraq twice. He did what he had to do. But we

have had too many Raul Bravos dying over there, unnecessarily, in the

middle of a civil war.

I listened to my radio yesterday morning, as I do every morning.

Yesterday morning: five dead soldiers the day before.

I say sincerely that we should not spill any more blood there. We

should start redeploying these troops, have them work in

counterterrorism, force protection, training the Iraqis.

Every one of my colleagues should understand that the Prime Minister

of Iraq told the President of the United States to his face the last

time they met: Get the American troops out of Baghdad. That is what he

told him. This was before the surge that the President came up with.

The leader of the country of Iraq told the President of the United

States: Get the American troops out of here.

The Iraqi people don't want us there. All the polls show

overwhelmingly the people, Iraqi people, don't want us there. The

majority of the people think it is OK to kill and injure Americans. Is

that what we want to be involved in? I think not.

A lot of people worked very hard on the provision that is subject to

being stricken from this bill. This is a good piece of legislation that

is in this bill. It is the right thing to do. It is good for America.

It is good for our world. And it is good for President Bush.

I yield back Senator Kennedy's time.