Mr. President, we are fortunate it has been almost 6

years since we have been attacked here at home. There is only one

reason for that: We have been on the offense in Afghanistan and in

Iraq. A lot of the terrorists who murdered over 3,000 of our innocent

civilians in New York on that fateful day are dead. Others of them are

incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay, and many others are on the run and

dodging our military. That part of the war on terror has been an

extraordinary success.

Iraq has not come together in terms of the Government as quickly as

we had hoped, and Afghanistan is still a challenge. But I wonder if our

good friends on the other side of the aisle have any answers to the

question: What happens if we precipitously leave? I gather the most

recent--in fact, the 17th--different version of Iraq resolutions we are

going to see later this week anticipates basically telling the enemy a

date on which we will depart. I can remember when most of our friends

on the other side of the aisle thought that was a bad idea, but I

gather their views must be evolving as to what kind of strategy might

be helpful. One thing is clear: If we announce to the enemy when we are

leaving, they will come back on that day.

So we will have another Iraq debate this week, and as the majority

leader indicated, there will be yet another Iraq debate when the

supplemental is before us in a few weeks. This is a debate we are more

than willing to engage in.

I would say to the majority leader, as I indicated last week, it

would have been possible, I think, to have gotten a unanimous consent

agreement to deal with the stem cell issue in a rather short period of

time had we chosen to take up another issue that was in the six in 2006

list of commitments the new Democratic majority made to the American

people. Having said that, I will be in discussions with the majority

leader today and tomorrow about how we might go forward on the Iraq

debate. It is certainly his prerogative as the leader of the majority

to determine what issue we proceed to, and he and I will meet later

today and be discussing that today and tomorrow.

As far as the 9/11 bill is concerned, I supported cloture on that

bill. We are anxious to go on and finish it and we should be able to do

that after lunch tomorrow.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.