Mr. President, our troops don't lose wars; bad policy and

bad leadership lose wars. We should have the courage to stand up and

tell the administration they have had a God-awful policy. They put our

troops in a position that, in fact, has made it virtually impossible

for them to succeed at the outset. They deserve a policy, a plan, but

there is no plan.

We went to war with too few troops, we went to war unnecessarily, and

we went to war with men and women who were ill-equipped, and they are

coming home ill-served. It is about time we have the courage to stand

up and say to the President: Mr. President, you have not only put us in

harm's way, you have harmed us. You have no policy, Mr. President.

I am so tired of hearing on this floor about courage. Let's have the

courage to tell the administration to stop this ridiculous policy they

have.

We are taking sides in a civil war. I was there in Srebrenica. I was

in Tuzla. I was in Sarajevo. I was in Brcko in the Balkans. How did we

solve that? We solved that with a policy of separating the parties.

This is a cycle of self-sustaining sectarian violence that 20,000,

30,000, 50,000, 100,000 Americans will not be able to stop. This is

ridiculous. There is no plan. I ask the President and everyone else who

comes forward with a plan, whether it is capping or surging or whatever

they have: Will it answer the two-word test: Then what? Then what? Then

what? What happens after we surge these women and men?

And by the way, he said General Petraeus is one who believes. He may

be the only one who believes this is a good idea. Virtually no one else

thinks it is a good idea. Look, in this story about the Constitution,

we gave the President specific authority, which is our responsibility.

It was to take down Saddam, if need be, it was to get rid of weapons of

mass destruction that did not exist, and it was to get compliance with

the U.N. resolution. Every one of those have been met. Saddam is dead,

there were no weapons, and Iraq is in compliance with the U.N.

So if one wants to be literal about it, his mission no longer has the

force of law. Everyone I have spoken with, including from the Biden-

Gelb plan straight through to the Iraq Study Group, says: Look, use our

troops wisely; use them wisely. What are their missions? We have the

right and obligation constitutionally, and we should have the courage

constitutionally, to exercise our responsibility to say: Why are our

troops there?

Did anybody on this floor, did anybody count on the utter

incompetence of this administration when they were getting the

authority they were getting? Absolute incompetence. I stood on this

floor 3 years ago saying we need another 100,000 troops before the

sectarian violence became self-sustaining and warned, as others did,

that once it did, all the king's horses and all the king's men could

not hold that country together.

So what is our objective here? Our objective is to leave Iraq

relatively stable within its own borders, not a threat to its neighbors

and not a haven for terror.

What is the President and my friend from Arizona and others insisting

on? What can never be: a central government that is a democracy that is

going to be fair to the rest of its citizens. It is not possible, mark

my words.

So as long as the President keeps us on this ridiculous path, taking

us off a cliff, I ask my colleagues: Does anybody think they are going

to be able to sustain keeping American forces in Iraq at 160,000 for

another year and a half? What do you think? What do you think is going

to happen in Tennessee, in Delaware, in Illinois? Are we going to break

this man's and woman's Army? What are we going to do here? How many

times do we have to ask those 175,000 marines to rotate, three, four,

five, six, seven times?

And what is the President's political solution? I love this. Everyone

says there is no military solution, only a political solution. Name me

one person who has come up with a political solution--one--other than

me and Les Gelb.

There is a political solution. It is what history teaches us. When

there is self-sustaining sectarian violence, there is only one of four

possibilities:

They either, one, expire, kill one another off; two, you impose a

dictator; three, you have an empire; or, four, you have a Federal

system.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 more seconds.

Mr. President, I am tired of hearing about courage. The

only courage being evidenced in this country is by those folks out on

the battlefields getting shot at, getting killed. Why are they there?

Let's get on with this. This is the only rational way to move.

All this malarkey about cutting off funds--this is about the mission.

Mr. President, you are leading us off a cliff. Stop.