Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for the

United States policy in Iraq Resolution of 2007. I think it represents

a sound policy and strategy that will help us achieve our objectives

not only in Iraq but in the region, and not only in the region but

across the globe.

Let me first begin by saying I have heard many of the opponents

suggest this Senate has but one choice: either to cut off funding or to

allow the President to continue to pursue any policy he feels is

appropriate. That is a false choice, similar to the false choice the

President presented to this Senate in 2002 and 2003. That choice was

that we could either invade Iraq or step back and watch them morph into

a much more serious threat. In fact, there were diplomatic options.

There was the possibility of effectively using U.N. inspectors. So I

don't think we should engage in discussions of false choices. We have

the authority constitutionally to adopt policies, to shape what the

President does, and that is the essence of this resolution.

Just today, the New York Times' Walter Dellinger and Christopher

Schroeder wrote an op-ed piece which bears on this point. They say the

Supreme Court has long recognized Congress's authority to set limits on

the President's military power, as in 1799, when it accepted Congress's

power to authorize the seizure of ships going to but not coming from

French ports. Talk about micromanagement; that is micromanagement.

That is not what our Iraq resolution does. We are laying out policy

objectives, a changed mission, which I think will enhance the ability

of military forces in the United States to do their job and to protect

our country.

The Dellinger piece goes on to say, ``More important, the legal

advisers of presidents have themselves repeatedly recognized this

congressional power. When former Chief Justice William Rehnquist was

President Reagan's chief legal adviser in 1970, he flatly rejected the

all-or-nothing claim.'' In Rehnquist's words, ``It is both utterly

illogical and unsupported by precedent to think Congress may not

delegate a lesser amount of authority to conduct military operations.''

That is essentially what we are talking about today. We are trying to

redefine the mission so that it is consistent with the highest purposes

of American national strategy. This mission would, first, recognize we

have to protect our forces, giving the Commander in Chief broad

discretion in protecting those forces; second, that we have an ongoing

obligation to help train Iraqi security forces, which is absolutely

critical; and, third, that we have the ongoing obligation to go after

the terrorists wherever they may be. We did this in Somalia a few weeks

ago when we had information of al-Qaida operatives. We had much

cooperation on the ground and we went in there. That is the same option

we must pursue in Iraq and every place else. These are the three

missions that are most consistent and most important to our national

strategy.

Also, this resolution begins a phased redeployment; not a rigid,

inflexible timetable, but starting a date where we begin to pull out

combat forces, leaving, of course, forces to carry on this mission of

training Iraqi security forces, going after the terrorists, and

protecting our own forces. Our goal, and it is strictly a goal, is that

these combat brigades should be out of the country, we hope, by March

of 2008.

This is a policy that I think will work, a policy that will be

supported by the American people, and a policy that will encourage, I

think, the political solution that is necessary. As everyone has noted,

the answer to Iraq is not going to be achieved by military means. It

will be achieved by political means. General Petraeus has said that.

These are his words: ``There is no military solution to a problem like

that in Iraq, to the insurgency of Iraq.''

We have to have, and this resolution calls for, the application of

diplomatic power, support for the creation of functioning institutions

in Iraq that can provide both the kind of political progress and

economic progress these people demand, tangible signs that their

Government will function. That is what we are encouraging and directing

in this policy.

This policy makes sense and it is well within not only the obligation

of this

Congress but the constitutional power of this Congress.

Mr. President, I request an additional 1 minute to be yielded from

the time of the leader.

Mr. President, what the President is suggesting to us, his

policy, is more of the same for a much longer period of time. As we all

know, recently General Odierno suggested this surge is probably going

to last not until the end of this year but into next year, and probably

into the following year. That is putting a huge strain on our troops.

I think also we have to recognize our focus in Iraq, our

preoccupation with Iraq, is inhibiting our strategic flexibility across

the globe. It has enhanced the relative power of Iran, ironically, and

it has caused us, belatedly, to begin serious negotiations with North

Korea, which might be a profitable and progressive thing to do, but the

focus on Iraq is serious.

Let me tell you, one of the most interesting comments that I have

heard is when I asked Admiral McConnell, the head of our intelligence

establishment, where is the most likely threat coming from, engaging in

an attack on the United States, Pakistan or Iraq? He answered quite

quickly: Pakistan.

We have to change our policy. This resolution will do that, and I

urge its support.

Mr. President, we are engaged in a debate that will be

critical to the future of this country. We have now for many years been

engaged in Iraq. We have seen substantial casualties of our military

men and women, not only those who have given the ultimate sacrifice but

those who have been seriously wounded. We have seen our position in the

world, particularly in that region, seriously eroded. We have a

situation where, unwittingly perhaps but actually, Iran has become a

more powerful agent in that area of the world because of the policy of

this administration. I think we have the opportunity at this juncture

to change this flawed strategy; also, to improve the operational skill

of this administration because not only was the strategy flawed, but

the implementation was absolutely horrid.

The Iraq Study Group made many useful suggestions, and key to those

suggestions was to begin a phased redeployment of our forces. This was

similar to language Senator Levin and I proposed last June, which

talked about a phased redeployment of our combat forces, leaving

residual missions for other forces, and also talked about an ambitious

diplomatic effort to try to adjust politically the various forces and

the various tensions in the country of Iraq and in the region. It was

interesting to note that many months after the Levin-Reed proposal, the

administration finally participated in a regional conference last week

involving both Iran and Syria and the other neighboring countries. That

is a step forward--a timid step but, indeed, a step forward.

The President, however--after the Iraq Study Group recommendations

and after our debates last year--in January, when he was able to

present and willing to present his new strategy, he made another

mistake in several respects. First, the surging or escalating of forces

is, I think at best, a temporary stopgap. The real solution to the

dilemmas and the details that engulf Iraq are political in nature. That

has been vouched for by every military commander and most commentators.

Rather than embracing the Iraq Study Group's recommendations, he

distanced himself from them. Rather than talking about a phased

redeployment, he talked about an indefinite escalation. In doing so, he

jeopardized one of the fundamental foundations of any national policy,

and that is public support. I believe the American people were

listening closely, waiting for a sign that the President finally got it

and that he was going to begin to conduct an orderly phased withdrawal

and concentrate on the other critical missions of training Iraqi forces

and going after terrorists who are much more important to our long-term

security. They did not hear that in his speech. It is no surprise to me

that their continuing lack of confidence in the administration has been

translated into a lack of confidence in our prospects in Iraq.

I think the American people are looking for a policy they can

support, one they can sustain, and one we can sustain. In my view, that

policy is laid out very explicitly in the proposal that we are debating

today authored by Senator Harry Reid. It focuses on defining critical

missions so that our soldiers know precisely why they are in that

country and that we can give them all the resources necessary for those

missions to go after terrorists who have infiltrated the country.

The existence of terrorists before the invasion was one of highly

speculative debate, and it turned out there was more speculation than

fact. But the reality is terrorists have infiltrated Iraq in the

intervening several years, and we have to go after them just as we did

in Somalia, just as we are doing in Afghanistan, and just as we hope

the Pakistanis are doing in Pakistan. After all, that is where bin

Laden and Zawahiri are residing, reorganizing, and contemplating

attempts to attack us again.

That effort of preemption of terrorists has to go on, and we have to

maintain a presence in Iraq to do that. We also have to train the Iraqi

security forces because, frankly, they are ultimately the decisive

point in terms of security for Iraq. It is not American soldiers. We

don't have the cultural affinity, as best we try; we don't have the

vested interests. We are trying to help, but it is not our country, it

is their country, and to prevail, they must carry the burden of war. We

have to help them, we understand that. We have to continue to train

them. Of course, we have to protect our forces.

There was some discussion today about how these missions are going to

cause our soldiers, as they go through Iraq, to say: Well, I can't go

after that fellow because he might be a sectarian militiaman and not a

terrorist.

If those forces pose a threat to American troops in the field, they

are fair game. That is what this resolution says. But it is made, these

missions are, in the context of a policy of redeployment, of getting

our combat forces out of Iraq. We hope we can do that within a year,

but much depends upon what happens in other arenas: political mentoring

and economic support. Frankly, this administration has done a dreadful

job of that.

I have been to Iraq a number of times, as my colleagues have. You

arrive there and they proudly announce they are going to have

provisional reconstruction teams all over the country. Suddenly you

discover months later that their goal of 20 was really 10, and now they

have just about 10 but not fully staffed and not fully functional.

They are still trying to get it right. Again, any military officer

will tell you that military forces in a counterinsurgency buys time.

The decisive action is by political and economic progress, to give the

citizens, the people of Iraq, tangible proof that their future lies

with a legitimate government and not those who seek to undermine.

Yet, repeatedly, when you strip away the President's proposal, it is

just more troops, without the real enablers, the real decisive factors

of economic, political, reconstruction and reconciliation.

So, again, I think this is exactly the right course to pursue. It is

a course that we must pursue. I have a great deal more to say about

this issue. I notice my colleague from New York has arrived. Under the

arrangement worked out with Senator Levin, I will yield the floor so he

may speak in the order established. There is much more to be said, and

I hope I have the opportunity to do so.

I yield the floor.