Mr. President, in life you can't stand still. You either go

forward or backward. If it were not such a serious matter--and it is a

serious matter--to have the Republican leader go back to a statement

that I made 5 years ago is what is wrong with the Republicans in this

debate. Things have to change. Things change. You can't stand still.

You either go forward or backward. To take a statement that I made 5

years ago and think that things haven't changed in 5 years is without

any degree of sensibility.

In just a few days our country will mark a solemn anniversary: the

beginning of the fifth year of a war that has raged in faraway Iraq.

For the fifth year, this war has taken a tremendous toll on our

country, our troops, their families, and our standing in the world. Mr.

President, 3,200 Americans, soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines have

been killed in Iraq. We have seen tens of thousands of our best

wounded--men and women who have come home to a health care system

unprepared and ill-equipped to take care of them.

Our Army has been stretched dangerously thin. Our Treasury has been

spending, week after bloody week, $2 billion, each week; $2 billion

each week.

Despite these tremendous costs, despite these great sacrifices,

despite the opposition to this war, Iraq continues to spiral out of

control. In February, attacks in Iraq increased dramatically. Three

American soldiers and 100 Iraqis died every day--every day in February.

In March it seems it is going to be just as bad. Our overburdened

troops, including hundreds of Nevadans, have done everything asked of

them and more. It is their political leaders at home who have failed--

who failed our troops and the American people. President Bush did not

go to war with enough military on the ground. We all know that.

President Bush didn't have a plan to win the peace, much less the war.

President Bush surrounded himself with yes-men, who told him what he

wanted to hear, what he needed to hear. To this day, President Bush

lacks a plan to complete the mission so our troops can come home. His

current strategy of more of the same is not working.

Five years into the war in Iraq the mission has changed but the Bush

policy has not changed. Saddam is gone, long gone. There are no weapons

of mass destruction; there never were. Iraq is in chaos. There is no

stability in Iraq. U.S. troops are policing a protracted civil war, not

hunting and killing terrorists who attacked us on September 11, 2001.

The original mission no longer exists. Yet President Bush wants to

stay the same--the same--failed course, to surge toward more of the

same, to sustain more failure.

Today, the Senate must finally send a clear message to the Commander

in Chief, President Bush. That message is: It is time for a new way

forward. Change course, Mr. President. The way to succeed in Iraq is

not more of the same; it is to change the mission and change the

course. Our country must have a surge, but that surge must not be a

military surge. There must be escalation in our diplomacy.

This is the message the American people delivered to Congress on

November 7, 2006. This is the message we must send President Bush again

today.

In just a few moments, we will have another cloture vote. I urge my

colleagues to vote to allow the debate to proceed and then vote to

change the course. Vote for the resolution. Voting no today is voting

to greenlight the same failed course in Iraq. Voting no today is an

endorsement of 5 years of failed policy. Voting no today is an

endorsement of America's continuing occupation of Iraq. Voting no today

is a vote to support President Bush maintaining an open-ended

commitment to keep U.S. troops in the middle of an Iraqi civil war.

But a ``yes'' vote on cloture and on the resolution--and a vote for

the resolution--is a vote of hope, hope that after 4 years in this war

we can finally begin to have the Iraqis control their own destiny,

their own future. We can tell President Bush to change course, redeploy

our troops, bring in Iraq's neighbors, and revitalize reconstruction

efforts that have failed, that have fallen woefully short.

Five years into the war, is it not the time for a new direction? The

answer is yes, and that direction starts by voting yes on this next

vote.

I yield back my time.