Madam President, over 3,000 Americans are dead--dead,

dead--and over 23,000 Americans are wounded as a result of the war in

Iraq. Our military leaders say that our Armed Forces are stretched

almost to the breaking point. We have spent almost $400 billion, and

the number continues to go up, up, up. But the United States Senate is

mired incredibly in a debate about the ability even to have a debate

about our Nation's future course in Iraq. Surely, no one in this Senate

can be so fearful of debate on a nonbinding resolution concerning the

President's plan to send some 40,000 additional troops to Iraq that

they fail to hear the voices of over 70 percent of the American people

out there who now oppose our involvement in this war. But apparently

some in the Senate are afraid of such a debate.

Some of my colleagues have indicated that they will vote against the

motion to proceed to debate on this straightforward resolution, which

expresses disagreement with the President's plan. While our brave

fighting men and women put their lives on the line in Iraq, this Senate

stands paralyzed--paralyzed, paralyzed, I say. The United States

Senate--the greatest deliberative body in the whole world--is probably

the only place in this wonderful land of America where this debate is

not--is not--taking place.

How can some express unwavering support for the troops if they quake

in the face of a debate about their safety? Our troops are stretched

thin. They are weary after deployment and redeployment. Post-traumatic

stress disorder and mental problems--yes--are rife in the troops. Lost

limbs and physical mutilation have scarred many of these young people

for life. Scores of families weep--yes, they weep--every night for

their lost loved ones. And yet many in this Senate claim to support the

troops, while those same many steadfastly refuse to debate an ill-

advised escalation--yes, an ill-advised escalation--of this war which

almost nobody but nobody supports.

Can one claim support for the troops while acquiescing in a policy

that only sinks our forces deeper into a civil war? Can any of us look

in the mirror while we stonewall the concerns of the American people

and engage in some political fandango to prevent discussion of our

engagement in Iraq?

Madam President, if it will help to bring our soldiers home, I will

work every Saturday for the rest of this Congress. I will stand here,

right here on this floor, of this Senate every day, 24 hours every day

if it would mean one less family without a son or a daughter. Hear me.

Madam President, this is the most important issue facing

America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, and I stand

with my colleagues today to say enough, enough stalling, enough

obfuscation. It is time for the people of America--yes, you people out

there in the mountains, the valleys, and across the rivers, across the

mountain ranges, yes, the great Rockies--you people, it is time for you

to know where every Senator stands on this war.

I will cast my vote with pride this afternoon, Madam President, in

favor of proceeding to this debate, and I hope that every one of my

colleagues joins me.

I yield the floor and thank the Chair.

I don't.

Yes.

Madam President, I thank our distinguished friend from

Illinois. And I thank my longtime friend from Massachusetts, Mr.

Kennedy.

I only rise to say that I have a binding resolution to bring our

troops home. I hope to see the day when we may vote on my resolution to

bring American troops home--home, home.

Yes.

Right.

Shame.