Madam President, with great respect for my friend from

West Virginia, the reason we are here is because the new majority

refuses to debate. They refuse to allow us to take up the amendments

that should be considered during this debate.

We have before us now a proposal drafted by the Rules Committee of

the House, presented to the House without debate and brought to us

without debate, and we are told we are to be limited on the number of

amendments that will be considered to this measure.

It is an important subject to be debated, but why Saturday? This is

the start of the President's Day recess that was announced 6 weeks ago.

In order to try to embarrass the Members of this side--21 of us up for

reelection--the leadership decided to have this debate today on a

nonbinding resolution, which wouldn't accomplish anything, wouldn't

bring any troops home, wouldn't announce our support for the troops,

just to see whether we come back to vote.

The real problem is how do we get together in a Senate that has a

majority of one? Do we do it on the basis that every time something

comes from the House we are to be told no amendments will be in order?

We can't debate this question of whether we support the troops? We

can't support any other amendment to this resolution? We are to take

the matter that came from the House without debate from the Rules

Committee? It was not changed all the way through the House.

How many Senators on that side want to be a rubberstamp for the

House? That is what you are starting. This is the third bill to come

before us with the idea of no minority amendments are going to be

considered unless the leadership on that side decides they should be

considered.

Again, I tell you, Madam President, this is a defining moment of the

Senate. This is a debating society. We should not be limited on the

number of amendments that are considered, any more than we are limited

on the CR.

When I became chairman of the Appropriations Committee in 2001, there

were 11 bills pending that had not been passed by the former majority.

We brought them before the Senate in an omnibus bill, and every single

bill was considered, one by one.

What did we do this time? We had one resolution which came over from

the House, and we passed it without any amendments. That is a formula

for the death of the Senate. There are people in this country who think

we should have a unicameral legislature.

I share the Senator's opinion because I would like to

debate him on some of these subjects but not

on a nonbinding resolution. Let's bring up a resolution that supports

the troops.

I directly contradict my good friend from West Virginia. The American

people support our troops in the field----

----and do not want us challenging them and trying to

find some way to deviate money from their support or deny them the

support they deserve. I would love to stand here and talk for hours and

hours with my friend about how to support the troops. You don't do it

by asking them to disobey the President of the United States. You don't

do it by urging the Senate and the House not to support the President

of the United States. You do it by trying to get together and working

on a bipartisan basis to solve our problems.

None of us like war. I said the other day I hate war. I have been

involved in the consideration of too many wars in my life, but clearly

those people wearing our uniform in Iraq and Afghanistan need to know

we support them 100 percent, and we don't stand here and talk about how

we should find ways so they would not get their support, so we force

the President of the United States to bring them home.

We will bring them home with the new commander there and the new plan

we are going to put into effect, a plan that requires a surge for the

safety of the people there, to move in the country to carry out the

plan.

I support the President, and I urge the Senate to do the same.