Mr. President, it is another day in Iraq and another $400

million. One only need look at the Washington Post, as I did yesterday,

to see what is happening in Iraq. Front page: ``Sunni Forces Losing

Patience With U.S.'' And it goes on to say how hundreds and hundreds of

these Sunnis, who were helping us, have gone home.

Now, Mr. President, the Sunnis, even before Saddam Hussein,

controlled Iraq. They are a minority, but they have controlled Iraq for

generations. Now the Shias control Iraq, and the Sunnis, as we all

know, are trying to make a comeback. This should cause everyone some

concern.

Also, if you look a little bit further in the newspaper, go over to

page 12, you will see another story dealing with Iraq. ``Iraq Leaders

Veto Law on Elections.'' We have been trying, and in fact it was the

purpose of the surge, to bring about some ability in the Iraqis to take

over the Government themselves, and they passed 4 pieces of legislation

of the 18 that they were supposed to pass. Everyone said at the

time they passed they thought basically they were for show. And,

obviously, the one calling for elections, which was one of the four, in

fact, that has taken place; the Iraqi leaders vetoed the bill on

elections. There still could be elections in the fall, but right now

they are going to have to do new legislation. So now we are down to 3

out of the 18.

During the month of July, more than one American was being killed per

day. We are now at 30 on the 28th day of February. Yesterday, one of my

Republican friends, one of the leaders, said the Democrats are in

denial. ``It's almost as if they are sorry things have gotten better.''

Mr. President, all Americans are glad for any American or Iraqi life

saved. But unlike the minority, which spent 6 years ignoring the

warning signs and following the President's policies in lockstep,

Democrats are clear-headed about where this war has been, where it

stands today, and what we must do to change course and make our country

safer.

Mr. President, last night, I think it was about 7:30 or 8 o'clock, I

went back to my office, and there was a man waiting there, one of the

Capitol guides. As disabled and wounded Iraqi veterans come through, he

brings them by, and if I am in my office, I am always happy to say

hello to these wounded veterans. Burt is the tour guide, and my office

is just off the Senate floor, so it is fairly easy for them to bring

them by.

Last night was a remarkable night. I have met probably 50 of these

veterans whom Burt brings around. Last night, a 22-year-old man from

Missouri by the name of Matthew McGuire came by. He was there with his

girlfriend, his wife to be.

I said: How are you doing?

He said: I'm OK.

He was standing. He was unstable. He had a cane that held him up.

I said: Why don't you sit down, and we will talk a bit.

I said: How long were you in Iraq before you got hurt?

He said: Well, I was there for 6 months.

Five times in that 6-month period, Mr. President, he suffered

attacks. Once he was on foot patrol, and he was knocked down by a bomb.

One time he was a gunner on a vehicle and was knocked off that. He has

all of his limbs. But last month, in January, in one 24-hour period, he

had 37 seizures. And I told him about Senator Johnson and said: I wish

Senator Johnson were here.

I talked about Senator Johnson being in a coma for the period he was

and how much he had improved and that he can now walk on his own and

speak 95 percent of how he was able to. I had a picture taken with him;

sat and gave them both a hug and kissed her on the cheek. It was really

a dramatic night when this young man was telling me that in one 24-hour

period he had 37 seizures.

It is one thing to talk about almost 4,000 Americans being killed and

30,000 being wounded, and another when you talk to one of these heroic

young men and women. I told him I so appreciated his service to our

country and that we are going to do everything we can to make sure the

sacrifice he made is not in vain. But these are more than just

statistics. These are people. And Matthew McGuire is a person who has

been hurt extremely bad. His life will never be the same.

I said: Have you been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder?

And he said, yes. But in addition to that, he has brain damage, as

indicated by the 37 seizures he had in one 24-hour period. He is only 1

of the 30,000 who have been wounded in a war that is stretching our

military to a breaking point.

There is going to be testimony in the Joint Economic Committee today

by Nobel Prize winning economist Stiglitz. Mr. Stiglitz has written a

book that will come out in about 10 days called ``The $3 Trillion

War.'' This is a Nobel Prize winning economist who has had access to

Pentagon records, and he has written how this war has cost and will

cost at least $3 trillion.

General Powell said last year that the Army is about broken, and that

is a quote. The day before yesterday, General Casey, Chief of Staff of

the Army, confirmed what Powell said a year ago, when Casey said:

Admiral Fallen and Admiral Mullin agree that concerns about our troop

commitment to Iraq may limit our ability to address other global

challenges. So we have to take seriously the concerns of General Casey,

General Powell, Admiral Fallen, Admiral Mullin, and countless other

military leaders and foreign policy experts.

It is time that we understand the sacrifices made by our valiant,

heroic military have come at a time when they have done what they

needed to do, and we have to get them home. Four hundred million

dollars a day. I repeat what I have said a couple times in the last 2

days, Mr. President. The Iraqis believe they have the most significant

oil reserves in the world. Everybody recognizes they have the second

largest oil reserves in the world. They think they have the largest oil

reserves in the world. It is a wealthy nation, and they should take

care of their own.

I think what we have talked about is that there should be a force

left there of American troops to take care of any counterterrorism

activities that need to go forth, and we should have limited training

of Iraqis. We have trained almost a half million now, 430,000. And, of

course, we have to protect whatever assets we have there. It is a

situation that calls for a conclusion.

As I said yesterday, when is enough enough? I think this debate has

been good. I think we need to have more in-depth discussions on a

Federal program that is costing us more than $400 million a day. I

think we have spent 2 days on this, and I believe that is not adequate,

but we will be back. The President has asked for another, I think,

about $120 billion more to the end of this fiscal year for the war in

Iraq, and there will be more discussion at that time. I think we will

wait until somewhere late in April to take that up. But the time is

coming when we will discuss this in more detail.

I appreciate the good nature of the debate. We just disagree. The

Republicans think everything is fine; we don't.

It has been a very positive, in my mind, debate. It has been a

civilized debate. I think the American people have been served well by

this debate we have had the last couple days.

I would say on the schedule, I am working with the Republican leader

to find out when he feels it would be appropriate to have a vote. We

are waiting for him. I will visit with him later today.