Mr. President, speaking on the same matters addressed by

both the majority and minority leader, I remind our colleagues that

last week this body passed by a very narrow margin what amounts to a

strategy for defeat in Iraq. This course of action was not a surprise.

After all, the majority leader had announced to the world that the war

was lost. This, of course, was news

to people in Iraq, our soldiers in the field included.

This is from a 24-year-old a half a world away.

I suspect the announcement that we had lost the war was also a

surprise to General Petraeus. Remember, we confirmed him unanimously in

this body. We knew what his strategy was. He has testified about it

when he came here for his confirmation hearings. In fact, he had

written a book about it.

Many in this body, I fear, have forgotten what he said. In a Pentagon

briefing, last week, when he returned from the theater to brief us on

the status of the conflict, he reminded us:

Now, I mention this because the majority leader and others have

quoted General Petraeus as saying this war can only be won politically,

not militarily. What General Petraeus actually said was: ``Military

action is necessary but not sufficient.'' He has pointed out over and

over that the political compromises and decisions and agreements that

need to be made cannot be made in the context of the violence and

instability that exists in Iraq today.

He predicted this. He said, likely we will have more casualties as we

ramp up our efforts because the fighting will be more intense, and that

is a necessary precondition to creating the peace and stability which

we hope to achieve by this increase in our activity.

So it is mystifying to me those on the other side of the aisle can

say we should withdraw now because the war is lost and that the only

solution is a political solution, but we are going to pass a bill

denying the President and General Petraeus, the State Department, and

others much of the economic reconstruction funding we need to achieve

the political solution. As the majority leader noted, there is still

much to be done in Iraq, other than on the military side of the

equation, just getting things up and running there.

But this is the bill sent to the President, after months of delay,

including 2 weeks when the other body was in recess. There, of course,

was no recess for our troops, nor for the Pentagon, which, according to

Secretary Gates, in an April 11 letter to Congress, told of the

disruptions already taking place.

Let me describe what some of those disruptions from this lack of

funding are: reducing Army quality-of-life initiatives, including

routine upgrade of barracks and other facilities; reducing the repair

and maintenance of equipment necessary for deployment training;

curtailing the training of Army Guard and Reserve units within the

United States, reducing their readiness levels.

This may be just the beginning of what is to come if this

supplemental funding is further delayed. The National Journal, this

morning, reported: ``Democrats have set a Memorial Day deadline to send

Bush a reconstructed supplemental.'' Memorial Day--a month away. Why

the further delay, when everyone knows the detriment to the training

and equipment availability for our troops that has resulted already

from the delay in funding? This would be dangerously irresponsible, and

the impacts will get only more significant over time.

Here are some of the additional results that will occur: reducing the

pace of equipment overhaul work at Army depots, which will likely

exacerbate the equipment availability problems facing stateside units;

curtailing training rotations for Brigade Combat Teams currently

scheduled for overseas deployment. Such a step would likely require the

further extension of currently deployed forces until their replacements

were judged ready for deployment. The self-fulfilling prophecy that

would result from the lack of funding is: Our colleagues on the other

side of the aisle say we are going to have our troops have to be in

theater a longer period of time. Answer: Yes, if you continue to deny

the funding, that is exactly what will happen.

It will also delay the acceleration of additional modularized Army

brigades necessary to expand the Army unit rotational pool and reduce

the stress on existing units. This must be what GEN Peter Schoomaker,

who is the Army Chief of Staff, meant when he stated, the Army ``will

be forced to take increasingly draconian measures which will impact

Army readiness and impose hardships on our Soldiers and their

families.''

These political delays are keeping much needed lifesaving equipment

out of the hands of our troops as well. I supported the amendment

offered by the senior Senator from Delaware to add an additional $1.5

billion for the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, the so-called

MRAPs, which, on top of the $1.83 billion for the services the

President requested, would get these vehicles into the field now.

So why would we further delay the funding to get these vehicles into

the hands of our troops? Delaying this all the way to Memorial Day

simply means further delays in getting this equipment to the troops.

Meanwhile, though we cannot get this funding to the troops, the

majority is feverishly at work adding unrequested, nonemergency

spending to the bill--all in an apparent effort to try to cobble

together enough votes to actually pass the bill, since the underlying

surrender date is so unpopular.

The bill includes over $21 billion in unrequested items--$21 billion.

Among them is title V, which provides $3.5 billion in emergency

agricultural assistance--things such as $60 million for salmon

fisheries. The bill also includes provisions such as--and by the way,

neither the Senate nor the House put these provisions in the bill; they

were added in the conference committee--such as an extension of the

Pharmacy Plus program in Wisconsin. Now, I am on the Finance Committee,

and we did not consider this in the Finance Committee. It is,

obviously, not an emergency, but, apparently, there were some folks

from Wisconsin who could be brought along in support of the vote if

this was added to the bill.

These provisions have no place in the bill. They should not return in

the final bill after the President has exercised his veto tomorrow and

the majority decides to get serious and pass legislation which the

President can actually sign.

My recommendation to the President, if they are included, is to veto

the bill. The military troops should not be forced to carry the pork of

Members on their backs. This bill should be vetoed both because of the

surrender date and because of the pork. It is time to end wasteful

Washington spending, especially when it is being carried on the backs

of our troops in an emergency supplemental bill.

I saw the items: the spinach farms, the peanut storage, the tropical

fish, bailouts for sugar beets. Let these provisions go through the

normal channels. If they have merit, their sponsors should be able to

carry the day and get them supported. If not, then we should not be

supporting them anyway. But let's not slow down the money for the

troops just in the name of some special parochial earmark.

One thing that has been lost, I would add, in the race to enact this

strategy for defeat is the consequences for this premature--this

setting a deadline for

surrender. Remember, this is the first time ever in the middle of a war

we would set a date and say: At this time we will be out of there. The

message it sends to the enemy is--well, it is unthinkable. But think

about the message it sends to the Iraqis who have fought along our side

and to our troops and their families. It would be a nightmare for the

Iraqi people were we to leave.

Do we want to be responsible for that in this body, the mass killings

that would result--exactly what we criticized Saddam Hussein for when

he was in power? It would not end with an American withdrawal in Iraq,

either.

Failing in Iraq would set back the entire region. The Brookings

Institution--no big supporter of the President, I would add--argues, in

their study, that:

We know Iran and Syria are fostering instability in Iraq. Al-Qaida

and Hezbollah are both active there as well. Chaos in Iraq could draw

in Saudi Arabia, and Saudi officials have threatened ``massive

intervention to stop Iranian-backed Shiite militias from butchering

Iraqi Sunnis.'' Kurdish succession could well cause Turkish

intervention in the region.

Failing in Iraq would be a dramatic setback in the war on terror.

Iraq must not be divorced from its context--the struggle between the

forces of moderation and extremism in the Muslim world.

Al-Qaida has been in Iraq since before the United States invaded and

has dedicated itself to fomenting sectarian violence there. Much of the

violence between Shia and Sunni is a result of prodding by al-Qaida,

starting primarily with the blowing up of the Golden Mosque in Samarra.

Osama bin Laden himself referred to Iraq--I am quoting him--as the

``capital of the Caliphate,'' arguing that ``The most . . . serious

issue today for the whole world is this Third World War . . . [that] is

raging in [Iraq].'' Those are not my words. That is what Osama bin

Laden said.

Failure in Iraq will encourage further attacks against the United

States and provide a base from which to plan and train for attacks.

I must remind my friends, if you are going to push this legislation

through, the strategy for defeat, you have a responsibility to tell the

American people what the consequences will be and to tell them how you

would respond. These are the burdens of being in the majority. These

are the burdens of making the difficult decisions we make in this body.

I urge my colleagues to work together to develop a supplemental

appropriations bill that President Bush can quickly sign, that will get

the funding to our troops and enable us to give the strategy a chance

to succeed so that the horrible consequences I have described will not

be the result of our actions.