Madam President, about a week ago, I think it was on the

23rd, my colleagues, the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. Ben Nelson, and the

Senator from Maine, Ms. Collins, and I, together with several

cosponsors, put into the Record a resolution--I underline put into the

Record--so that all could have the benefit of studying it.

We three have continued to do a good deal of work. We have been in

consultation with our eight other cosponsors on this resolution, and we

are going to put in tonight, into the Record--the same procedures we

followed before--another resolution which tracks very closely the one

that is of record. But it has several provisions we believe should be

considered by the Senate in the course of the debate. How that debate

will occur and when it will occur. I cannot advise the Senate, but I do

hope it is expeditious. I understand there is a cloture motion that

could well begin the debate, depending upon how it is acted upon.

We have also had a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee

last Friday. We had a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee

again this morning. Friday was in open session. The session this

morning was in closed session. The three of us, as members of the Armed

Services Committee, have learned a good deal more about this subject

and, I say with great respect, the plan as laid down by the President

on the 10th of January. We believed we should make some additions to

our resolution.

We have not had the opportunity, given the hour, to circulate this

among all of our cosponsors so at this time it will not bind them, but

subsequently, tomorrow, I hope to contact all of them, together with my

two colleagues, and determine their concurrence to go on this one. I am

optimistic they will all stay.

But let me give the Senate several examples of what we think is

important in the course of the debate--that these subjects be raised.

We put it before the Senate now in the form of filing this resolution,

such that all can see it and have the benefit, to the extent it is

reproduced and placed into the public domain. Because the three of us

are still open for suggestions, and we will continue to have

receptivity to suggestions as this critical and very important subject

is deliberated by the Senate.

Our objective is to hope that somehow through our efforts and the

efforts

of others, a truly bipartisan statement--I don't know in what form it

may be made--a truly bipartisan statement can evolve from the debate

and the procedure that will ensue in the coming days, and I presume

into next week. We feel very strongly that we want to see our Armed

Forces succeed in Iraq to help bring about greater stability to that

country, greater security to that country, so that the current elected

government, through a series of free elections--the current elected

government can take a firmer and firmer hand on the reins of

sovereignty. We believe if for political reasons all Members of the

Senate go over to vote with their party, and the others go over to vote

with their party, we will have lost and failed to provide the

leadership I believe this Chamber can provide to the American people so

they can better understand the new strategy, and that the President can

take into consideration our resolution hasn't been changed.

We say to the President: We urge that you take into consideration the

options that we put forth, the strategy that we sort of lay out, in the

hopes that it will be stronger and better understood by the people in

this country. Their support, together with a strong level of bipartisan

support in the Congress for the President's plan, hopefully as slightly

modified, can be successful. We want success, Madam President. We want

success.

So that is the reason we come this evening. I am going to speak to

one or two provisions, and my colleagues can address others.

First, the unity of command. We have a time-honored tradition with

American forces that wherever possible, there be a unity of command

from an American commander, whatever rank that may be, down to the

private, and that our forces can best operate with that unity of

command and provide the best security possible to all members of the

Armed Forces that are engaged in carrying out such mission as that

command is entrusted to perform.

A number of Senators, in the course of the hearing on Friday and the

hearing this morning, raised questions about this serious issue of

unity of command. I say serious issue because the President, in his

remarks, described--and this is on January 10--described how there will

be an Iraqi commander, and that we will have embedded forces with the

Iraqi troops. Well, we are currently embedding forces, but I think the

plan--and that is what I refer to, the President's announcement on

January 10 in the generic sense as the plan--will require perhaps a

larger number of embedded forces. But the plan envisions an Iraqi chain

of command. The Iraqis indicated, in working with the President, this

plan in many respects tracks the exchange of thoughts that the

President and the Prime Minister have had through a series of meetings

and telephonic conversations. So the plan embraces the goals of the

Prime Minister of Iraq, the goals of our President.

But this is a unique situation where the Iraqis have a complete chain

of command, from a senior officer in each of the nine districts in

Baghdad, and the United States likewise will have a chain of command in

that same district or such segments of this plan as the military

finally put together--each will have a chain of command, the Iraqi

forces and the United States forces.

In the course of the testimony that we received, particularly

testimony from the retired Vice Chief of the U.S. Army on Friday

afternoon, he was concerned, as a number of Senators are concerned--and

our provision literally flags this, and flags it in such a way that we

call upon the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs

of Staff to look at that plan and to bring such clarification forward

as may be necessary, and to do it in a way that will secure the safety

of our forces, the protection of our forces, and yet go forward with

this idea of a greater sharing of the command responsibility in the

operations to take place in Baghdad. So we simply call on the

administration to bring such clarification and specificity to the

Congress and the people of the United States to ensure the protection

of our force and that this command structure will work because I

believe it doesn't have--I am trying to find a precedent where we have

operated like this. I have asked the expert witnesses in hearings, and

thus far those witnesses have not been able to explain the command

structure that we have conceived, the concept of the plan of January

10, just how it will work.

Likewise, we put in a very important paragraph which says that

nothing in this resolution should be construed as indicating that there

is going to be a cutoff of funds. Given the complexity of this

situation, there has been a lot of press written on the subject of our

resolution. Colleagues have come up to me and said: Well, can you

assure me that this doesn't provide a cutoff of funds.

Now, the cutoff of funds is the specific power given under the

Constitution to the Congress of the United States. I personally think

that power should not be exercised, certainly not given the facts and

the circumstances today where this plan--which I hope in some manner

will succeed and we are working better with the Prime Minister and his

forces. So at this point in time I think it is important that our

resolution carry language as follows:

So I think that very clearly eliminates any consideration there.

At this time I would like to yield the floor so that my colleagues

can speak, and maybe I will have some concluding remarks.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I thank our distinguished colleague from

Maine.

It has been a hard work in progress, but we reiterate, perhaps

Members want to offer their own resolutions. We are open to

suggestions. We are not trying to grab votes, just make ours stronger.

I bring to the attention of my colleague, this is not to be construed

as saying, Mr. President, you cannot do anything; we suggest you look

at openings by which we could, hopefully, have substantially less

United States involvement of troops in what we foresee as a bitter

struggle of sectarian violence.

The American GI, in my judgment, has sacrificed greatly, and their

families, in giving sovereignty to this Nation. Now we see it is in the

grip of extraordinary sectarian violence. Sunni upon Shia, Shia upon

Sunni. I am not trying to ascribe which is more guilty than the other,

but why should they proceed to try and destabilize the very government

that gives all Iraqis a tremendous measure of freedom, free from

tyranny and from Saddam Hussein. Why should the American GI, who does

not have a language proficiency, who does not have a full understanding

of the culture giving rise to these enormous animosities and hatreds

that precipitate the killings and other actions--why should not that be

left to the Iraqi forces?

We have trained upwards of 200,000. We have reason to believe today

there are 60,000 to 70,000 who are tested--in many respects they have

been participating in a number of military operations, together with

our forces. Let elements of that group be the principals to take the

lead, as they proudly say, give them the lead, and go into the

sectarian violence. That would enable our commanders, our President, to

send fewer than 20,500 into that area.

On the other hand, we support the President with respect to his

options regarding the Anbar Province and the additional forces.

Am I not correct in that?

You refer to the one commander you met. I wonder if the

Senator would reference your trip in December and what others told you

about the addition of United States forces. I think that is important

for the Record.

Madam President, I thank my colleague.

In my trip in the October timeframe, I would see much the same

expression from military and civilian. Our codel visited, and it was

following my trip that I came back and said in a press conference, this

situation is moving sideways.

My observations, together with the observations of others--some in

our Government, some in the private sector--induced the

administration--I am not suggesting we were the triggering cause, but

we may have contributed--to go to an absolutely, as you say in the

Navy, ``general quarters'' to study every aspect of the strategy which

then was in place, and which now is clearly stated as late as yesterday

by the admiral who will be the CENTCOM commander, wasn't working.

I commend the President for taking the study and inviting a number of

consultants. That whole process was very thorough.

The point the Senator is making, as late as December--mine in

October, yours in December--we both gained the same impressions that no

one was asking for additional United States troops at that time.

I thank my colleague.

We should add an important reference to work done by the Baker-

Hamilton commission. They have made similar findings. They mention a

slight surge, but in my study of that one sentence in that report, I

don't think they ever envisioned a surge of the magnitude that is here.

They can best speak for themselves and, indeed, yesterday there was

testimony taken from two senior members of that commission, but I don't

know whether they were speaking for the entire commission, and whether,

in their remarks, they may wish to amend portions of their report. I

wasn't present for that testimony.

I hope someone in the Foreign Relations Committee can make that

clear. Were they speaking for the entire commission? Did they wish to

have their remarks amend their report which we followed? It was one of

the guideposts we used, the important work of that group.

Again, we are doing what we think is constructive to help the Senate

in preparing for its deliberations, to invite other colleagues to make

suggestions. We stand open to consider other options that may come

before the Senate.

At this point in time, our resolution is the same form as the

resolution we filed here a week or so ago. We are not changing any of

the procedures by which the Senate takes into consideration our points.

Whether we will be able to utilize this as a substitute should other

amendments be called upon the floor, the rules are quite complex on

that matter, and I will not bring all of that into the record at this

point. But there are certain impediments procedurally as to how this

specific resolution could ever be actually used for the purposes of a

substitute.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.