Mr. President, I join my colleagues this morning

especially in thanking and congratulating the Senator from Colorado and

the Senator from Tennessee for bringing forward this approach. There is

no question but that we are going to begin disengaging from Iraq. The

question is: Is that disengagement going to be done in a manner which

strengthens our security as a nation or is it going to be done in a

manner which undermines our security as a nation? Are we going to leave

an Iraq which is stable enough to govern itself and maintain its own

security and have a government that functions or are we going to leave

an Iraq which becomes divided into warring factions which may lead to

literally a genocidal event with an element of the country which is a

client state for Iraq, an element of the country which is a safe haven

for al-Qaida, and an element of the country which is perceived as a

threat to Turkey?

Clearly, we cannot precipitously abandon the people of Iraq or our

own national interests in having a stable Iraq. So we need to look for

a process which is going to allow us to proceed in an orderly way and

in a way which, hopefully, can start to bring our own Nation together

as we try to address this most difficult issue.

Looking to the proposal of the Iraq Study Group is, in my opinion,

the appropriate way to proceed. It is interesting that today we are

going to see, I believe, the passage of a supplemental bill which will

fund our soldiers in the field, which we absolutely have an obligation

to do, which, after a lot of pulling and tugging and different ideas

being put on the table, has reached a position which, hopefully, will

have a consensus vote and will represent a majority which will be able

to pass that bill and, thus, fund the soldiers in the field in a manner

which has both sides working together, the Democratic leader having

endorsed the language and the President having endorsed the language.

But this agreement today which has in it the Warner language, which I

supported, is a precursor to the next step, and the next step should be

a broader coalition within our political process of developing a plan

for disengagement from Iraq that assures the security of the United

States and the stability of that country. Thus, I think the step which

is being proposed today by the Senator from Colorado and the Senator

from Tennessee and is supported by the Senator from Pennsylvania, the

Senator from Arkansas, the Senator from Utah, and myself is an effort

to set out a blueprint or a path which we can, hopefully, follow in a

bipartisan way as we proceed down this road.

The Iraq Study Group did this country an enormous service--former

Congressman Hamilton and former Secretary of State Baker--in

extensively

studying the issue and coming back with very concrete and specific

proposals as to how we can, hopefully, effectively deal with settling

the Iraq situation.

I congratulate both of these Senators for this initiative. I am happy

to join in it. I look forward to it being the template upon which we

build a broader coalition which I hope will be bipartisan and which I

hope can settle a little of the differences which are so dividing our

Nation and which will give not only the Iraqi people the opportunity to

have a surviving, stable government, but will give ourselves the

direction we need to assure our safety as we move forward in this very

perilous time confronting terrorists who wish to do us harm.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.