Mr. President, I follow the remarks of my colleague

from Texas regarding the situation in Iraq and our own situation as it

relates to that effort. I wish to pick up on what he said, which is

that for so long in the history of our Nation, politics ended at the

water's edge. I wish we could go back to the days when we would look at

our troops fighting overseas in an effort as significant as this is--

the current war against radical Islam--as something that could unite us

all as Americans, where we might shed party labels and also shed

personal political ambition.

I cannot help but notice, as the Senator from Texas was recounting

all of the various plans that have been proposed from the other side,

that most of them seemed to come from those labeled as a Presidential

candidate. It seems everybody tried to have a different nuance on yet

another micromanaging strategy to satisfy their personal political

goals.

So how do we serve our national interests best? We should not be

fighting a war from the political landscape of Washington. That is a

recipe for defeat. We should follow the strategy of General Petraeus,

who is in the field, who is the allied commander of our troops in Iraq,

who does believe the current strategy we are following is one that has

a reasonable chance for success. There is no guarantee, but it has a

reasonable chance for success. That strategy has now been unfolding for

several days. There has been a change on the ground. It is a strategy I

know many forget, but it has multiprongs to it. It is not just the

military reinforcements over Baghdad and the Iraqi forces taking the

lead in Baghdad with our support, but it also has a political and an

economic component. The political component--and I had to look for it

because it was not on the front page--was that the Iraqi Cabinet

approved yesterday an oil-sharing agreement for their country, which

now goes to the Iraqi Parliament for their approval. That is one of the

key cornerstones of beginning to achieve a political settlement--

reaching an accord on the sharing of oil revenue--so there can be a

sense of nationhood, so there can be a coming together of the different

factions within Iraq. It is a very important component of a political

settlement. I know other settlements are being added to the military

and, at the same time, we understand some of those folks we would not

want to be partners with. There are elements from the old Baathist Army

that can be incorporated. Most of these are Sunnis, which is leading to

a greater sense of confidence in the Sunni population. We see shifting

and changing on the ground. We see that al-Sadr is taking a slightly

different approach. He is anti-American, but at the same time the

streets of Baghdad seem to be a tad quieter.

We have a long way to go, but we are making some progress. I believe

it is important we note even the small measures of progress. I know our

troops on the ground, our brave men and women fighting in Iraq, do

notice these changes and understand they make a difference in the lives

of the Iraqis. When our men and women who volunteer to serve our Nation

are deployed and they go into battle, they should never for a moment

have any hesitation in their minds or wonder whether they will have the

tools they need to successfully perform their mission while defending

themselves and the civilians they are working to protect.

The concept of opposing the war but supporting our troops seems

untenable, when part of that same plan is one that will not allow

reinforcements into battle, will not allow the equipment necessary, and

has been described as a slow-bleed strategy. That kind of a strategy

accomplishes nothing toward victory, and it does damage our troops,

their morale and their mission.

Our President is the Commander in Chief. He is the leader of our

Nation's military. Congress voted to authorize the President under the

present circumstances. Resolutions in Washington of all flavors and

varieties might make for good politics, but they do not make good sense

as a military policy and a strategy for success. We only have one

Commander in Chief at a time. Our Nation only has one Commander in

Chief, and to micromanage our troops in the field is not what was ever

intended by the constitutional responsibilities that divide the powers

within our Government.

My colleague from Texas talked about Chairman Levin's comments. He

made other comments in that interview. This was Sunday on ``Meet The

Press.''

I don't think that is a check and balance that was envisioned by our

Constitution and Founding Fathers--tying the hands of the Commander in

Chief in a time of war, while our troops are deployed and are shedding

blood in battle. That is not what our Constitution ever intended.

Is it appropriate for Congress to tie the hands of the Commander in

Chief in a time of war? I would say no. I believe most Floridians would

agree with that--that this is not the time to tie the hands of the

Commander in Chief. Should we keep the Commander in Chief from

reinforcing our troops? In the judgment of military leaders, such as

General Petraeus, the reinforcements are necessary, needed, and they

are part of what will give us an opportunity for success. Should we

keep the Commander in Chief from reinforcing these troops? The answer

to that is also no. Under article I, section 8, of the Constitution,

with regard to the Armed Forces, Congress is given the power of the

purse and only the power of the purse. We have the responsibility to

fully provide funding for our military forces, especially when they are

at war and in harm's way, defending our Nation.

So what is the President's role in all of this? Article II, section

2, of the Constitution says the President is the ``Commander in Chief

of the Army and Navy of the United States.'' He has command over the

Armed Forces. He has the power and authority to deploy troops. He has

the power and authority to direct military campaigns during wartime.

For the Congress to tie the President's hands is not the right thing to

do. It is outside the scope of what the Congress is supposed to do.

This is not the checks and balances intended by our Founding Fathers.

In a time of war, the Congress should only support our President, try

to unite behind our troops and unite behind our effort. Our job is not

to micromanage the handling of a war.

Another theory that has been advanced is we should continue to fight

al-Qaida but not be involved in a civil war. I have not understood how

we can have a strategy in a place that is as complex as Iraq is today

to fight against one set of insurgents and not against another. We do

know that a chaotic Iraq would be nothing but a haven for al-Qaida. We

know that al-Qaida is resurging and reorganizing; our recent

intelligence reports indicate that. Nothing would be more appealing or

pleasing to them than to, first of all, validate their strategy, which

is to create such an uproar in American politics through the deaths of

our men and women in uniform and to end the resolve of our Nation so we

would not continue to be steadfast in our resolve. This has been their

avowed and professed strategy.

I believe for us to do anything other than continue forward in this

hopeful effort for a victorious outcome would be nothing short of

giving in to al-Qaida's strategy--their professed strategy. There is

only one option, which has to do with the funding of our troops. I go

back to the Gregg resolution. Senator Gregg had a resolution, and it

was simply that we would support our troops. Our troops are in battle;

we are in a time of war. This Congress sent them into battle by

allowing the President to have the authority to do so. So at this time,

the only resolution that I think is appropriate is the Gregg

resolution, which has been discussed but not debated on the floor of

the Senate. I look forward to an opportunity to have a full debate on

that resolution. Hopefully, the leadership will allow it to come to the

floor for a full debate and a vote.