

He had to make them take him. He was a sitting judge. He was not required to go. He was deployed to England. I do not know how long he had been in at the time D-Day occurred. He volunteered to go in on a glider behind enemy lines in the nighttime at the time of the D-Day landing to try to protect the soldiers on the beach from counterattacks.

I remember asking Strom—former chairman of the Armed Services Committee, I will note—I asked: Strom, well, how long did you stay in? Did you stay in until Germany surrendered? He said: Yes, sir, we stayed in until Germany surrendered—there to the day they surrendered. He said: In fact, after Germany surrendered, I was on a train heading across the United States to the Pacific. They were going to send us to Japan when they dropped the bomb on Japan.

I wish to say, I do not know what General Eisenhower, General Marshall, General MacArthur would think about a policy that says, in a time of war, Congress is going to decide how long people are deployed. I do not think it is good policy for a lot of reasons. I would express my objection to the amendment. I know it is well intentioned.

I say this: The military understands it. The military is determined to reduce deployment times in Iraq. Secretary Gates has made that clear. But had he not been able to extend for 3 months those soldiers he extended, it would have required as much as five new brigades to be sent over there. Some of them would not have had their full time at home that he wanted them to have at home. He thought it was better to do it that way than the other way. I believe, under the circumstances, that was a correct decision. People could debate that, but I think he made the right decision there. So it is better to do it that way. To pass a law, sitting here in air-conditioned offices, that is going to direct how the military deploys its troops in times of war is something I think we should not do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I also thank the members of the Armed Services Committee, the Senators from Michigan and Arizona, for all the work they have done on this Defense authorization bill.

I hope the Members of the Senate would have an honest discussion and debate and vote on these amendments and to uphold the 60-vote threshold on something that is as important as this Defense authorization bill, the many amendments that are going to come before us today, I think, takes away from the process, quite honestly.

As far as the air-conditioning goes in this body, I have advocated since I got here, if we shut the air-conditioning down, we would probably be a little more concise and gotten to the point a long time ago.

I rise today in support of an amendment offered by my friend, Senator WEBB. As many colleagues here in this body know, Senator WEBB is a highly decorated marine and Vietnam veteran. I respect his judgment. I trust his counsel enormously on these issues. I am proud to cosponsor his amendment as one part of a strategy to strengthen our military and change course in Iraq.

I also rise today to honor those who have served in Iraq, in honor of those who have been hurt there, and in honor of those 3,600 who never came home. Twenty brave men from my State paid the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq. They are our friends, our neighbors, our brothers, our sisters, our parents, and our children.

The war in Iraq has dominated this country's dialog and conscience for 5 long years. It is now costing us more than \$2.5 billion every week; some say it is \$3 billion. That is over \$100,000 every minute of every hour of every day in Iraq.

Like many of my colleagues in the Senate, one of the most difficult things for me is the struggle in my heart. I balance two seemingly contradictory ideas: I stand here today proud to support our men and women in service, and I also stand here today proud to say that I adamantly oppose this war. I lie awake trying to think of ways to give our troops the resources they need to do their jobs in Iraq but all the while trying to figure out ways to bring them home to their families, friends, and communities.

Let me be clear about this: The men and women fighting this war have my full and unconditional support as a Montanan, as an American, and as a Senator. This country's service men and women have performed their jobs with honor and distinction in the most difficult conditions imaginable. I have supported them since the beginning, and I will continue to support them in the field and, just as importantly, after they come home—something our Nation has fallen behind on doing.

For more than 2 years, I have been asking the President of this great country to develop a plan to get us out of Iraq. I am disappointed to report that I no longer believe President Bush will use any of his remaining 559 days in office to do so. Think of this. We were told in 2003 that we were invading Iraq for the following 3 reasons: to find and destroy weapons of mass destruction, to topple Saddam Hussein's regime, and to give the Iraqi people a chance to establish their own government. While certainly no weapons of mass destruction were found, any infrastructure that may have been in place to create such weapons of mass destruction has been destroyed. Saddam Hussein's government has been dissolved, and an evil dictator has been captured and put to death. The Iraqi people have voted on several occasions on their Government, their Constitution, and their future. I would say our work in Iraq is done. It is time for

American troops to stop refereeing a centuries old civil war and come home after a job well done.

The President has not come up with a plan to bring the troops home. Instead, he jeopardized their funding, their equipment, and their training by vetoing legislation that would have funded those vital needs and begun the process of getting them home. The President uses our fighting men and women as pawns in this political game that is dividing our own people at home. That is totally unacceptable. President Bush's intention is clear—to leave our troops in the middle of this bloody civil war until he leaves office. That is why I am announcing I can no longer give the President the benefit of the doubt that he will end the Iraq war.

I am going to take a moment today to share with my colleagues thoughts on a possible three-point plan I hope will bring the Iraq war closer to an end, make our troops safer around the world, and refocus our efforts on those terrorists who attacked this Nation on September 11.

First, we must support the Webb amendment that protects the mental and physical health of our troops. We all know a neighbor or a friend whose son or daughter has been deployed two, three, or even four times with seemingly no rest at home. That is why I am cosponsoring this amendment with Senator WEBB. It deals with troop readiness. His amendment basically says that if you are going to send a unit into war, make sure they are well trained, well rested, and ready for the fight. It is very simple. It is common sense.

More and longer deployments of units with less time to rest and recuperate between means we are going to see more casualties in Iraq, more cases of post-traumatic stress disorder, and more suicides after they get home. According to the Army's own data, soldiers serving repeated deployments are 50 percent more likely than those with only one tour to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Let's think twice before we let the President send a unit to this war or any other of the world's hot spots without the proper training and time between deployments. The strength and long-term health of our Armed Forces is at stake. This war has taken its toll on our readiness. If we don't start now to rebuild and fortify our troops, we will not be able to effectively go after the bad guys who continue to threaten our national security. We need to pass this Webb amendment, period. It is the right thing to do for our troops.

Second, we must redouble our efforts in Afghanistan. Afghanistan threatens to slide back from the progress that was made there immediately following the attacks of September 11. But the war in Afghanistan is rapidly and dangerously becoming a forgotten war, and our lack of effort there helps to explain the rise of al-Qaida in a nuclear and highly volatile Pakistan.