

we supported just 54 days ago. Just tell them we changed our minds. You say they will be let down if they are stopped before they have an opportunity to achieve success? I do not think so. They will get over it.

Well, maybe that is a bit unfair. Maybe that is not a fair way to deal with it. But with a little senatorial poetic license, I think it makes a sort of point. Many have said that President Bush lied to get us into this war. I reject that. But what is the integrity in voting on a policy in May that puts 30,000 more soldiers in harm's way and then we pull the plug on them before they have half a chance to be successful?

Our military will go where we ask them to go. They will go into harm's way. They are willing to put their lives on the line. They do not want to be put on the line if we are not going to follow through to success in the end. Among the other adverse ramifications of a precipitous withdrawal, a failure of will by the Congress that denies our military a fair chance to be successful, I think could be damaging to the morale of the finest military we have ever had. I think it is an important matter.

There are a lot of things we need to be thinking about. I do not know how this war will come out. I am anxious to hear General Petraeus's report. He finished at the top of his class at West Point or near the top. He was No. 1 in his class at the Command and General Staff College. He has his Ph.D. from Princeton. He is a Ranger combat commander of the 101st Airborne, and he has written the manual on how to defeat an insurgency. He has only had his full complement of the surge troops about 3 weeks.

I believe it is premature and immature for us to react in this way and vote to bring those soldiers home, to reorder how they will be deployed without even seeking his opinion or giving it sufficient thought.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, the Senator from Minnesota has been waiting patiently for, I believe, an hour or so. I note the Senator from New York is on the floor. So I will speak for a few minutes and then yield the floor.

I want to point out that again, yesterday, British Army Lieutenant General Graeme Lamb, Deputy Commander of Multinational Force, Iraq, and senior British military representative in Iraq, was asked by Jamie McIntyre of CNN about how "the growing sentiment in our Congress to bring U.S. troops home sooner affected the mood of troops deployed in Iraq."

Lieutenant General Lamb responded that those troops find it "a touch difficult because while it is so clear to them that we are making progress, it is not reflected by those who are not in the fight but are sitting back and making judgment upon what they, the troops, can see with absolute clarity."

Lieutenant General Lamb noted that those making such judgments and not taking note of the progress "are not going out every day in a humvee." Moreover, he further noted that the progress the troops see is "seldom reported." They see provincial councils. They see water going to people who did not have it before. They see electricity coming on line. They see stability to the networks. They see all the stuff that no one portrays.

That is the view of our deputy to General Petraeus over in Iraq. Yet I hear on the floor here—I hear again there has been no progress made, that the status quo remains, that there has been no progress. And as we get into the debate, we find that those who are supportive of this particular amendment, which requires after 120 days a departure from the conflict, have no plan B themselves. I have been asked continuously what plan B is. And plan B, after the surge, I believe details a set of difficult options. But I think it is important that we point out what has been happening in Iraq as a result of the surge, even though it has been a very short period of time.

In Anbar Province—which we all know is over here, as shown on the map. Here is Fallujah. Here is Ramadi. The fact is that last year Anbar Province we believed was lost to al-Qaida. The U.S. and Iraqi troops cleaned al-Qaida fighters out of Ramadi, which I visited last week, and other areas of western Anbar Province. Tribal sheiks broke with the terrorists and joined the coalition side. Ramadi, months ago, was Iraq's most dangerous city. It is now one of its safest. Attacks are down from 30 to 35 a day in February to zero on most days now.

Fallujah. The Iraqi police center established numerous stations and divided the city into gated districts. Violence has declined. Local intelligence tips have proliferated.

Throughout Anbar Province—this area shown right here on the map—thousands of men are signing up for the police and army, and the locals are taking the fight to al-Qaida. All 18 major tribes in that province are now on board with the security plan. A year from now, the Iraqi Army and police could have total control of security in Ramadi, allowing American forces to safely draw down.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I am glad to yield for a question.

Mr. SESSIONS. I was in that area, also, in the spring and was there last fall. Last fall, I thought it was one of the worst briefings, the most troubling briefings I had about the condition in the al-Anbar region. I say to the Senator, you have been there, I guess, within the last week. It was a dramatic turnaround. One of the thoughts that went in my mind was: Why would I ever want to bet against the U.S. Marines. They were out there having a tough challenge, but this thing has

turned around, has it not? I ask the Senator, is that his view, from talking to the people on the ground, as they explained it to us?

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, in response to the Senator's question, I would say a couple things have happened. One is obviously, as the Senator has pointed out, the bravery and courage of our Marines and Army personnel who are there. But in addition to that, al-Qaida has been so cruel, so disruptive, and causing so many difficulties that the sheiks, the Sunni sheiks have come over on our side.

About a year ago, they were recruiting about 20 to 25 people a month to join the local police. The last time they had a recruitment drive, some 1,200 young Sunnis showed up.

Now, I will freely admit to my friend from Alabama, you will never see this probably in much of the media reporting today. That is why you have to go over there and get feet on the ground, as I know the Senator from Alabama has, the Senator from Minnesota and others, as well as the Senator from New York. But you have to see it, and you have to talk to these people.

It brings up another point. These soldiers, marines, airmen, others, men and women, pay attention to what is going on here on the floor of the Senate. They pay attention when the majority leader of the Senate says the war is "lost." They pay attention when people, previous speakers have said nothing has changed, no improvement. They pay attention to that.

General Petraeus said in response to a question I asked him a long time ago—I said:

Suppose we send you additional troops, and we tell those troops we support you, but we are convinced you cannot accomplish your mission, and we do not support the mission we are sending you on. What effect does that have on the morale of your troops?

That is a question I asked General Petraeus back in January. General Petraeus said:

Well, it would not be a beneficial effect, sir. Obviously, a commander would like to go forward with as much flexibility as he can achieve. I was assured yesterday by the Secretary of Defense, if we need additional assets, my job is to ask for them.

Of course, Lieutenant General, British Army General Lamb was much more frank in his response, where he said:

While it is clear to them that we're making progress, it is not reflected by those who are not in the fight but are sitting back and making judgment upon what they, the troops, can see with absolute clarity.

So my answer to the Senator from Alabama is—and I will go through some more areas where we made progress—it is very unfortunate that more Americans do not know not only about the success but of the incredible difficulty of this kind of combat, and yet these young people are doing such a magnificent job.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I am glad to yield for a question.