

There needs to be debates, like we're going through. There needs to be town-hall meetings. There needs to be travel. This is a huge country.

New Hampshire, Republican debate:

I read the newspaper.

In answer to a question about his reading habits.

"Meet The Press," November 21, of last year:

I think it's important for those of us in a position of responsibility to be firm in sharing our experiences, to understand that the babies out of wedlock is a very difficult chore for mom and baby alike. . . . I believe we ought to say there is a different alternative than the culture that is proposed by people such as Miss Wolf in society. . . . And, you know, hopefully condoms will work, but it hasn't worked.

From "A Charge to Keep," by George W. Bush, published last year in November:

The students at Yale came from all different backgrounds and all parts of the country. Within months, I knew many of them.

New York Times:

The important question is, How many hands have I shaken?

The Washington Post, July 27:

I don't remember debates. I don't think we spent a lot of time debating it. Maybe we did, but I don't remember.

This is on a discussion of the Vietnam war when he was at Yale.

Knight Ridder News Service:

The only thing I know about Slovakia is what I learned first-hand from your foreign minister, who came to Texas.

The fact is, the meeting was not with the Minister of Slovakia but with the Prime Minister of Slovenia, two different countries.

June 16, New York Times:

If the East Timorians decide to revolt, I'm sure I'll have a statement.

Economist, June 12:

Keep good relations with the Grecians.

CNN Inside Politics, April 9:

Kosovians can move back in.

I was just inebriating what Midland was all about then.

This is from an interview, as quoted in "First Son" by a man named Bill Minutaglio.

Arlington Heights, IL, October 24, a day or so ago, to make sure we are current:

It's important for us to explain to our Nation that life is important. It is not only life of babies, but it is life of children living, you know, the dark dungeons of the Internet.

The debate to become President of the United States is a very serious debate. It involves things we talked about tonight. Tax policy, established by an independent group—the tax policy of want-to-be-President George W. Bush would bankrupt the country. His Social Security policy would bankrupt Social Security. His education program in Texas has been a failure. His efforts to talk about bipartisanship is without any foundation.

He, in the debates, talked about bipartisanship. The fact is, on major issues in play in this election, bipartisan projects have been blocked by the

highly partisan Republican majority. Overcoming that kind of determined partisan opposition means working with people such as Dr. Charlie Norwood on the Patients' Bill of Rights.

Although George W. Bush claimed credit for the Texas Patients' Bill of Rights, the truth is he initially vetoed it and later let it become law without signature. Or working with JOHN MCCAIN on the bipartisan campaign finance reform bill or GORDON SMITH and 12 other Republicans on the bipartisan hate crimes bill or JOHN WARNER and RICHARD LUGAR on the bipartisan legislation to close the gun show loophole. Not only does Governor Bush fail to appreciate what kinds efforts these involve, he actually opposes every one of these bipartisan measures.

Instead of showing bipartisan leadership, Governor Bush stands squarely with the entrenched Republican majority on every one of these issues, and that is not bipartisanship.

I read quotes tonight and last night. The American public must decide for themselves if this man is the person who should be President of the United States.

Mr. President, until my friend, Senator BROWNBACK, arrives, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GORE-CHERNOMYRDIN DEAL

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I wish to take some time this evening to discuss an issue on which I held a hearing, along with Senator GORDON SMITH, yesterday. It concerns something that is very troubling: The arming of Iran, which occurred recently, and concerns an agreement that was made by Vice President AL GORE with then-Prime Minister of Russia Viktor Chernomyrdin on allowing Russia to convey armaments to Iran and avoid U.S. sanctions law.

I do not want to discuss so much that part of the issue, although it is an important part of it, but I want to get to the issue of an agreement made between the Vice President and then-Prime Minister of Russia Viktor Chernomyrdin to allow the conveyance of this equipment, military hardware—we are talking submarines, tanks, attack helicopters, a lot of equipment.

It was stated by the Vice President in this agreement—and we found this out when it was leaked to the press 14 days ago, in the New York Times—that we will not sanction Russia for allowing this to take place.

I asked the administration in the hearing I held yesterday and I asked by letter today signed by a number of my colleagues: Let us see the agreement the Vice President entered into with Viktor Chernomyrdin. To date, the administration has refused to convey that document to us. We held a closed session yesterday. We said: Convey it to us in closed session. They refused.

This afternoon, a group of Senators and myself sent a letter to the Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, restating our position that the administration should share with the Congress the documents relating to the Gore-Chernomyrdin agreement which allowed Russia to sell conventional weaponry to Iran and not be sanctioned under U.S. law.

If we have not received the documents by noon on Monday, the Foreign Relations Committee will be forced to issue—and pursue issuing—a subpoena to receive those documents from the administration.

This letter was signed by Senator GORDON SMITH; myself, who chaired the hearing yesterday; along with Chairman MCCAIN of the Commerce Committee; Senator LUGAR; Chairman SHELBY of the Intelligence Committee; Chairman WARNER of the Armed Services Committee; Chairman THOMPSON of the Governmental Affairs Committee; and Senators NICKLES and LOTT of leadership.

In it we express our disappointment with the administration's continued stonewalling and refusal to provide documents related to the Gore-Chernomyrdin agreement. They refused to even allow us to see documents which have been published in the press, which is how we learned about them. These were published in the New York Times. That is how we learned about this taking place.

Essentially, now, the administration is asking us to trust them. But the fact that almost everything we have learned about this secret deal has come from the New York Times and the Washington Times—and not the administration—makes such trust difficult.

Congress has the right and the responsibility to review all the relevant documents and to judge for itself whether the transfers the Vice President signed off on were covered by U.S. nonproliferation laws.

Unfortunately, until the New York Times broke the story 14 days ago, Congress had not seen this written, signed agreement between the Vice President and the Russian Prime Minister. In open session hearing yesterday, I asked them to deny this, that this had been conveyed to the Congress. What we heard was that the administration had "telegraphed" the contents of the agreement, that they had "briefed" but they were unable to say that they had transmitted this document to the Congress, as they were required to do.

In essence, they said to us: Look, we were telling you that the Vice President was meeting with Mr.

Chernomyrdin. We told you that they were discussing a number of issues. That should be good enough.

Well, it isn't. Now we are saying to the administration: Show us the documents that have now been—some of them have been leaked to the press. Tell us what the agreement was. Because we want to determine whether or not laws were violated.

To date, they have continued to stonewall and to refuse to provide the documents to us. We provided, as I stated, a closed session for them to provide it to us in case there were national security concerns. They refused to do so.

The decision to allow Russia to escape the consequences of providing Iran with conventional weapons is one which affects not only the security of the American military personnel in the gulf but also the security of our allies in the region. This is not the type of agreement which should have been kept from the American people, and it certainly is not something that Members of Congress should have learned about first in the press.

The Vice President is saying this deal with Russia slowed down and prevented more weapons transfers from Russia to Iran. The fact is that the Russians did not keep their side of the bargain.

I have held a number of hearings on Russian arms transfers to Iran over the last 4 years. As a matter of fact, I held six hearings on the topic of Iran's weaponry buildup. At each of these hearings we have seen and have had experts cite the level and the amount of weaponry that has been transferred from Russia to Iran. At almost all these hearings—as a matter of fact, I think all of them—we had an administration witness there. We said to them: Stop this flow of weaponry from Russia to Iran. We are going to face this weaponry or our allies in the region are going to face this weaponry.

At each of these hearings the administration would say: Yes, it is terrible that Russia is conveying this weaponry to Iran. We are trying to stop it. Then I would ask: Are you sanctioning Russia for doing this? They would say: Well, no, we are not doing this. We are not sure it rises to that level. We are not sure we should do this. And all along, there was this secret agreement in the background that they had agreed to—the Vice President had—that they would not sanction Russia. And they did not disclose that at any of these hearings nor even allude to the fact that that existed. Until we found out about it 14 days ago in the New York Times, I did not know this existed.

This should have been conveyed to the Congress. We should have been brought in so we could appraise whether or not these sanctions should have happened with this level of weaponry that has been flowing from Russia to Iran.

I have a compilation now, from open sources, of some of the weapons that

have been transferred. These are all weapons which pose a direct threat to our forces in the gulf as well as to our allies. This is a list gleaned from various press sources and other open sources. And we do not have the list of the weapons the administration agreed to let Russia supply to Iran.

Yes, the press is reporting there was an annex to the Gore-Chernomyrdin agreement that listed the level of weaponry, the amount of weapons that could be conveyed from Russia to Iran, and that this would not be sanctioned. We need to see that annex. We need to see what was agreed to be allowed to be conveyed. We know some of what has been conveyed because of open sources in the press. We do not know what was in the agreement between Vice President Gore and Mr. Chernomyrdin. So the Congress is continuing to be left in the dark about what laws, if any, have been broken.

The administration claims that the weaponry is not destabilizing and therefore not subject to sanctions anyway. When you look at the list, the public list, I submit that any and all of these weapons pose a direct threat to our soldiers and sailors in this region. They include submarines. They include attack helicopters. They include attack aircraft, mines, and torpedoes. I think that would be and is destabilizing in the region. It is destabilizing. It is clear that this so-called deal did not stop these transfers from occurring.

The main problem here, that I am complaining about this evening, is not the weaponry, although I think that is a terrible problem and one we are going to have to face. It is going to be very problematic for us and our allies to face in the future. The main problem is we are not being given the opportunity to look at these documents—the agreement—ourselves, to determine the legality of this deal and whether or not it falls into the categories of an agreement that should have been transmitted to Congress by law, and then whether, in fact, this deal allowed Russia to circumvent the law.

By stonewalling on providing us with the material to allow us to see their side of this issue, the administration is raising even more questions than were raised by the initial New York Times article. Why are they refusing to provide these documents? Is there something they are hiding? Provide it to us in closed session. Yet they have continued to refuse to do that.

The administration has an obligation to submit these agreements to the Congress. They never revealed there was a written and signed agreement which binds both sides and binds the United States into skirting U.S. laws.

Now, a couple of laws I think are in play here, whether or not they have been violated. We have not heard from the administration about these. They say they have not, overall, been violated. But the Gore-McCain Act is one, I believe—as we look at it and study it,

if we are able to get the information—that was probably violated. Allowing Iran to have this sort of weaponry is one that would violate this law.

Mr. President, I want to go through a series of charts here to maybe put down clearly what has taken place to date.

Fourteen days ago, there was an article that appeared in the New York Times. I am summarizing here about what took place. Fourteen days ago, an article appeared in the New York Times stating that a secret agreement had been reached between Vice President GORE and then-Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin allowing Russia to avoid sanctions required under U.S. weapons proliferation laws for selling arms to Iran. This is what was in the newspaper, signed by AL GORE and Viktor Chernomyrdin. There is attached to this—we have not seen it, but it has been reported—an annex listing weaponry that can be conveyed.

They are saying here: In light of the undertakings contained in this joint statement—in the aide-memoire—the United States is prepared to take appropriate steps to avoid any penalties to Russia that might otherwise arise under domestic law with respect to the completion of the transfers disclosed in the annex for so long as the Russian Federation acts in accordance with these commitments.

So here is the Vice President of the United States signing an agreement with Mr. Chernomyrdin saying we are going to not enforce U.S. domestic law on these transfers.

Now my question to you, to all of the people, and to the administration, is: Does the Vice President have this authority to waive these sanctions? No, he does not have the authority to waive these sanctions. Under the law, they have to issue the sanctions.

Now they can choose later to find a way out, to waive them afterwards, but they cannot just waive these sanctions. The Vice President does not have the authority to do this. He enters into an agreement saying: We will take appropriate steps to avoid any penalties to Russia that might otherwise arise under domestic law with respect to the completion of the transfers disclosed in the annex for so long as the Russian Federation acts in accordance with these commitments.

I want to go to Secretary Albright's letter to Ivan Ivanov, the Foreign Minister of Russia, about this aide memoire where she says:

Without the aide memoire which we just looked at—

This is the Gore-Chernomyrdin agreement—

Russia's conventional arms sales to Iran would have been subject to sanctions based on various provisions of our laws.

This is her letter to the Russian Foreign Minister, January 13 of this year. The Secretary of State is saying, if we hadn't agreed in this signed secret agreement that we would not sanction you, you would have been subject to

sanctions. The Secretary of State is saying it. You would "have been subject to sanctions based on various provisions of our laws."

This is the other part that was in the secret agreement with Chernomyrdin, that "we are prepared to take steps" that I previously read. The administration itself is saying, look, we agreed with you not to sanction you, but if we hadn't agreed to it, you would have been subject to U.S. sanctions law. Does the Vice President have the authority to waive U.S. sanctions? He doesn't have that authority to do this. Yet that is what he did.

I want to show you some of what we are talking about, the weaponry that has been conveyed. This is one piece of equipment, Russian attack submarines for Iran, three Kilo-class attack submarines have been conveyed under this agreement. We have, as I mentioned, attack helicopters, airplanes. The administration was saying, look, we are not going to sanction you because we have secretly agreed not to sanction you.

I don't want to go on a long time about this. I just want to continue to raise this issue because I am deeply troubled about a couple of things.

No. 1, for 4 years I have been holding hearings about conveyance of weaponry from Russia to Iran and pressing the administration, what are you doing to stop this conveyance of weaponry from Russia to Iran, because our allies will face this equipment in the future. They wring their hands and say, it is terrible what is going on. And then nothing would happen.

Now, 14 days ago, I found out the reason nothing is going to happen—a secret agreement was agreed to that they weren't going to sanction Russia. They were going to let it go ahead and continue to happen. Now we face heightened danger in the Persian Gulf. This equipment is there, and some of it is still being conveyed.

No. 2, we have asked the administration, show us the agreement. You should have shown it to us when it took place so we could understand what this is. I believe there was a violation of the law then. We need to see these documents now. They say nothing illegal has taken place. OK, then, fine. Show us the documents.

A letter was sent today. We want to see the documents of this agreement. We don't want to continue to read about it in the newspaper. We want to see the documents. Convey them to us; send it in a closed session. If there is national security interests, we want to see these documents. That is what we are saying now.

What I am also saying is, what I have stated this evening, if we don't have these by noon on Monday, we will seek a subpoena to receive these documents and get them from the administration.

I think this is highly suspect, what has taken place by the administration. We are only now finding out about it. We need to see what it was that the ad-

ministration agreed to, what it is that is still taking place between Russia and Iran, and why the United States is not stepping in to stop this.

I believe you will be hearing more about this unless the administration comes forward and comes clean. I hope they do. I hope they tell us: Here it is, and here is all of what we agreed to. Here is why we agreed to all of this. Here is why we think this is working, rather than it isn't.

But right now, all we have are secret deals that somehow are getting leaked out to the newspapers, and we don't even know what the agreement is. We don't know what it is. We deserve to know what that agreement is.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STRIPPING JIM LYONS' AUTHORITY AT USDA

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the Founding Fathers intended that the legislative process work through strongly held policy differences to establish the law of the land. They saw open dialogue as central to our democracy, and their vision has served the American people well for over 200 years. It is regrettable, therefore, when policy disagreements degenerate into acts of retribution against individual public servants whose only transgression is to execute the directives of the President they serve.

That is exactly what happened recently when a provision was inserted into the fiscal year 2001 Agriculture Appropriations Bill stripping the USDA Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, Jim Lyons, of his authority to administer the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service until his term in office expires in January 2000. This provision is not only unfair to Mr. Lyons, it undermines the separation of powers doctrine because it is designed solely to intimidate administration officials who are faithful to the policies of the President.

What has Mr. Lyons done, you might ask, to warrant such rebuke? The simple answer is: he has done a difficult job conscientiously.

Mr. President, Mr. Lyons was confirmed as the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment by the Senate in May of 1993. As Undersecretary, he administers two important agencies—the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service—that include nearly half the employees in the Department.

I have worked closely with Mr. Lyons over the past 8 years and respect greatly his work ethic, his understanding of

the issues within his agencies' jurisdiction and his commitment to the public policy making process. We have had policy disagreements, but I have never had reason to question Mr. Lyons' dedication to his job or fitness to serve as Undersecretary.

Mr. Lyons has provided steady and clear leadership during his tenure at USDA, tackling many complex and controversial issues that have plagued the conservation and forestry communities for years. While many of these policy challenges defy easy solution, Jim Lyons never shirked his responsibility to address them. Further, it has been his hallmark to solicit and discuss the views of all parties in a search of common ground in the pursuit of Administration objectives. That approach was particularly evident in the policy dispute that culminated in the Agriculture Appropriations rider relieving Mr. Lyons of line authority for the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, NRE, has responsibility within USDA for working with the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, on issues affecting clean water and air, agriculture, forestry and other environmental concerns. It was in this role that Mr. Lyons entered into negotiations with the EPA to reduce the impact of EPA's proposed Total Maximum Daily Load, TMDL, rule on agriculture and forestry, while helping to ensure our continued progress in improving the quality of the waters of the United States.

After months of negotiation with the EPA, Mr. Lyons helped construct a rule that would provide for measured progress in reducing non-point source pollution through the use of voluntary, incentive-based programs administered largely through the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Many of the provisions objectionable to commodity groups and the Farm Bureau were dropped from the final rule or significantly modified. The provisions affecting silvicultural activities and forestry were dropped altogether.

In August, the President announced the final TMDL rules, and, in response to concerns expressed by Members of Congress, delayed their implementation for one year. Nonetheless, some who were upset that EPA had elected even to proceed with the rules decided to take their frustration out on Mr. Lyons, charging that he had not done enough to fight this rulemaking. As a consequence, language was added to the House version of the fiscal year 2001 Agriculture Appropriations bill defunding Mr. Lyons' office.

At the urging of Senator COCHRAN and his colleagues on the Senate Appropriations Committee, the House agreed to restore funding for the Undersecretary's office, but eliminate Mr. Lyons' authority to manage, supervise or direct his agencies—the job he had sworn to do and for which this