

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 11:30 a.m., with the first half of the time under the control of the Senator from Texas, Mrs. HUTCHISON, or her designee, and the remaining time under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Wyoming.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS
REQUEST FOR IRAQ

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, obviously one of the issues before us and the issue we will be grappling with for the remainder of the week—perhaps longer—is the question of supporting our troops in Iraq and continuing to deal with the war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan. Certainly everyone agrees that these things have to be done. There are different views as to how they should be done. All of us have to review in our minds where we are, what the basic issues are that have us there, and certainly what is necessary to succeed in our efforts in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We have before us a request for \$87 billion for the war on terror. That will be dealt with this week, the division there between what is required for the military aspect and then what is required to complete our job in terms of leaving Iraq and Afghanistan in the condition in which democracy and freedom and a lack of terrorism will be where we are in the future.

It is good to go back and review some ideas. I would like to talk about where we have been, where we need to go to complete the task we undertook, and talk a little about what we are seeking to do in terms of leaving Iraq in a position to govern itself and to support freedom and peace, and about the fact that we hear all the time that there was no plan after combat was over. That is not true. There is a plan. The plan is in process. We certainly will continue to carry out that plan. We need resources to do that.

All of us are concerned about spending. All of us are concerned about the deficit. We find ourselves in a deficit situation for reasons that are fairly apparent. It started, of course, with September 11, which was something we had no control over, which increased special spending we would not otherwise have had. Then we were faced with an economic turnaround which caused additional impacts on our deficit and the economy. Then, of course, we continued to have more terrorism and our troops in Iraq.

I guess probably no one in this body is more conservative than I am in terms of spending, in terms of government's role and what we ought to be doing, but I do recognize that when you have special things, whether it is your business or your family or your government, then spending is done in a different way. That is where we are.

The stakes are high in Iraq, certainly. It is the center front now for the war on terrorism. Critical work remains to be done in Afghanistan as well. Terrorists and regime remnants are making a desperate attempt to maintain themselves and continue in these countries. The U.S. and its allies are confronting them where they live and where they seek refuge, rather than leaving the terrorists in the safe havens where they would like to gather strength and resources and come back as they did before.

Our troops—no one would disagree, I am sure—have to have the necessary resources for the war on terror, and the spending requests will give our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan the equipment they need to increase their safety and security, which happens to be the most important thing for us. This includes funding to replace equipment used that was destroyed during combat operations, to protect our forces, better housing for our troops deployed overseas, and enhanced pay, reflected in the dangers that we face.

Of course, we have been through these things before. Stabilizing Iraq and Afghanistan will increase our security at home and certainly help win the war.

As we understand, the war was not just combat but to change things in that part of the world. The costs of fighting terrorists are significant, but they still are a relatively small percentage of the overall economy compared to that of previous conflicts. According to an analysis done by USA Today, the cost of fighting the war is 5 percent of the GDP compared to 30 percent for World War II and 15 percent for the Korean war. The \$87 billion request is less than 4 percent of our entire Federal budget next year. Yet it is a critical part of this stabilization area we are in.

Initial estimates of Iraq's total need range from \$50 billion to \$75 billion. The administration believes \$20 billion represents our reasonable share as to what we ought to be doing to put the country back in reasonable shape, and we expect the rest of the costs, of course, to be filled by the international community, or by Iraq's own reserves, which are potentially very large.

So these funds will be carefully targeted to the immediate security needs, as well as the share of the critical infrastructure that has to be replaced in order to get the kinds of support there that we are looking for.

Iraq oil reserves are estimated at approximately \$12 billion in 2004 and \$19 billion for each of 2005 and 2006. So unlike many of the countries in that part

of the world, there are sizable resources that we hope will be part of this rebuilding exercise, and indeed should be.

President Bush has held the line on nondefense spending growth. In 2001, the last budget before President Bush took office, nondefense spending grew nearly 15 percent. He cut that growth to 6 percent in 2000, less than 5 percent in 2003, and 2 percent in 2004. Obviously, there is always controversy and different views and things that we would like to do in our home States and in our country. But, of course, obviously, they have to be balanced with our ability to pay and our willingness to tax.

Today's deficits are larger than anybody wants. No one wants deficits, but they are certainly still less than 5 percent of the GDP and are manageable if we put them into a steady downward path by strong economic growth and spending restraints. These are the issues with which we have to deal.

Certainly, the war on terrorism has to be funded. Freeing Iraq is the key to winning the terrorism war and vital to America. President Bush has asked for \$87 billion in emergency funding—a large amount, of course. The majority—\$65 billion—will go to directly support troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, give them more resources that they need. Again, no one would argue against giving our troops what is necessary for them to go forward. And \$21 billion would go to create a secure environment. It is high, but as I mentioned, things have changed and we need to do the job right and continue to work at doing it.

From time to time we hear that there really wasn't a plan or there is not a plan. There is a plan and we are following it. One of the issues, of course, is time. I don't know how you could plan that anybody would have a definite timeframe in terms of a plan for a place such as Iraq. But I think Secretary Rumsfeld covered it well when he commented some time back, a few days ago. These are some of his comments that I think are correct. He said the coalition has certainly, in less than 5 months, racked up a series of achievements in both countries and civil reconstruction that may be without precedent. Today in Iraq virtually all major hospitals and universities have been reopened; hundreds of secondary schools—until a few months ago many were used for weapons storage—have been rebuilt and are ready for the start of the fall semester. This is part of the plan to put these entities, of course, back into place.

Fifty-six thousand Iraqis have been armed and trained in just a few months. They are contributing to the security and defense of the country. Today a new Iraqi army is being trained, and 40,000 Iraq police will join with that army to conduct joint controls with the coalition. Contrast that to the 14 months it took to establish a police force in postwar Germany and

the 10 years it took to begin training a new German army.

Again, this is part of the plan to add stability and provide the opportunity for Iraqis to be able to control their own country and their own people and move forward. As security improves, so does commerce. Five thousand small businesses have opened since the liberation on May 1. An independent Iraqi central bank was established and new currency was announced in just 2 months. These are accomplishments which took years before in Germany. The Iraq governing council has been formed and they appointed a cabinet of ministers—again, something that took years to do in other times.

So this is the plan and the movement to get government back into place there, to have security for themselves, to have people trained to do what has to be done in a country that is independent and standing alone. In major cities and most of the towns, villages, and municipalities, councils have been formed to make the decisions on local matters. That is something that it took a great deal of time to do before, and you would imagine that it would.

But all this has taken place in just 5 months. Again, I don't think anybody can specifically say we are going to be done by the 14th of March in 2005, or whatever, but we are moving very quickly. There is a plan as to what needs to be in place. The Iraqi people are providing intelligence now for our forces every day. Division commanders consistently report an increased numbers of Iraqis coming forward with intelligence that makes it more likely that we can find the terrorists and get them out of positions, and so on. So there has been a great deal of advancement.

There has been great talk about the need for more troops. Those in the military have declared that is not necessary. If we are going to have more, they need to come from other countries that are involved. The commander of the Marine division in the south area decided to send home 15,000 troops and explained if there is a point when he needs them, he can get them. So there hasn't been the shortage that is felt by the military.

Again, we are moving forward and making some progress in that area. That is what it is all about—to continue to reach the visions that we have for Iraq and against terrorism.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming. We are beginning a very important week. We are going to be talking about what is happening in Iraq and the President's request for \$87 billion and added funding.

A lot of people are saying: Wow, \$87 billion. But it is important for us to look at what that \$87 billion is going to do.

First of all, \$66 billion is for our troops. That is for our troop protec-

tion, equipment, making sure they have everything they need to do the job we are asking them to do over the next year. I don't think there is anyone in this Congress who would deny the President a dime of the money that is going to our troops to make sure they have everything they need to do one of the toughest jobs I have ever seen.

I was in Iraq and I was in Afghanistan in August. In Iraq and Afghanistan, our troops are in harm's way every day—every moment, really. I just woke up this morning to the news that two of our wonderful military personnel have been assassinated in Afghanistan. It is a very tough place. We are having to deal with a Taliban that has rejuvenated its efforts, and they are now into drug dealing. They are preying on the police in Afghanistan. If somebody doesn't deal with them, they are murdering them, assassinating them because they want the drug trade.

Why do they want the drug trade? They want the drug trade because that is how they are going to finance the terrorist operations around the world. That is why they are trying to raise money in this illicit way. What could be more important to the security of our people than to stop the drug trafficking in Afghanistan and stop the resurrection of the Taliban?

In Iraq, we see on a daily and weekly basis the harm our young men and women are in. We need to make sure they have the capability to do the job we are asking them to do. That is what the President is asking for, and that is what we will give him.

The other \$20 billion is what most people are talking about. How much should we be giving to rebuild Iraq and how should it be done? Those are the questions we are going to hear on the floor. The Appropriations Committee right now is marking up the bill that will come to the floor, hopefully tomorrow.

This is a legitimate area of disagreement. Most certainly people can reasonably ask the question: Why are we putting \$20 billion into Iraq? There are things we need in America.

The first responsibility of the Congress of the United States and the President is to provide for the security of our people, to provide for a national defense. This is national defense. If we can stabilize Iraq and stop Iraq from being a breeding ground for terrorism, that is a United States security interest. That is why putting the money into the rebuilding of Iraq so that the people will be able to start having an economy, and if they have electricity, water, and basic living conditions, we also will begin to see the startup of business. We hope the oilfield infrastructure will be repaired or rebuilt. It is in much worse shape than we ever thought it would be. We want to rebuild the oil infrastructure so when the Iraqis get the oil out of the ground, it will give jobs to the Iraqi people. They will be able to use it and export it, but

it also means other businesses will crop up to service those oil wells and the delivery of that oil.

We are talking about the beginning of an economy for Iraq. If we don't put \$20 billion into the rebuilding of Iraq, what will those people have to do? How can they start their economy from scratch? How can they start the creation of jobs if the oil pipelines are being held together with rags and cannot deliver the oil?

It is a package of \$87 billion that will be for the security and support of our troops, and for the rebuilding of Iraq which, in turn, will allow our troops to leave earlier but with the knowledge that the people of Iraq will have stability, that Iraq will not be a breeding ground for terrorism, and that they will have a justice system and a security system in place with their own policemen and their own army to protect their borders from the terrorists who are infiltrating their borders from Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.

This is a very important bill, it is a very important request from the President, and it is important that we give to the President what he needs to do the job Congress has given him the authority to do. Congress gave the President the right to declare war on terrorism. Congress declared the war. The President is implementing that war, and we are going to have to give him the support he asks us to give. It would be unthinkable to walk away with the job not yet completed.

I am very pleased to be supportive of the President and this effort, even though it is a difficult situation and a lot of questions have been raised.

Mr. President, we have had a good beginning. We have had the beginning of 6,000 individual reconstruction projects. Schools, universities, and hospitals have been opened. They are not up to the standards we hope they will be, but it was important for the Iraqi children to start school; it was important they have health care services. We have gone in to augment the opening of those facilities.

Iraq is also in the process of transitioning to a governing council. We hope they will be able to form their own government, create their own constitution, have representatives of their people for whom they can vote. That is what we hope to leave them.

We have made a very strong beginning. If we look at where we started, which was absolutely a deteriorating infrastructure, we are making progress. What we hear about in the news is very disconcerting. We hear about a terrorist putting a landmine in a road and it blows up one of our people or one of their people. We hear of terrorists tearing down the electricity grids and cutting the water supply. This shows, if nothing else does, that this is the terrorists' last stand. They do not want the United States to succeed. They do not want the Iraqi people to have a stable lifestyle. They want there to be foment and unrest. They

want people who are desperate for change. We are not going to let them win. That is why this bill is so important.

I am pleased to talk about the important accomplishments and the importance of what we are doing in Iraq. The President and Congress must come together and do what is right for the security of the American people, and doing what is right means we will give the President the money which he has asked for the rebuilding of Iraq and for the protection and support of our troops in the field.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Texas. She certainly expresses the view of at least all of us on this side of the aisle in terms of the challenge we have before us and our willingness to take on that challenge and to complete this task we have begun in the protection of our country.

There are probably a number of questions that are frequently asked with regard to this issue. They should be discussed, and indeed they have been discussed. So, frankly, I hope we do not string this issue out any longer than it needs to be. We should have a reasonable debate and get on with what we need to do. I am very hopeful, as well, that the idea of some of the discussion is not designed to be political. Unfortunately, many issues do that. These are genuine issues. They are not political issues.

Some of the questions that are asked: Why can we not provide the resources for the troops and let the Iraqis do their own thing with their infrastructure? I think one of the differences we have, that we might not have with some other place, is Iraq has suffered from decades of corruption and mismanagement from Saddam, where he built dozens of lavish palaces for himself and his family and funded destruction programs. He involved himself in war in Kuwait, and he failed to invest in the country's critical infrastructure. As a result, more than \$100 billion in debt is unable to be tapped for their own resources. The stability of Iraq and Afghanistan is what is important so that they are no longer the breeding grounds for terrorism.

So it is important that we are helpful in restructuring the things that have not been done for many years prior to our involvement there.

Some ask: Why is rebuilding Iraq costing more than the administration said it would? Has the administration been honest about their analysis of the costs?

Again, that is a legitimate question. Under Saddam, Iraq was one of the most tightly controlled and secretive societies in the world. Until the country was liberated, it was hard to know exactly how much internal damage or neglect had been suffered in everything from the electrical grid to water and sewage. In addition, rebuilding efforts

have been hampered, of course, by the remnants of the regime and foreign terror groups that are there. It has been very difficult, in the long term, to understand what these costs would be.

What are other countries realistically going to contribute to the reconstruction effort, and what are the expectations for the Madrid donor conference? It seems as if there is now more support for doing something in terms of restructuring than we had in the combat stage. We expect that many members of the community will participate, as well as some international financial institutions and organizations, such as the United Nations. Quite frankly, when we start doing this I believe we will see some of the European economic interests there. Some of them were there before in a business sense, and they will return again. We have had discussions with these donors individually, and they are planned for the conference. We also need to review the assessments being done by the U.N.

What is our exit strategy? Again, that is a very difficult issue, particularly on timing. We know what we want to accomplish, but it is not always easy to know how long it will take to achieve those kinds of things.

After 9/11, the President told the American people that he would confront the threats to our Nation before they reached our shores. Our troops are performing a vital task right now, and that is what they are doing. They are liberators, not occupiers. We bring freedom to those oppressed people and help the Iraqi people. It is interesting that all we hear about are the difficult times—and there are difficult times, and I understand that. The media, or whoever it is, speaks of those difficult and tragic things at the top of the news. The improvements that are being made and the support that is there is not always as well understood as are the difficulties.

So I think we are making good progress. As we have pointed out, in just 5 months many things have happened that need to be done. The more that happens, the more support we will have from the Iraqi people, and we can begin to move rather soon.

We have enough forces in the region. That is always a question that is being asked. I mentioned it before, but in the professional judgment of the military commanders, who are the ones who really know, the 130,000 troops recently in Iraq can carry out the mission. Some of the marines have been sent back to the United States, knowing that if they are needed, of course, they could go there.

One of the last figures I heard was about 25,000 troops from other countries are there, and that is a good thing. Of course, we are dealing with an action at the United Nations, so there will be more input from the United Nations into what we are doing, and I think that is good.

So these are some of the questions that are asked, and I think they are indeed legitimate questions.

No one wishes we were there. We all wish the whole terrorism thing had not happened, but it has, and the Senator from Texas mentioned why we do not want it to happen in our country. We need to deal with terrorism where it exists and not to let it happen here. I am hopeful that this is an issue we can deal with, and deal with it in a timely way.

THE UNFINISHED AGENDA

Mr. THOMAS. We have a lot of work to do. We have six or seven appropriations bills that we have passed. We have 13 total to do. This is the last day of the fiscal year. We will have to pass a continuing resolution to go on into October, but we certainly need to continue to work on that and get that completed as soon as we can. It is very important we do that.

There are several other bills, of course, that are pending that all of us feel strongly about. The Medicare bill is pending and we need to do something with pharmaceuticals. There is a great difference of opinion as to how we do that. The bottom line is that everybody knows we need to do something for Medicare, particularly pharmaceuticals, to make them available at a reasonable cost to as many people as we possibly can. So those issues are pending.

I have a particular interest in energy because of my committees and because of where I live. Wyoming is an energy-production State. We look forward to being able to do more of that. We are in the process of an energy policy and had planned to get that completed this week. The House and the Senate have both passed energy bills. Most everyone knows we need an energy policy. We have not passed one for a good many years, and things have changed substantially. So we really need to deal with it.

One of the issues I believe is important, that we are talking about, is an energy policy. We are not talking about every detail. We are not talking about everything tomorrow. We are talking about an energy policy that will give us some guidance into where we are 10, 15, 20 years from now. Obviously, things are going to change and indeed have changed. We have seen a number of the problems: the blackouts, the cost of gasoline, the shortage of natural gas, the things that happened in California. Those are part of what we are talking about, but we are also talking about the future. In this bill, we have things that have to do with renewable energy, finding ways to use wind energy, finding ways to use ethanol to extend the use of gas. We are talking about renewables. We are talking about doing some things with hydro and making that more accessible to much of the country.

Obviously, one of the questions we have is how to move energy around the country. It has to do with the blackouts and has to do with California. We