

just for the plaintiffs, the defendants, and the particular plan.

I thank the Chair, and yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. What is the regular order?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The regular order would be to lay the bill before the Senate.

Mr. GREGG. I thank the Chair.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN SECURITY AND RECONSTRUCTION ACT, 2004

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1689, which the clerk will read.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1689) making emergency appropriations for Iraq and Afghanistan security and reconstruction for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Byrd amendment No. 1818, to impose a limitation on the use of sums appropriated for the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund.

Byrd/Durbin amendment No. 1819, to prohibit the use of Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Funds for low priority activities that should not be the responsibility of U.S. taxpayers, and shift \$600 million from the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund to Defense Operations and Maintenance, Army, for significantly improving efforts to secure and destroy conventional weapons, such as bombs, bomb materials, small arms, rocket propelled grenades, and shoulder-launched missiles, in Iraq.

Reid (for Stabenow) amendment No. 1823, to provide emergency relief for veterans healthcare, school construction, healthcare and transportation needs in the United States, and to create 95,000 new jobs.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly. I understand the Senator from North Dakota is also going to speak. I want to talk on this piece of legislation but, more importantly, on the overall approach we take toward fighting terrorism as a nation.

First off, as to this bill, which is obviously an extraordinarily expensive bill—over \$80 billion, much of which goes to support our forces in Iraq, which is absolutely critical, and some of which goes to assisting in the rebuilding of Iraq—many of my colleagues and others have questioned the dollars going to the rebuilding of Iraq and whether that is an appropriate way to spend American tax dollars. I think, however, we have to look at this issue not from the standpoint of whether it is benefiting Iraq but whether it is benefiting us, the American people.

I don't think there is any question but that it benefits the American people. Our purpose here is to defeat terrorism. Our purpose here is to undermine the capacity of those people who would use violence against Americans

and against our system and against our Nation. We learned from 9/11, regrettably, that there are, unfortunately, groups out there who subscribe to what is known as Muslim fundamentalism, who are willing to pervert the Muslim faith, and who wish to pursue actions of violence against us as a nation, and against Americans as people, simply because we exist. For whatever reasons, they see us as their enemies, and there are a variety of reasons, which I will not go into. They obviously have the capacity and have shown their willingness to do us damage and harm. We have to respond to that.

Fortunately, we have a President who understands this—understands it in a way that I think many of us don't fully appreciate. I happen to, however, greatly admire it. The fact is, in President Bush we have someone who is very focused on the issue of protecting the United States and all Americans, defeating the threat of terrorism, and finding terrorists and bringing them to justice before they can do us harm. As part of that effort, there is a philosophy that I think is very appropriate that we are pursuing as a nation, which is that we will go out and find the terrorists before they can find us. We will kick over the rocks under which they hide and bring them to justice in whatever manner is appropriate—before they can get out from underneath the rocks under which they hide and plan to attack us. The basic theory is to cause the terrorists to worry about where they are going to sleep tonight rather than to be thinking about whom they are going to attack tomorrow.

It requires an aggressive international policy, but it is a policy directed at protecting us, Americans, across our Nation, giving us a better opportunity of avoid another 9/11, another attack on our country on our soil. As part of that effort, we have replaced a dictatorial, repressive, genocidal, maniacal regime in Iraq, a regime which clearly represented a threat to its neighbors and was a breeding ground for terrorists and a potential, if not real, supporter of those who would do us harm in the United States.

The strategy of the war was brilliantly executed by our military, our men and women. We have to admire their courage, their expertise, and the manner in which they comported themselves in Iraq. Their success militarily is in large part due to the fact that we are willing to spend our national treasury to support them, and we must continue to do that. That is what this supplemental is about.

So supporting our troops with the dollars they need and the equipment they require is a given. There is no one in this body who would question that.

The second part is the rebuilding of Iraq. Why is that important to us as a nation? Well, if we are going to undermine the fundamentalist Muslim terrorist threat, we must undermine their breeding ground, where they are able to recruit, and their philosophy for recruitment.

We have been extremely successful as a nation so far, I believe, in pursuing a tactical war against terrorists, and we can continue this tactical war and we will probably have to continue it for years to come. By that I mean finding the terrorists, following the dollars, tracking them down, using our expertise, our intelligence capability, and our military to neutralize their ability to attack us—whether it is in Afghanistan, Iraq, Buffalo, or Seattle—finding them before they can do us harm, eliminating their resources and sources of resources, and working an international coalition of law enforcement agencies and military forces that is capable of doing them physical harm before they can do us physical harm.

That is a tactical approach. It is one that is being pursued with great aggressiveness at all sorts of different levels—internationally, of course, and obviously in Iraq and Iran, but across the globe, such as in the Philippines and India and Pakistan, and domestically with the creation of the Homeland Security Department and the restructuring of our own domestic law enforcement community.

But that is tactical. That means you find the individual or the cell, you find the group of fundamentalist terrorists who are gathered together, you get the information on where they are, you disrupt them and, if you can bring them to justice, you do. That is tactical. That is not going to resolve the problem for us because, regrettably, no matter how you look at this, if you are honest about it, there is a cultural and a religious issue involved.

There are a billion people in this world who subscribe to the Muslim faith. It is a strong and good faith with an incredible history. But if only 1 percent of those billion people are attracted to the perversion of that faith and follow a Muslim fundamentalist view of the world—terrorist view of the world—that is 10 million people. That is potentially 10 million people who want to do us physical harm. Hopefully, it is not that high.

So if we are to pursue a lasting resolution of this issue, a tactical approach will keep us, hopefully, safer, but it will not resolve the underlying problem. We need much more of a strategic approach, something that looks at the forces which create the threat and undermines those forces. That is where the issue of addressing the reconstruction of Iraq comes in. There are a variety of ways we can address people who are members of the Muslim faith, especially in the Middle East and show them that we, as a nation, are not a threat to them but are actually an avenue of opportunity. But today those options don't really exist in the Middle East.

If we can prove to people who subscribe to the Muslim faith and might

be attracted to a fundamentalist terrorist approach that democracy works and is a great option for them, the market-oriented approach works and there is great opportunity for them, that education that encompasses the expansion of the mind relative to not only Western values, but Eastern values, and the issues of especially science and its potentials is of great value, then we will have created an opportunity for people to take a different look at what we stand for as a nation and say: Maybe rather than being a threat, you are an avenue of opportunity.

That is where Iraq comes in. If we are able to settle Iraq over the next 3 to 5 years in a way which allows it to grow as a democracy, in a way which allows it to grow as a market economy, in a way which allows its people, especially its children, to attend schools which teach a variety of values and especially the opportunities which come from quality education, if we are able to produce such an Iraq, it will be a shining light in the middle of the Middle East. It will be a place that people can look to and say, My goodness, democracy does work; market economies do mean more prosperity for my family and me; balanced education is a good thing. We will have set up a natural magnet to attract a positive view of these forces which have done so much for us as a nation and for the West, specifically democracy, market economies, and education.

Today that does not exist really in the Middle East, but this is our opportunity, an unintended consequence possibly of this war in Iraq, but clearly a potential consequence of significant and positive opportunity to create an Iraq, one of the larger nations in the Middle East and one of the wealthier nations in the Middle East, a nation with exceptional history and with a people who have historically been extraordinarily productive, to create a nation which realizes the dreams of freedom, opportunity, economic well-being, and education, which most people in the world subscribe to and desire, and that is why stabilizing Iraq is so important. If we accomplish that, we will fundamentally undermine the philosophy of the Muslim fundamentalists and their message to the Middle Eastern population, which is that America is a threat, an enemy, and that Americans must be destroyed and our culture must be attacked.

It will benefit us Americans in our country; it will benefit us in New Hampshire; it will benefit us in New York; it will benefit us in Pennsylvania; it will benefit us in California to have a nation in the Middle East which is a viable option to the threat and the message of fundamental Islam that goes to this whole strategic issue.

As we pursue our fight against terrorism, we have to have a two-track approach, in my mind. One is tactical, which I outlined. That is what we are doing in Afghanistan, obviously, and in

Iraq with our military. It is what we are doing in working to break up the money in the European countries and to find the cells in the United States, and what we have to continue to pursue aggressively through the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and the CIA.

At the same time, we need to have a strategic track. It has to go beyond just reconstructing an Iraq and making it a democratic nation. It has to go to messaging. It has to go to communication. It has to go to education. We need to spend significant thought on planning and probably treasury on the issue of a strategic approach to set up different initiatives which will have the effect of undermining the capacity of the Muslim fundamentalists to recruit and to make their case against America by communicating more effectively throughout the Middle East and also across other Muslim nations in the southeast, such as the Philippines and Indonesia, and Pakistan, by creating initiatives which encourage market-oriented approaches, which encourage leaders who subscribe to democracy, which encourage leaders who subscribe to education.

It has to be more than just a haphazard exercise. It actually has to be a structured exercise. It is much more difficult, much less tangible than a tactical approach, but it needs the same type of attention and energy.

We are not doing that right now as a nation. We are certainly not doing that as a government, in my opinion, and we as a Congress should be thinking about how we can do this.

As we move down this road, I believe this is something to which we have to pay significant attention, but clearly, one step in this exercise of a strategic approach is to assist in the creation of a democratic, market-oriented nation in the middle of the Middle East, specifically Iraq, which subscribes to the teaching of its young a value system which is consistent with the beliefs of freedom and democracy and market forces. That is why it is so imperative that we make this investment in Iraq. It is not about protecting them. It is not about rebuilding Iraq, although that is certainly an outcome of it. It is about creating an opportunity to undermine the sources which breed the fundamentalist Islamic movement and, thus, lessening the threat against Americans and our culture.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from North Dakota who has an amendment and a longer statement. I ask unanimous consent that he be recognized after me to offer his amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, is there an amendment pending?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Reid-Stabenow amendment is pending.

Mr. BOND. I ask unanimous consent that amendment be temporarily set aside so that I may offer an amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1825

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk on behalf of myself and Senator MIKULSKI and ask that it be immediately considered.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mr. BOND], for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI, proposes an amendment numbered 1825.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide additional VA Medical Care Funds for the Department of Veterans Affairs)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CARE

For an additional amount for medical care and related activities under this heading for fiscal year 2004, \$1,300,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2005.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, this is an amendment that Senator MIKULSKI and I believe is very important to provide adequate funding for medical care for the Veterans Affairs Department. This amendment provides \$1.3 billion in emergency funding for the Department of VA medical care account which truly is an emergency.

This amendment addresses the medical care needs of returning servicemembers from Iraq and Afghanistan who will require medical care service from the VA.

As many of my colleagues know, the VA cannot currently keep up with the demand of the current veteran population, as illustrated by the tens of thousands of veterans who have been told to wait at least 6 months to get an appointment. Even more distressing is the fact that many of them may have to wait up to 2 full years, and that is unacceptable. If the VA cannot currently help those who are in the system, how will they be able to help those veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan?

In the legislation before us today, we have provided emergency funds for the Department of Defense to fight these wars and reconstruction funds to ensure that we win the peace, we secure the peace and bring our troops home. I support these funds. They are vitally needed. I hope we can get them approved when we return. However, I believe we also need to ensure that when

our troops do return home, the Government will be there to treat their medical care needs. If we are willing to provide emergency funding to fight the wars, we must be willing to provide emergency funding to meet the medical care needs to treat the injuries and the wounds suffered by our valiant heroes in the wars. In other words, we must ensure that there is a continuum of care for our service members from basic training to deployment to discharge.

Let me illustrate the current pressing and urgent needs for these emergency funds. According to a September 2, 2003, Washington Post article, the number of service members wounded in action in Iraq totals 1,124 since the war began in March. This Post article states:

The rising number and quickening pace of soldiers being wounded on the battlefield have been overshadowed by the number of troops killed since President Bush declared an end to major combat operations May 1.

USA Today, in this past Wednesday's edition, has reported that at least seven times as many men and women have been wounded in battle as those killed in battle. This is a copy of that article, and it is entitled "Trip Home is Just Start of Road Back."

I am not going to offer these articles for the RECORD but I would refer those publications to my colleagues who are interested. We know the wounded are arriving in Washington every week. I point out these numbers do not include military men and women who are returning from Afghanistan and other parts of the world after fighting the war on terrorism.

According to the VA, some of our returning service men and women are currently being served through VA-DOD sharing agreements. Others, such as PVT Jessica Lynch, of whom we all know a great deal, are being discharged and turning to the VA for specialized services. This level of demand for VA services has not been foreseen or anticipated.

Further, we know that overall demand for VA medical care is not going to lessen. We have already seen the VA medical care system being overwhelmed by the staggering increase in demand for its medical services. Since 1996, the VA has seen a 50-percent increase in growth, or 2 million patients in total users of the medical care system. Moreover, enrollments have increased by some 3.1 million since 1999 alone, and the VA projects that its enrollments will grow by another 2 million patients from a current level of 7 million to 9 million in 2009. This is a historic and unprecedented increase in the level of service.

Again, I urge my colleagues to support these emergency funds. At a time of war with thousands of injured troops returning from battle, it is clearly an emergency to include these funds. It is our moral responsibility to ensure that we provide adequate resources to the VA to meet the vital medical needs of

our veterans. If these emergency funds are not included in the bill, the VA will have enormous difficulties in treating veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, due to the current backlog of veterans waiting for care. Without those funds, those waiting veterans will wait longer for medical care and the VA will be forced to deny medical care to another 585,000 veterans. I cannot accept these outcomes. I do not believe my colleagues will accept these outcomes. This is medical care they have earned through the risk of life and limb, and all too often their long-term health.

I ask my colleagues to think about our service members who have already returned from service, our service members who are continuing to serve and those who want to serve. If we do not provide these funds, what kind of message does this send to those currently fighting overseas and those who will be sent overseas?

I hope my colleagues agree with me that we want to tell these men and women that we will not turn our backs on them and that we will keep our promises to them.

I thank the Chair and I thank my colleague.

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BOND. Yes.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask the Senator from Missouri if he would add my name as a cosponsor to the amendment.

Mr. BOND. I would be happy to do so. I ask unanimous consent that Senator DORGAN be added as a cosponsor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOND. I believe there will be others who wish to do so. I thank the Chair and I thank my colleague from North Dakota.

Mr. President, I rise in support of the Bond-Mikulski amendment. This amendment is simple and straightforward. It would add \$1.3 billion to the Iraq and Afghanistan supplemental for veterans' medical care.

Our men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan have my steadfast support, and so do those men and women who fought before them. Our veterans need to know that America is with them, and that we owe them a debt of gratitude. Congress should show that gratitude with deeds, not just words. That means making our troops and our veterans a priority in the Federal checkbook.

As the ranking member on the VA-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee, my guiding principle for the VA budget is that promises made to our veterans must be promises kept. I believe this means no membership fees or toll charges on veterans to get health care or prescription drugs, and no waiting lines for veterans to get medical care or to get their claims processed.

Under a law passed after the Persian Gulf war, VA must give priority to re-

turning troops for immediate medical care. The Veterans Programs Enhancement Act of 1998 requires VA to provide 2 years of medical care benefits for returning servicemembers. This law was originally passed to meet the medical care needs of veterans who served in the first Persian Gulf war. The law applies to servicemembers who are in Iraq now.

But the VA medical care system is under tremendous stress. During August, I traveled to VA clinics across Maryland. I saw dedicated staff providing quality medical care. But they are stretched to the limit.

Nationally, there are over 100,000 veterans waiting longer than 6 months to see a VA doctor. Some veterans are waiting as long as 2 years. The wait for specialty care like spinal cord injury care, blind rehab, and prosthetics can be even worse. The Blinded Veterans Association tells us that there are 2,600 veterans waiting up to 1 year for admission into a blind rehab center.

Our veterans didn't stand in waiting lines when they were called up to serve our country. They shouldn't have to stand in line or pay toll charges to get the medical care they deserve. The Bond-Mikulski amendment is necessary to keep our promises to our Nation's veterans by ensuring that soldiers returning from war, and the veterans who fought before them, will get the medical care they deserve.

The President's budget proposed a new \$250 annual membership fee for veterans, and increased copayments for veterans' prescription drugs and visits to the doctor. Senator BOND and I have worked together on a bipartisan basis this year to reject these proposals. This funding will ensure VA has the resources necessary to meet the needs of our veterans and returning troops.

I thank Senator BOND and urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the Bond-Mikulski amendment described by the Senator from Missouri makes a great deal of sense to me. It seems to me that keeping our promise to our veterans is also a part of national security and national defense. We have a very serious problem in the VA health care system. It is going to grow worse, not better, and we need to add these resources.

As we know, the number of people who have been wounded in Iraq and are going to come back home and justifiably lay claim to the health care they were promised in our VA system, we must provide the funding for that.

I think all of us in this Chamber have had the experience of visiting with veterans with respect to their experience in the VA health care system. They will tell us of seeing the posters of Uncle Sam pointing at them saying, Uncle Sam wants you, and on the bottom of the poster it said, free health care for life.

Many of our veterans have experienced something substantially less

than that when they come home from having served our country, and that is why I think it is very important for us to provide the funding that is needed in the VA health care system.

I recall one day being at a town meeting and a man named Thor came up to me. He had served in the Air Corps in the Second World War, had fought for this country, had done all that his country had asked of him, many years ago. Now he was without much income, in his late seventies, and he was having all kinds of health problems, some of it related to his service in the Second World War. He was not able to get the help he needed.

The day he came to the meeting I held, he told me he was having trouble with his teeth and could not eat. He had false teeth. His teeth did not fit. They were cutting his mouth and he could not get new teeth from the VA system. At age 75 or 80 years of age, having served in the Second World War, done for this country what this country asked him to do, now living in very low-income circumstances, he should not have to beg VA to get new teeth. That ought not be the way it happens.

I happened to get him new teeth because I had a friend who was a dentist. He talked to some people who run a laboratory and he was able to get a new set of teeth. But we ought to take care of these needs more systematically. We ought to fund the VA health care system to provide for the needs of these veterans. It is a promise we have made and, in my judgment, a promise we ought to keep. So I am pleased to add my name as a cosponsor to the Bond-Mikulski amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 1826

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The pending amendment is laid aside.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. DORGAN], for himself, Mr. DURBIN and Ms. LANDRIEU, proposes an amendment numbered 1826.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require that Iraqi oil revenues be used to pay for reconstruction in Iraq)

Beginning on page 25, strike line 5, and all that follows through page 28, line 15, and insert the following:

FINANCING OF RECONSTRUCTION

The President shall direct the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, in coordination with the Governing Council of Iraq or a successor governing authority in Iraq, to establish an Iraq Reconstruction Finance Authority. The purpose of the Authority shall be to obtain financing for the recon-

struction of the infrastructure in Iraq by collateralizing the revenue from future sales of oil extracted in Iraq. The Authority shall obtain financing for the reconstruction of the infrastructure in Iraq through—

(1)(A) issuing securities or other financial instruments; or

(B) obtaining loans on the open market from private banks or international financial institutions; and

(2) to the maximum extent possible, securitizing or collateralizing such securities, instruments, or loans with the revenue from the future sales of oil extracted in Iraq.

Mr. DORGAN. I offer this amendment on behalf of myself and Senators DURBIN and LANDRIEU. This amendment is identical to that which I offered in the Appropriations Committee, and which lost on a 15-to-14 vote. It is the identical language. So my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, at least, will be acquainted with the provisions and the specific language of this amendment.

My colleague spoke earlier today about the goals we share for Iraq—our country's objectives in the Middle East and around the world. We all want the Iraqi people to have a better country and to be able to control their own destiny. We all want to foster a democracy in Iraq, in which the Iraqi people are free to make their own decisions, could build a model economy with a market system that works, one that provides an expansion of economic opportunity and jobs for the Iraqi people—all of us would aspire to have that happen.

Some of my colleagues, however, have said this can only happen if you inevitably link the two pieces of the appropriations request sent to us by the President, the \$87 billion which includes the amount of money for the defense needs, which is some \$66 billion, and the \$20-plus billion for the reconstruction of Iraq. They say it must remain a single piece of legislation, inextricably linked, that cannot in any way be taken apart because one part makes the other work.

I suppose it is like a loose thread on a cheap suit. You pull the thread and the arm falls off, so you can't take any part of this and adjust it or change it. That is what we are told.

I believe there are pieces of this legislation that can be changed, and I think changed for the better, in ways that will still accomplish the goals the President and we have for the country of Iraq, but that will also help the American taxpayer.

At the outset, let me say that I believe that the portion of the request relating to our military is important and is urgent, and this Congress will enact it very quickly. I don't think America sends its sons and daughters to war and then decides it will not fund that which is necessary for them to carry out their mission. That would be unforgivable. We have a responsibility to do that, and we will do that.

The second portion of this request, dealing with the reconstruction of Iraq, is a different story. I think there are a couple of aspects to remember about that.

First, the infrastructure of the country of Iraq was deliberately not targeted by the American military attack. The attack, which was called Shock and Awe, which most of us saw on television, did not target electric generation facilities, the electric grid, roads, bridges, dams. It deliberately did not target those. As a result of that, we do not have a country in which their infrastructure has been devastated by carpet bombing of the type that happened in some places during World War II.

Second, many of the reconstruction items in the 20-plus billion request by the administration are not urgent. I will describe that in some detail.

Third, the cost of the reconstruction effort need not, and ought not, to be borne by the American taxpayer. If the United States was the only possible source of funding for reconstruction, that would be one thing. But that is not the case. The fact is that Iraq has a wealth of oil reserves, and Iraq can easily use those resources to finance its own reconstruction. My amendment would help construct a mechanism for the Iraqis to do exactly that.

My amendment simply proposes that there be established an Iraq Reconstruction Finance Authority, in Iraq, by the Governing Council of Iraq, working with the Coalition Provisional Authority. The Governing Council of Iraq is made up of Iraqis. They would create an Iraq Reconstruction Finance Authority. That authority would securitize or sell securities against the value of future oil that will be pumped in Iraq. Iraq has the second largest reserves of oil in the world and has substantial capability to pump a dramatic amount of oil in order to raise ample funds to reconstruct Iraq.

Simply, my amendment says let Iraqi oil pay for the reconstruction of Iraq, not the U.S. taxpayer. And let Iraqis use that Iraqi oil revenue to reconstruct Iraq. This has nothing to do with the United States grabbing part of the resources that belong to the people of Iraq. On the contrary, my amendment says that the Iraqi people, through the Governing Council of Iraq, should use Iraqi oil revenue to reconstruct the country of Iraq. It is very simple. It is not hard to understand.

Some believe that if we followed this approach, we would be accused of grabbing Iraqi oil. They will say: You attacked Iraq because you wanted their oil.

That can't be the case because there is nothing here that would put American hands on Iraqi oil. It would be Iraqis in the country of Iraq using Iraqi oil to reconstruct Iraq. It simply relieves the burden of \$21 billion from the shoulders of the American taxpayers, which is what is proposed by the administration for the reconstruction of Iraq. It says instead of having the U.S. taxpayers borrow the money, or the Federal Government borrow the money or pay taxes to reconstruct Iraq, Iraqis can use their oil resources to do that.

Ambassador Bremer said that by July of next year, Iraq will be pumping 3 million barrels of oil per day. That is \$160 billion of net export value of oil for the country of Iraq in 10 years. They can easily sell securities against that future production of oil and use that to reconstruct Iraq.

As I indicated, this is the second largest oil reserve in the world. This is not a small resource. This is liquid gold under the sands of Iraq. When they pump it and sell it to a world that needs oil, they will have \$16 billion a year. And Iraq could obtain immediate funding for reconstruction by selling securities, or obtaining loans, backed by that future revenue stream.

The concept of securitizing these oil reserves has been endorsed by a number of sources and experts. The endorsement comes from a number of corners of thought. The President and Chairman of the Export-Import Bank, Philip Merrill, has said he supports that concept of using Iraqi oil for reconstruction. In fact, the Export-Import Bank used a similar approach for Russian oil and gas after the fall of the Soviet Union, which was credited with helping to stabilize the industry's finances and restoring Russia's infrastructure in the early 1990s.

Mr. Merrill, the head of the Export-Import Bank says: What we want to do is securitize this flow of oil.

Now, when Ambassador Bremer appeared before the Appropriation Committee, he said that this approach wouldn't work. Ambassador Bremer said you can't have Iraq securitize its oil, or use future sales of oil to reconstruct Iraq, because Iraq owes a lot of money. It has foreign debt. Ambassador Bremer said the foreign debt was owed to Russia, France, and Germany.

After that hearing, I did a little research. It turns out that the largest foreign debt owed by Saddam's regime was not to Russia, France, and Germany.

The largest foreign debt of the Saddam regime was owed to the Saudis, and the Kuwaitis, and the other Gulf Countries. The two largest single creditors, by far, are Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Saddam's regime also owed some money to Russia, Japan, France, and Germany, that is true, but the largest foreign debt was owed to the Saudis and the Kuwaitis.

I just don't understand the Ambassador's contention that Iraqi oil must be sold right away in order to pay off the Saudis and the Kuwaitis. First of all, Saddam Hussein and his henchmen owed this money. Saddam Hussein ran the country of Iraq, and he engaged in strategies and policies that resulted in these debts. Ambassador Bremer suggested that some successor government in Iraq will inherit the debt. My question is, Why? Why not say to the Saudis and the Kuwaitis: You are owed a lot of money by Saddam Hussein and his henchmen. Find them, and collect it from them.

The Iraqi people ought not have to bear the burden of Saddam Hussein's

debt. It doesn't make any sense to me. This man is gone. His government no longer exists. And Iraq is sitting on top of an enormous oil resource.

But we are told now that the American taxpayer should pay to reconstruct Iraq, because Iraqi oil revenues need to be immediately turned over to the Saudis and the Kuwaitis to settle Saddam's debts.

I am sorry. It doesn't add up to me. It doesn't work for me. I don't understand the perversity of a strategy that says the American taxpayer shall bear the burden so that Iraq's assets can be free to pay the Saudis and the Kuwaitis past foreign debt.

Does this make sense to anybody? If you answer, yes, we think this makes sense, the American taxpayers will pay the bill, and Iraqi oil will pay the Saudis, then I am sorry, you need to go back and do some remedial training someplace. You are not thinking straight.

Now, there are those who argue that the current Iraqi Governing Council is not a duly elected government, and has no standing to do anything with Iraq's oil.

But on Friday, Ambassador Bremer said the following:

The Iraqis are perfectly ready now to accept a lot of responsibility, and they are doing that. There are Iraqi ministers running all 25 ministries. . . . They are making policy in every ministry. They are responsible for the budgets of their ministry. They've got to spend the money. They can move the money around within their budget. They have great latitude. And they are now operating ministries.

The Governing Council of Iraq is made up of Iraqis. They are running Iraq's Oil Ministry, among others. It seems to me that they have the capability to securitize future Iraq oil revenues and pay this reconstruction cost.

Is the Governing Council of Iraq somehow less legitimate than Saddam Hussein's government? To anyone who argues that the Governing Council of Iraq cannot enter into debt on behalf of Iraq, I ask this: Do you think that Saddam's regime was a duly elected government?

In 1995, Saddam ran for President of Iraq unopposed, and he won 99.96 percent of the vote. That's right. Less than four one-hundredths of one percent of the voters voted against Saddam.

In August of 2000, Saddam Hussein ran again for President. He ran unopposed. This time, the official reelection count was better. With 100-percent voter turnout, he received 100 percent of the vote. That was the official result announced by the Iraqi government.

In that election, there were no polling booths. Voters were required to hold their ballot over their heads as they approached the ballot box, so that everybody could see how they voted. When they voted, they had to parade past 28 portraits of Saddam Hussein, and they had to hold these ballots over their heads so they could demonstrate how they voted.

Was that a duly constituted government? I don't think so. The Iraq Governing Council is much more legitimate than the Saddam regime, in my estimation. Why would anyone argue with that? Who wants to come to the Senate floor and say that the debts incurred by Saddam's regime are legitimate, but securities that would be issued by the current Governing Council would not be legitimate?

I ask that again because I think it is important.

Why would anyone argue that the massive debts run up by Saddam Hussein's government are legitimate and payable, but securities issued by the current government of Iraq's Governing Council against future oil revenues with which they could reconstruct Iraq would somehow not be legitimate? It doesn't make any sense.

Until a few months ago, the Administration was telling everyone that Iraq's oil would allow the Iraqis to pay for their own reconstruction.

Let me show what Mr. Ari Fleischer at the White House said about this. He was the President's spokesperson. He said in February of this year:

And Iraq, unlike Afghanistan, is a rather wealthy country. Iraq has tremendous resources that belong to the Iraqi people. And so there are a variety of means that Iraq has to be able to shoulder much of the burden of their own reconstruction.

He is, of course, talking about Iraqi oil, the second largest oil reserve in the world.

Shortly after that time, Mr. Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, said:

. . . the oil revenues of that country could bring in between \$50 and \$100 billion over the course of the next two or three. . . . We're dealing with a country that can really finance its own reconstruction, and relatively soon.

That is the administration speaking. They say Iraq can finance its own reconstruction, and relatively soon, because it has massive oil resources.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, in March of this year, said:

I don't believe that the United States has the responsibility for reconstruction, in a sense. . . . And the funds can come from those various sources I mentioned: frozen assets, oil revenues and a variety of other things.

That is the Secretary of Defense saying the American taxpayer is not going to have to pay for the reconstruction of Iraq.

Vice President CHENEY, on national television in March of this year, said:

In Iraq we have a nation that's got the second largest oil reserves in the world, second only to Saudi Arabia. It will generate billions of dollars a year in cashflow in the relatively near future, and that flow of resource obviously belongs to the Iraqi people and needs to be put to use by the Iraqi people. And that will be one of our major objectives.

This administration has said time and time and time again that the reconstruction of Iraq will be done with Iraqi oil.

Let me describe a "Nightline" program with Ted Koppel and Mr. Natsios, head of USAID, the lead reconstruction agency in our country.

Mr. Koppel: I understand that more money is expected to be spent on this than was spent on the entire Marshall plan for the rebuilding of Europe after World War II.

Mr. Natsios: No. This doesn't even compare. The Marshall plan was \$97 billion. This is \$1.7 billion.

Mr. Koppel: I mean, you talk about 1.7. You are not suggesting the rebuilding of Iraq is going to be done for \$1.7 billion?

Mr. Natsios: Well, in terms of the American taxpayers' contribution, I do. This is for the U.S. The rest of the rebuilding of Iraq will be done by other countries that have already made pledges: Britain, Germany, Norway, Canada and Iraqi oil revenues. They are going to get \$20 billion in revenues but the American part of this will be \$1.7 billion.

Again, this is the lead person on the reconstruction of Iraq speaking last March.

Mr. Koppel: I understand. But as far as reconstruction goes, the American taxpayer will not be hit for more than \$1.7 billion no matter how long the process takes?

Mr. Natsios: That is our plan, and that is our intention.

Over and over and over again, Mr. Natsios said exactly the same thing.

It is strange that not many months later all of those folks—Secretary Rumsfeld, Vice President CHENEY, Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz, Mr. Natsios—all said the same thing. And now there is this eerie silence from those folks who told the American taxpayer, you won't have to pay for this, Iraqi oil will pay for it.

Now they send up a \$21 billion request to say to the American taxpayer, you will pay for this. And, by the way, you can't change any element of this, because this all fits together like a puzzle; take out one piece and you destroy the puzzle.

Now, in Ambassador Bremer's request, part of the nearly \$21 billion involves items that are clearly not related to any damage caused by our military action:

\$1 billion to rehabilitate power distribution networks that were in a highly deteriorated condition before the war.

This has nothing to do with the war. It is just 20 years of devastation by Saddam Hussein's government.

\$50 million to rectify the actions of the former regime and reconnect the Euphrates River to 30 villages and 100 farms.

That is an irrigation water project and has nothing to do with the war.

There is \$50 million to restore a marsh and rectify some of the environmental tragedies "of the past 25 years"; \$50 million for water projects in Basra, a "long neglected city"; \$125 million to restore railroad tracks that suffered from "severe neglect over time."

There are a whole series of things like that, that on their face are not a result of the war and in many cases not particularly urgent. Here is a pretty symbolic item: \$1.6 million requested to build museums and memorials. I have never heard of an urgent request for a museum. I have heard of important requests for museums, but I have

never heard of a request for a museum that is urgent or an emergency. I am wondering if there is anyone in our country who thinks that the building of a new museum in Iraq is an emergency.

Many have mentioned, and I did in the Appropriations Committee, some of the expenditures: For a 4-week business course for executives, \$10,000 per student. That 1-month catchup course in business is double the monthly cost of going to Harvard Business School.

There is \$55 million for computer training, \$330 a month for half-day courses; \$1,500 per student for a 6-month second language English course; \$9 million to study ZIP Codes for the postal service in Iraq; \$100 million for 2,000 garbage trucks; \$4 million to start telephone area codes.

The fact is, many of these items are not an emergency and not urgent. And the American taxpayer should not have to pay for any of this, because Iraq has the resources to pay for its own reconstruction. Yet we have this piece of legislation that we are told is not separable, it comes as one piece; pull a string on the cheap sweater and the arm comes out; take one piece out and it destroys the rest. That is nonsense.

When you look at the \$66 million requested by the Pentagon to support our troops, no question: We need to do that, and we need to do that now. But when you look at the \$21 billion with respect to reconstruction, in my judgment, that can be done by having Iraqis securitize Iraqi oil, and using that financing for the reconstruction of their own country.

I said when I started, everyone has the same ultimate objective. I want not just Iraqi people, I want people around this world, to have opportunity and hope, to live free, to live in circumstances where they have an economy in their country that expands and produces jobs and opportunity.

There is a hopelessness and helplessness in many parts of the world. One-half of the population of the world lives on less than \$2 a day. One-half have never made a telephone call; 150 million have no access to potable water that is healthy and is of good quality; 150 million kids are not in school. This is a big, challenging world.

We are focused now on the country of Iraq. I want things to go well in Iraq. I want our soldiers to be safe. I want them to be able to come home as soon as possible. I want the Iraqi people to come through this experience believing their country has turned a corner and they can live in freedom and have some hope and have the opportunity to make a good future for themselves.

But as we do all of that, we have some responsibilities at home. We need to be able to deal with those. We are lucky to be Americans, lucky to be alive now and to live in what I think is the greatest country in the world, but we have a lot of challenges. We have huge homeland security issues right here at home.

The plain fact is, we have had major studies done, most notably the Hart-

Rudman study by two of our former colleagues for the Council of Foreign Relations. That study says we are dangerously unprepared. In fact, that is the title of the study. We have a lot of things to do at home to make sure we are prepared to protect our country against another attack by terrorists. We can't just write a blank check for Iraq's reconstruction, and say spend whatever you need, let's spend \$9 million for new ZIP Codes and buy pickup trucks and build prison beds at \$50,000 a bed in Iraq. We have urgent needs here, in this country, and we do not have infinite resources.

With respect to the country of Iraq, our country ought to be supportive. We ought to be helpful. We ought to aspire to have the same kind of future for the folks in Iraq that we want for ourselves; that is, a future of hope. But that does not mean the American taxpayer ought to bear the burden of solving problems created by Saddam Hussein when he borrowed money from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Russia, France, Germany, and others. It does not mean we ought to bear that burden. Those debts ought to be forgiven or restructured. Iraqis ought to be able to use their oil resource to pay for the reconstruction of Iraq right now. Very simple.

Sometimes we get so rigid in this political process, we do not hear each other; we talk past each other. The discussion about this in the committee came down to this: the President says it has to be this way now, and therefore it must be this way and we cannot consider another way. I offered two amendments in the Appropriations Committee. The first amendment, identical to the one I am offering today on the Senate floor, was that there should be created an Iraq Reconstruction Finance Authority. They should borrow money against future Iraq oil and reconstruct Iraq. It is the burden of Iraqi oil, not the burden of the American taxpayer, to reconstruct Iraq.

That amendment lost by a vote of 15 to 14, though at least one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle expressed support for the concept, and said he might consider this approach on the Senate floor.

So I offered a second amendment in the Appropriations Committee, which said that instead of providing a 20 billion-plus dollar grant, we should extend Iraq a loan. That is not something I prefer, because I think Iraqis can finance their reconstruction by securitizing their oil. But it is a better approach than just extending a grant.

I lost that second amendment as well, by a vote of 15 to 14. I understand that a number of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are interested in this concept.

So we will have these debates in the Senate. I expect that we will vote on

the amendment I offered today, once we return. My hope is we can find a bipartisan way to agree on something that shows common sense.

Most of us know little about Iraq. But Iraq is not a desperately impoverished country. Iraq sits on top of the largest reserves imaginable. The oil reserves exist under that sand. There is only one country that has larger reserves. That is Saudi Arabia. Iraq has great capability to invest in itself and build and grow and provide opportunity for the Iraqi people.

Even as we aspire to have that happen, we had better look inward a bit in this country and ask ourselves where we are headed. We are facing record Federal budget deficits. This year, we also had the largest trade deficit in the history of this country, by far.

The combined budget and trade deficit is very close to \$900 billion. Yet people walk around here as if it is "Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil." It is as if none of this exists.

All of this money we are talking about today, \$87 billion—all of it is borrowed against our children's futures. Why?

The President wants to have it all: We need tax cuts. We need increased military spending. We need increased homeland security spending, and, at the same time, \$87 billion now for Iraq, on top of the \$79 billion earlier this year.

Someone, someday, in some way, pays the cost of that. That cost comes with a lower standard of living in this country if we do not get our fundamentals in order. You just cannot keep doing this.

Mathematics is taught the same way from Maine to California. There is only one way to add and subtract.

What we require, I think, is a bit of backbone from Republicans and Democrats, this President and the Congress, to stand up and take a look at what we are facing, our budget deficits, our trade deficits, our long-term future economic health, and decide we have to put things back on track. That is important for this country.

Yes, I care about Iraq, as do my colleagues. Yes, we should be concerned about the reconstruction of Iraq. But that is a burden that Iraqis can bear, by using their vast oil resources. It is not a burden that ought to be borne by the American taxpayer.

The Senate will not be in session next week. But I will seek to have a vote on this amendment when we return.

I thank my colleagues. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. 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. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

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

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

CALL FOR APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

Mr. President, I take the floor again today, as I said I would do every day, until this matter is resolved, until the individual or individuals who leaked the name of a CIA undercover agent to the press are identified and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

So I take the floor again today to again recap what has gone on, and also to ask the President to become more fully engaged in finding out who did this.

As I said earlier this week on the floor, President Bush can resolve this matter, literally in an hour, by calling his senior staff members in the Oval Office and asking them one by one if they were involved. It would be very simple. Call them in and ask them: Were you involved in this, yes or no?

Bear in mind, the Washington Post story on Sunday—this is when it all came out in the open—reported a senior administration official revealed two other "senior White House officials" had leaked the undercover CIA agent's identity to six reporters before the so-called Novak column ran in July. So again, a whistleblower in the White House revealed—and this is according to the Washington Post—a senior administration official. In the Post on September 28, last Sunday, they quoted the senior official who said:

Clearly, it was meant purely and simply for revenge, the senior official said of the alleged leak.

It was purely and simply for revenge against Mr. Wilson, obviously. So we know now a whistleblower in the White House, a senior administration official—we don't know who—revealed two other senior White House officials had leaked the undercover CIA agent's identity to six reporters prior to the Novak column running in July 14. Someone was pretty busy in the White House calling six reporters. And the senior administration official said it was "purely and simply for revenge."

Why doesn't Mr. Bush simply call them into the Oval Office and ask them one by one: Were you involved in these leaks? We know at least three of these senior administration officials know the full story. We know now at least three senior administration officials know the full story. The odds are many more know the story as well, that there was some talk around the White House back in July about doing this. I find it hard to believe some low-ranking individual called six reporters without having this cleared at the highest echelons in the Bush administration. Obviously, we know there are three. There may be more.

Mr. Bush could resolve this matter literally by lunchtime if he were to call the senior officials in the Oval Of-

fice, lay down the law, and get some answers.

I was driving in to work this morning and I heard on the radio that the President is flying to Wisconsin this morning for yet another fundraiser. People have their priorities, I guess. I think our priority should be getting to the bottom of this as soon as possible and finding out who made these leaks, not flying off for yet another fundraiser in Wisconsin.

Again, instead of a serious, straightforward approach, the President now is trying to make light of the matter. He was joking and laughing about it yesterday with some foreign journalists.

I refer to a story that appeared in the Washington Post this morning, Friday, October 3. Headline: "Justice to Begin Leak Interviews Within Days." I will have more to say about that. I will quote directly from the article in the paper this morning:

As pressure built on his aides, —regarding finding who leaked this information—

Bush joked about the matter. During a roundtable discussion with reporters for African news organizations, he was asked about three reporters in Kenya who were detained this week in what some journalists saw as an effort to intimidate them into revealing sources. The detention drew a condemnation from the International Federation of Journalists which complained that the government has been harassing and brutalizing journalists.

"I'm against leaks," Bush said, to laughter. "I would suggest all governments get to the bottom of every leak of classified information." Turning to the reporter who asked the question, Martin Mbugua of the Daily Nation, Kenya's largest daily newspaper, Bush said "By the way, if you know anything, Martin, would you please bring it forward and help solve the problem."

I guess I find this remarkable, a matter as serious as this, disclosing the identity of an undercover agent in the midst of our war on terrorism, where we have to rely upon good intelligence, we have to rely upon the security of these individuals, and to let them know that at no time, now or in the future, will they be outed, which could do serious harm not only to them but to their sources and to others. Rather than approaching this in that serious manner, the President is joking about the matter as if this is ha-ha, some kind of a lighthearted little diversion from his fundraising activities.

I will say this: This is not a laughing matter. The President may take it lightly, but I don't believe our intelligence agencies, nor do I believe those of us here in the Congress will take it lightly either. And neither do the American people take it lightly.

This is a deadly serious matter of national security. The President of the United States should make it his personal business to resolve it as soon as possible. In fact, I would suggest the President should publicly commend the individual who told the Washington Post last Sunday about the leak, promise to protect that whistleblower's job, give that person a certificate of merit

for being truthful and honest and helping to expose those who may have leaked this information, rather than joking about it with foreign journalists and asking them if they know anything about it, would they please help him out.

I understand from today's news reports that the Justice Department has set a deadline for White House documents related to the matter. That is great. But I still don't understand why it has taken at least 2 months for them to request this information since exposing the identity of an undercover CIA agent is a violation of Federal law punishable with up to 10 years in prison. Also I believe it goes further than just releasing classified information.

This is an issue, as I said, about compromising the safety of our undercover agents and the investigative efforts to prevent future threats to the United States. Again, let me just go back to this timeline.

On July 6, former Ambassador Joseph Wilson's op ed appears in the New York Times, questioning President Bush's assertion that Iraq had sought uranium from Niger.

On July 14, Robert Novak publishes a column saying "senior administration officials" have identified Wilson's wife as "an agency operative of weapons of mass destruction."

On July 24, Senator SCHUMER calls on the FBI director to open a criminal investigation based on that call.

In late July, the FBI notified Senator SCHUMER they sent an "inquiry" to the CIA.

Then it appears that nothing happens for 2 months.

On September 23, the Attorney General says he and CIA Director Tenet sent a memo to the FBI requesting an investigation.

So in July the FBI says they sent an inquiry to the CIA. In September the Attorney General says they sent a memo to the FBI requesting an investigation. On September 26, the Department of Justice officially launches its investigation.

But interestingly, it took 4 days after that official launch for the Justice Department to call White House Counsel Gonzales and notify him of the official investigation and to tell them to preserve documents, phone logs, et cetera.

Today, October 3, according to the newspaper, we understand the Attorney General wants to quickly move the investigation along. Again, I don't understand why it took President Bush and Attorney General Ashcroft so long to get moving on this investigation, when they appeared to move so quickly in wanting to question our congressional Intelligence Committees last year for allegedly leaking "classified information." In fact, the FBI was coming down, as Senator DURBIN said on the floor, asking them to take lie detector tests. But now we don't seem to be moving very rapidly in trying to get to the bottom of this real—not alleged,

but real—leak of classified information.

I have other concerns as well, and that has to do with the clear conflict of interest Mr. Ashcroft has with this administration.

I refer to this chart. There was a story in the newspaper about the close connections Mr. Ashcroft has had with senior White House officials. This chart kinds of shows it. We have Attorney General Ashcroft, then Mr. Karl Rove, senior assistant to the President, who was a paid consultant for Ashcroft for Governor in 1984. Mr. Rove was a paid consultant for Ashcroft for Governor in 1988. Mr. Rove was a paid consultant for Ashcroft for the Senate in 1994. Today, he is political director and senior advisor to President Bush.

Then there is Jack Oliver. He was campaign manager for Mr. Ashcroft in 1994. Mr. Oliver was deputy chief of staff in Senator Ashcroft's office in the Senate. Mr. Oliver now is a deputy finance chair for the Bush-Cheney reelection team for 2004. Now we understand that, with these connections, these people so high up in the administration, such as the Attorney General—President Bush is his boss. The Attorney General says he can do the investigation. Give me a break. That is why we need a special counsel. That is why the American people see this as an inherent conflict of interest, with all of these people so closely tied together. That is why we need an appointed special counsel.

Some argue this is purely politics, that we are blowing this incident out of proportion. Well, what makes this so serious is this administration released its classified information for revenge to punish those who told the truth at the risk of national security and the safety of others.

I have been hearing all of these spins coming out of the White House about Mr. Wilson and politics, and so I was looking at this and I wanted to get to the bottom of it. I looked at this and I saw the spin coming out of the White House and the Republican Party. Here is Mr. Gillespie, RNC chair:

The fact is that Ambassador Wilson is not only a, you know—a former foreign service officer, former ambassador, he is himself a partisan Democrat who is a contributor and supporter of Senator Kerry's Presidential campaign.

That is Ed Gillespie, RNC chair, on September 30.

Then, here is the former RNC communication director, Cliff May. He said:

Wilson is no disinterested career diplomat—he's a pro-Saudi, leftist partisan with an ax to grind. And too many in the media are helping him and allies grind it.

What are the facts. The fact is we found out Mr. Wilson has given money to the Presidential campaign of Senator JOHN KERRY. But he also contributed money to George Bush during the 2000 election. GOP Representative Ed Royce, a Republican from California, received \$1,000 from Wilson between

2000 and 2001. I don't know Mr. Wilson; I never met him in my life, but it looks as though he is one of those independents who gives to both sides depending on who he thinks is best qualified. The fact is former President Bush—the first President Bush—praised Wilson for his courageous leadership when he was Ambassador in Baghdad in 1990. He praised him for his courageous leadership, saying:

What you are doing day in and day out under the most trying conditions is truly inspiring. Keep fighting the good fight. You and your stalwart colleagues are always in our thoughts and prayers.

Yet spokesmen for the Republican Party want to make Mr. Wilson some leftist partisan with an ax to grind. No, don't get to the bottom of it, you see. Don't find out who leaked it. Attack Mr. Wilson's character. Have we seen this before? We sure have.

So, again, this is no laughing matter. Quite frankly, I just don't understand the President joking lightheartedly about this, but he did. The President needs to take it seriously. The American people take it seriously; we take it seriously. He can take care of it very quickly, as I said, by calling in those senior advisors and asking them, one by one, if they have knowledge of this. Mr. Ashcroft can hardly investigate his own boss, with all of the connections he has. He can hardly be asked to investigate.

That is why under "recusals" in the Department of Justice Resource Manual it says:

If a conflict of interest exists because a United States Attorney has a personal interest in the outcome of the matter or because he/she has or had a professional relationship with parties or counsel. . . . Where there is the appearance of a conflict of interest, the United States Attorney should consider a recusal.

I can think of no better example of an appearance of a conflict of interest, nor where the U.S. Attorney has had a professional relationship with parties or counsel. They should recuse themselves. That is what the Attorney General should do, and he should appoint a special counsel to proceed further to investigate this matter to find out who leaked it.

I will close with this. As I said yesterday, it is not just the person or two persons who leaked this to six reporters; how did these individuals get that classified information? Who gave that to them? Did it come from the NSC? Is that now politicized? Did it come from the CIA? Did someone in the White House request this kind of classified information in order to put it out?

That is why I said yesterday, and I repeat again today, there is a cancer growing on this administration, and the best way to get rid of a cancer is to excise it. The best way to excise it is for the President himself to get involved, for the Attorney General to recuse himself, appoint a special counsel, and let's get to the bottom of this, not in a matter of weeks or months but in the next few days.

Nothing less will suffice for those brave men and women working all over the globe to get the intelligence and the information we need to fight global terrorism and to reassure them that this will never happen again.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I thank the Chair. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to continue as in morning business.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1618

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 282, S. 1618, a 6-month extension of the FAA authorization; that the bill be read a third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, at the request of other Senators, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I reclaim the floor. I am disappointed that my Republican colleagues objected to this request because the future of our aviation system is an extremely important matter.

On Tuesday just past, the authorization for the Federal Aviation Administration expired under its previous authorization, called Air-21, and we are struggling to get something done that can pass both Houses and serve the public, as they should be, in aviation.

My UC request was to pass a 6-month extension of all aviation programs so we can continue this critical airport improvement program without any interruption.

The continuing resolution that the majority brought to the floor last week intentionally omitted funding for certain important airport construction programs under the Airport Improvement Program. It is \$3.4 billion for fiscal year 2004. The fiscal year is now 3 days old.

I think it is irresponsible to allow this critical funding to lapse in the current economy. Job loss is at an all-time high, and the preliminary U.S. Census Bureau data shows that transportation construction is down 8.7 percent from this time last year. Withholding any part of the \$3.4 billion in construction projects makes this problem even worse.

Why did we need to consider a continuing resolution for aviation programs at all? The Senate passed a bill reauthorizing FAA programs on June 12 of this year. The House passed it before then. But we cannot get a bill passed because since that time, Republican leaders, at the behest of the President, have decided to wage an ideological battle over privatizing our air traffic control system rather than doing what the public wants and needs.

I suggest the White House leave its ideological debates at the Heritage Foundation. Let us pass an FAA bill. The public wants safe skies—and I agree with them—not cutbacks in safety, not cutbacks in security.

The biggest problem the White House created in the FAA conference report is overprivatizing our air traffic control system. Despite clear language prohibiting this in both the House and Senate versions of the bill, conference leaders ignored the clear mandates and bowed to the will of the ideologues in the White House.

In all of my years of serving in this Chamber, I have never seen such disregard by conference leaders of a clear safety mandate by colleagues in both Chambers. A bipartisan majority in the Senate voted 56 to 41 for an amendment that I offered to prevent privatization of our air traffic control system. We voted to heed the lessons gleaned from the attacks of September 11, the lessons of our Space Shuttle Program, the Shuttle *Columbia* disaster, and the experiences of our foreign counterparts to avoid making the same mistakes that will end up costing our society more.

September 11, 2001, was a most tragic day, perhaps the most tragic in our history, when America's invincibility was pierced. Almost 3,000 people were killed. In my State of New Jersey, nearly 700 people lost their lives in the terrorist attacks.

As my colleagues know, Transportation Secretary Mineta ordered all aircraft in U.S. airspace grounded that day. It was a massive undertaking in just a few hours. Some 5,000 planes were guided to safe harbor, and our air traffic control system managed that unprecedented effort flawlessly.

I show on this chart what happened on September 11, 2001. At 8:30 in the morning, the skies looked like this to those who were watching the scopes in the towers in the FAA: All of these little green stars, symbols, depict an airplane. The sky was filled. If we look at the northeast corner of our country, including New York and New Jersey, we almost cannot see the black portion of the map because the traffic was so heavy at 8:30 in the morning on that fateful day.

At 9:45, after the attack had begun, we start to see a lessening. There is much more of the map visible.

At 10:45, an hour later, look what happened: Those thousands of airplanes with passengers in every one of them, almost 5,000 airplanes in the sky at that time, and the FAA had to jump in and the controllers had to exercise their best judgment because they had to direct these airplanes to a safe landing place regardless of what their original destination was. We see a totally different picture. There are very few spots where we see airplanes in the sky.

The terrorists crippled our aviation system, and it was the FAA, our heroes, who managed this terrible task

that day because they knew what their responsibilities were and they jumped to it. We didn't know whether there were going to be other planes brought down that morning, but the FAA did its job. The Secretary ordered the planes out of the sky, and people were able to touch down in almost every case safely. The cases that did not were those that were suicidally brought down by maniacs.

On September 11, those who operated our Federal air traffic system demonstrated great heroism and dedication. Air traffic controllers across the Nation performed heroically as they guided the thousands of aircraft out of the sky. Technicians who certify and maintain the high-tech equipment kept it operating reliably throughout the crisis, and flight service station controllers talked directly to the pilots to let them know what was happening and to tell them the best places they could look to for a quick, safe landing.

In my home State, from the tower at Newark International Airport, the air traffic controllers could see the World Trade Center burning in front of their eyes. As they worked to return Americans to the ground safely, they knew that people were dying in front of them.

In the aftermath of these tragic events, the American people demanded private baggage screeners becoming Federal employees. But it seems backward to me that the administration, who quickly got on the problem with the baggage handlers because the private side was not handling it well, put them into Government hands—I believe 28,000 was the total number—and they still want to contract out the air traffic control system to the lowest bidder. It is one thing to assure ourselves that the baggage that goes aboard these airplanes is free of explosives and damaging material, I agree with that, but it is worse to ignore the fact that airplanes full of people, perhaps my grandchildren, my children, other people's children and their families, are in those airplanes. Do we not want the best that we can get in safety and protection for our people? I think so.

The risks of privatizing highly technical and complex operations speak for themselves. On February 1 of this year, our country suffered another tragedy. The Space Shuttle *Columbia* tragically exploded over the skies of Texas, and we lost some of the most courageous Americans on that day. Immediately after that accident, it was our air traffic control system that worked flawlessly to guide aircraft around the falling debris.

Following this disaster, the *Columbia* Accident Investigation Board, led by ADM Harold Gehman, published its findings. The board found that cross-cutting and a drive for ever-greater efficiency at NASA—a pioneer in Government privatization—had eroded NASA's ability to assure mission safety.

Now, if safety lapses can lead to the *Columbia* Shuttle accident and the failure to guarantee the safe return of our brave astronauts from mission STS-107, just how much are we willing to gamble on the safety of the 2 million Americans who travel in our skies every day?

The lessons of privatization are hard learned and should not be ignored. Other countries have tried this already and they have paid the price. Australia, Canada, and Great Britain all have privatized systems that did not live up to the promised benefits of privatization. Just to clear the air, privatization means that these tasks will be handed over to companies whose mission it is to make a profit and who will try to do the job at the cheapest prices.

A member of Parliament of the British House of Commons named Gwyneth Dunwoody said this:

The privatization of the United Kingdom's air traffic control system was a grave mistake, and one that the United States can still avoid making. British air traffic controllers are among the best in the world, and they fought tooth and nail to keep ATC in the public sector.

The public sector means in government.

They insisted that the sale of the national air traffic services would lead to a collapse in morale, the unwise introduction of inadequate and unreliable equipment, and an increasing danger of catastrophic accidents. The Government did not listen and went ahead. They were wrong and the air traffic controllers were right.

Costs have gone up and safety has gone down since Great Britain adopted privatization. Near misses have increased by 50 percent and delays have increased by 20 percent. Do we want to risk near misses in the skies over America? Do we want to take a chance because we can buy security on the cheap? I do not think so, and I am going to do whatever I can to prevent that from happening.

The British Government has already had to bail out the privatized air traffic control company twice. When is this administration going to take off the ideological blinders from its eyes and learn the lessons taught to our British friends?

President Bush himself should be quite familiar with the importance of our air traffic control workforce. Last month, on September 10, the day before the second-year anniversary of the most tragic attack on our soil, the President traveled to a fundraiser in Florida. As Air Force One, the President's airplane, approached for a landing, air traffic controllers noticed an unidentified car on the runway that Air Force One was attempting to land on. Disaster was avoided because of the quick reaction of those air traffic controllers in Jacksonville.

Despite these lessons, the administration has pushed hard to privatize through the contract tower program which has been beneficial to many small airports across the country. Most

of these 200 or so small airports would not otherwise have an air traffic control tower.

There are many more. Some 4,000 small airports exist that could use this program, but the administration wants to use the program to privatize some of the busiest airports in the country. Examples of some of the busiest airport towers: They want to privatize the eighth busiest airport in the country, Van Nuys, CA, almost a half a million flight operations in 2002; the 18th most busy, the Denver Centennial Airport in Colorado, over 400,000 flight operations in 2002. In fact, those two airports are busier than Washington Dulles, which was 23rd with 392,000 flight operations in the year 2002. We look at Arizona, the 24th busiest airport, Phoenix/Deer Valley Municipal Airport, 390,000 flight operations in 2002. The list goes on. We are looking at the 50 busiest airports in the country.

Some may notice that two airports were dropped out of the list, both in the State of Alaska. Now, why is Alaska exempted? The chairman of the Transportation Committee in the House of Representatives is Congressman YOUNG. He is chairman of the committee because he has seniority. Well, he made sure that the two Alaskan airports that were listed for privatization were taken off the list. They are smart in Alaska. They know they have to fight to protect themselves. They are a long distance from the mainland, but they are smart enough to exempt themselves from this dangerous privatization scheme.

I do not believe the safety of every other airport in our national aviation system is any less important than the safety at Alaska's airports.

The White House interfered in our process and altered language in the FAA conference bill so they would be explicitly allowed to privatize some of the busiest air traffic control towers in the world. It is for this reason that I and many of my colleagues are not going to agree. We are not going to accept any FAA reauthorization conference report without language prohibiting privatization of our air traffic control system. I am going to fight until the will of the Senate is heeded. Others have pledged to do the same thing.

I want to make clear to my colleagues that we passed legislation to prevent privatization of the air traffic control system. It was bipartisan. There were 11 Republicans and the remainder Democrats who passed that bill.

The system is made up of many important parts, including the air traffic controllers themselves, those who run the towers, the technicians who have the responsibility to certify that the equipment is working, and the flight service station controllers who communicate directly with the pilots as they make their way to their destination.

As FAA conference leaders did not abide by the will of both the Senate

and the House to prohibit privatizing our air traffic control systems, my colleague, Senator ROCKEFELLER, the ranking member of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Aviation, and I, introduced S. 1618. It is the Temporary Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2003. This legislation extends funding for reauthorization for all aviation programs, including the AIP program, for 6 months, and it also addresses the immediate safety and security needs while FAA conference leaders work with us to go back and fix the problems they created for themselves in the FAA conference report.

But, unfortunately, my unanimous consent request to pass this extension was objected to by the majority. In the meantime, our Government operates under a continuing resolution that means we couldn't get our work done in time, that as fiscal year 2003 ended we were not prepared, though we knew a year in advance that the new fiscal year was going to start with October 1, 2003. I find it outrageous that the Republican leadership in Congress would effectively punish our economy with further job losses in order to afford the opportunity to the White House to wage their ideological battles.

I am appalled they would intentionally zero out the Airport Improvement Program, again, the program that keeps updating our airports across the country. It is over \$3 billion. I am appalled they would intentionally zero that out, zero out the opportunity to put Federal funds in there for airport construction programs, to muscle their plan through the Congress. It is not going to happen.

Our economy cannot stand to lose any more jobs, and using a continuing resolution to cancel a program which will provide \$3.4 billion in AIP funding is just irresponsible.

I hope when we get this bill up my colleagues will work with us so we can do the right thing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent that there now be 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.

IRAQ

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I want to share a few thoughts. I will probably talk about it next week on the supplemental for our activities in Iraq.

I congratulate and will be forthright in my support for the military men and women who are serving so extraordinarily well and Ambassador Bremer for his leadership in an effort to create a new government in Iraq where the