

and weapons-usable material to be “the most urgent unmet national security threat to the United States today.”

That is what Howard Baker and Lloyd Cutler said in their report to the Congress in 2001.

That report was before an agreement was reached on the Moscow Treaty for reducing our nuclear arsenals.

Now with so many new nuclear weapons coming out of service, we must consider significant action to reduce proliferation to ensure that the American people and our friends and allies around the world will be safe. The most obvious way is to bolster the Nunn-Lugar programs.

I want to also speak on the subject of nuclear weapons, and I want to mention North Korea.

I was very troubled to see the report that the Bush administration is slowly accepting North Korea's status as a nuclear power. This is an unconscionable abdication of leadership by this administration. North Korea has taken provocative steps. I don't know why we weren't raising Cain—I mean shaking the rafters—when those fighter aircraft buzzed our observation aircraft—our surveillance aircraft—just 2 days ago. North Korea has taken some very provocative steps hostile to the United States.

It is likely they already have, according to our estimates, between one and three nuclear weapons because North Korea cheated on several international and bilateral agreements over the past decade. Since that time, they have renounced the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. They have renounced the International Atomic Energy Agency and their monitors who were there present by international agreements. They have renounced the 1994 Agreed Framework with the United States. They have been moving spent fuel rods to a reprocessing plant. Then, of course, this inexcusable incident with fighter jets to harass a U.S. reconnaissance flight in international airspace.

Now, lo and behold, the President of North Korea is overtly threatening a nuclear war if the United States leads any effort to isolate them.

With all of this belligerence, we have to have a plan. I would suggest that the Bush administration start working to diplomatically sit down with North Korea to start reducing tensions. We cannot and must not allow the North Koreans to develop an effective nuclear weapons arsenal.

A year ago, the President, in his State of the Union Address, referred to North Korea as an “Axis of Evil.” Does he think that they are evil? I think he does. Do I think that they are evil? I certainly do.

But is this the best way, diplomatically, to approach someone that we are trying to contain from becoming a nuclear power? We want them to stop their brutal actions against their own population, and we want to stop their proliferating technologies relating to weapons of mass destruction.

So in that regard, the President was correct. But we have started to see what the consequences of that speech are. Instead of, as Theodore Roosevelt would say, “speaking softly and carrying a big stick,” the President made a judgment to speak harshly. And I want to know, where is the policy to back it up?

This pronouncement did not cause the North Koreans to begin bad behavior and cheat on their agreements with the U.S. and the international community, but it did embolden them to harden their position and to spurn the international community and begin in earnest to openly pursue more nuclear weapons. This is now the situation in which we find ourselves. And we have to get out of it.

I want this administration to have success because I think North Korea, with, a short way behind them, the country of Iran, poses the next major threat behind the threat that we are engaged in, which is, the war against terrorists.

I think the United States needs some clear action. U.S. leadership is needed to get the world's declared nuclear powers to work together through the United Nations Security Council on a common response to the danger, not only in North Korea, but in Iran as well. If we fail to do so, the nightmare scenario of North Korea selling its nuclear weapons to terrorist groups and other rogue states, even their enriched uranium that they are trying to produce, all of that could become a reality. That is not good for anybody on planet Earth.

I believe we ought to approach a policy where we must make North Korea understand that building an arsenal of nuclear weapons will not be tolerated and that all options to combat this threat, including the military options, have to be on the table. At the same time, we must work to form a viable regional solution with China and Russia and Japan and South Korea, but not to the exclusion of bilateral dialog with North Korea.

I think all of us here are disappointed that China did not respond favorably to Secretary of State Colin Powell's recent appeals for assistance and involvement during his recent trip there. China, and other members of the Security Council, have a lot at stake. They must live up to their commitments of trying to prevent nuclear proliferation.

No policy that we pursue can possibly work unless it is carried out in concert with key countries. But we are getting to the point that we cannot wait. We are going to have to devise workable policy options that the United States and North Korea may take to de-escalate this situation.

So I call upon our colleagues here and our friends in the administration to begin a dialog with North Korea immediately. Each day that passes is a day that the danger notches up one more level.

Again, I thank Senators LUGAR and BIDEN for their strong leadership on

these critical security issues facing our Nation. I thank them for their sponsorship of this Moscow Treaty. I will support the Moscow Treaty on the final result at the end of the day when we pass it. It is clearly in the interests of the United States. Indeed, it is in the interests of planet Earth.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now return to legislative session and that it proceed to a period for morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING SERGEANT AT ARMS ALFONSO LENHARDT

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, the Democratic leader took to the floor recently to pay tribute to the retiring Sergeant at Arms, GEN Al Lenhardt.

I used to chair the Committee on Legislative Branch Appropriations, in which circumstance I had continual contact with the Office of the Sergeant at Arms. When I became the ranking member of that subcommittee was when Al Lenhardt was hired as the Senate Sergeant at Arms. I can report to my fellow Senators that he had no partisanship at all in the way he discharged his duties.

It was within a matter of days after he was sworn in as Sergeant at Arms that September 11 hit. His baptism into the procedures of the Senate was handling the disaster of September 11 and trying to work out security for the Senators, and then to handle security as we traveled to Ground Zero in New York. Since that time, he has been faced with the challenge of making the Capitol as secure as possible.

As he moves on to his next assignment, I want to make it clear that I, too, salute him for the service he has performed for the Senate. He has handled himself in a very professional way. He has done very significant things to make this building safer, things that most Senators do not see.

By virtue of my position on that subcommittee, I was privileged to be in a confidential, classified briefing, as he outlined for us the actions that have been taken to make this building safe.

Indeed, I now take some comfort out of the fact that if there is a biological or chemical attack on Capitol Hill, this building is the safest place to be of any place on Capitol Hill. And that is a tribute to the patriotism, professionalism, and service of Al Lenhardt.

So I join with my friends on the Democratic side of the aisle, and the Democratic leader, who chose him for that position, in wishing him the very

best in his professional service here forward.

Mr. REID. Will my friend yield?

Mr. BENNETT. I am happy to yield.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am embarrassed that I have not come prior to tonight and said something about GEN Al Lenhardt. I have served in the Senate a long time, and we have had some very fine Sergeants at Arms. But for the time and place, he was what we needed.

He is a man who had been literally under fire when he was in the military. He had been head of all the MPs in the Army. And for him to step in here, it was a perfect time, when we were going through all the trouble we had.

I have gotten to know him extremely well. He has been a personal asset to me and to all the Senators. As the distinguished Senator from Utah mentioned, staff and a number of Senators do not know how much he has done. Someday maybe something will be written about everything he personally went through to make sure this place is very safe.

I very much appreciate the Senator from Utah mentioning this fine man. This is not a partisan issue. Those of us who worked with him know what a wonderful job he has done. This is a spoils system we have here, and there are things that happen when there are new administrations, and I accept that.

I personally am going to miss him. He is a fine American. He has rendered great service to the Senate and to our country.

Mr. BENNETT. I thank the Senator from Nevada. I would also note that at the request of the majority leader, I was somewhat involved in the selection process to come up with a successor to Al Lenhardt. I can assure the Democratic whip and all other Senators that in the new Sergeant at Arms Pickle, we have a worthy replacement for Sergeant Lenhardt.

Mr. REID. General Lenhardt.

Mr. BENNETT. Now General Lenhardt. All right. I am very comfortable that the new Sergeant at Arms will carry on the same level of professionalism and provide the same level of protection for the Senators and our staffs that we have seen before.

It is a tribute to General Lenhardt that he has agreed to stay on until March 17 to see that the transition is as seamless as possible and that we do indeed maintain the level of safety we now have.

As good as the hands we have been in in the past, we will remain in good hands in the future.

SENATE ENGAGEMENT

Mr. WARNER. The public, today, across this Nation is exercising our greatest freedom, freedom of speech. Central to many town meetings, central to the media today, are the issues relating to Iraq. I find this strong and thoughtful debate, no matter on which side of the issue individuals or writers

may be, extremely important at this key time in America's history.

I have been fortunate to be on planet Earth somewhat longer than many, and I have been fortunate to have been on the scene and been in a position to observe World War II, Korea, Vietnam and, this being my 25th year in the Senate, together with my colleagues in this Chamber over these many years, these wonderful years, I have been in a position to observe, and if I may say with some modesty, participate in those decisions facing our Nation as it relates to national security.

I have said many times of recent that this particular framework and decisions facing this President, President George Bush, this very courageous President, are as complicated, if not more complicated, than any I have ever seen in this span of my 76 years.

I commend our President and his team—Secretary of State Powell, Secretary Rumsfeld, National Security Adviser Rice, and many others. I followed, as I hope other colleagues did, another brilliant speech given today by the Secretary of State—no equivocations, respect for others and their views, but clearly staying the course, a course on which our Nation embarked to pursue diplomacy to resolve these issues. Iraq is foremost in our minds but close in parallel to significance is the Korean peninsula. There, again, we are being confronted with a situation that requires the strongest of commitments and the strongest of diplomacy. And our President, again, is guiding that diplomacy such that we should address this issue in a multilateral context. I think he is on the right track.

Worldwide terrorism: How many could have foreseen before September 11 that this country would be in the grip, not of state-sponsored terrorism—some state-sponsored but now more the individual. The al-Qaida, the Hamas, you can recite these organizations that challenge our freedoms, our very security, and our most precious security at home.

Yes, America is engaged in this important debate. I commend all. There is a diversity of thought, and I am perfectly willing to listen carefully and heed the thoughts of others. But in that debate a question has arisen, and an important one: What has been, what is, and what is to be, the role of the Congress, and most particularly, the Senate?

The Senate is known and respected worldwide as a debating society; an institution where we have this marvelous opportunity for unlimited debate in certain instances, but most significantly, debate among 100 individuals, well-informed, very conscientious Members who work hard at their duties. We are the world's greatest institution for deliberations, and I am proud, modestly, to be a part. But we symbolize the hope across this world for freedom such as we enjoy in the United States, the hope to fight despair and hunger and political oppression.

The Senate so often and carefully addresses those issues day by day.

As there is diversity of views in debate on Iraq across this Nation, there is diversity among Members in the Senate. That is the way it should be. Therein lies our strength. But there are some who have come up with some viewpoints which I simply do not share.

Some in this Chamber have exercised their very right to criticize the body as an institution for what it has done, is doing, and, more particularly in their views, has not done. Some have gone so far as to say, "We are sleepwalking through history;" "this Chamber is hauntingly silent."

Those are strong words, and words that I heed, and listen to, and in this instance I have great respect for the marvelous Senator who stated those words.

I can remember in the debate on Iraq that we had back in November, 5 hours one day, debating with that particular Senator, whom I admire. So the debate goes on.

But my point is, even though the rafters of this Chamber are not rattling with the rhetoric on Iraq, there are many very important functions going on beyond this Chamber, in the halls of the Senate, in the committee rooms, in the offices of Senators, throughout the entire infrastructure of this institution—in our field offices in our respective States where I and others so frequently meet our constituents. The debate on Iraq is taking place in a responsible way, in my judgment, in the Senate, and this institution is fulfilling its role.

Other Senators have criticized our President. We are really at war now. Yes, I agree that diplomacy is still at work and that final decision to go or not to go is yet to be made by our President, by the very courageous Prime Minister Tony Blair, and other heads of state and government of the group of willing nations, those willing to face up to the need to remove weapons of mass destruction from Saddam Hussein. Yes, they criticize the President. But really we are at war now, and I question how severe that criticism should be.

I was with the distinguished ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, Mr. LEVIN, the distinguished chairman of the Intelligence Committee, Mr. ROBERTS, and the vice chairman, Mr. ROCKEFELLER. The four of us toured Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf region. As we were there, missions were being flown in Operation Northern Watch, Operation Southern Watch, and other activities were taking place regarding which I am not at liberty to describe, nor should I describe, here on the floor.

But men and women in the uniform of the United States, and indeed a great many civilians—particularly those of the Agencies and Departments of this Government who perform our intelligence missions throughout the