

Some critics, such as the junior Senator from Massachusetts, have argued that the war in Iraq is a distraction and that the global war on terrorism has actually been set back as a result of draining the swamp in Iraq. Senator KERRY's reversal on Iraq was wrong and his refusal to support \$87 billion for U.S. troops for reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan stands as a stark rebuttal to President John F. Kennedy's call to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and success of liberty."

This war is not an isolated fight against al-Qaida but a global competition with a shadowy evil that lurks on every continent. It is a fight against the very enemies of freedom. We must never ever shrink from that fight. Terrorists do not reside in Afghanistan alone. It would be dangerously irresponsible to focus single-mindedly on al-Qaida while neglecting the other real threats facing our Nation. There is no doubt that terrorists reside in Iraq. We see evidence of this fact every single day on television.

Those who claim that Iraq is a distraction in the war against terrorism have very short memories, conveniently short memories. They have already forgotten that the Clinton administration State Department listed Iraq as a state sponsor of terrorism—that is the Clinton administration: Iraq as a state sponsor of terrorism—and that Saddam Hussein provided safe haven to international terrorists. We all know he made cash payments to families of suicide bombers among Palestinians.

Now the terrorists are currently making a desperate stand to prevent the establishment of an oasis of freedom in the heart of the Middle East. If we fail to eradicate the terrorists in Iraq, we will fail to defeat terrorism anywhere.

Waffling on our commitment to Iraq would convince the terrorists that America is little more than a paper tiger, and it would undermine our global efforts to deter other rogue states, such as Iraq and North Korea, from supporting terrorism.

We must not allow Iraq to become another Somalia. Going home early is the surest way to embolden the terrorists and to ensure the failure of our efforts to bring peace and security to the Middle East.

It was said the other day that Iraq is Bush's Vietnam. Nothing could be further from the truth. It may be Japan or Germany or Korea, but it is not Vietnam. We face lingering threats and challenges in those conflicts, but by staying the course we heralded in decades of freedom and prosperity in places such as Japan, Germany, and Korea. That is what will be done in Iraq.

Victory in Iraq is now central to our war against terrorism, and not only because it is preferable to fighting terror-

ists in Iraq rather than in New York. A free Iraq represents a mortal blow to the terrorists' goal of a radicalized Middle East.

Until you change the politics of the Middle East, Islamic fundamentalists are going to keep trying to kill Americans, and not even the best defenses will be able to prevent every conceivable attack against us here at home.

Establishing a democratic and economic beachhead in the backyard of radical Islam is itself a major success in the war against terrorism. Indeed, that is precisely why foreign terrorists are so committed to preventing the Iraqis from building a democracy in the heart of the Middle East.

The war against terrorism must be fought outside of Afghanistan, and it must continue after bin Laden is dead or behind bars; otherwise, we will find ourselves as vulnerable as we were on September 10. We cannot keep America safe by distinguishing between terrorists who have attacked us and terrorists who want to attack us.

In conclusion, I close with a quote from Michael Kelly, who died a year ago in Iraq while covering the war from the tip of the spear as an embedded journalist with the Third Infantry Division. He wrote in February before our liberation of Iraq about our cause in Iraq and the challenges we would face. Here is what Michael Kelly had to say:

There is risk; and if things go terribly wrong it is a risk that could result in terrible suffering. But that is an equation that is present in any just war, and in this case any rational expectation has to consider the probable cost to humanity to be low and the probable benefit to be tremendous. To choose perpetuation of tyranny over rescue from tyranny, where rescue may be achieved, is immoral.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Nevada.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Madam President, I would say I agree with my friend that the situation in Iraq is not a Vietnam. But it is Iraq. I would hope the comparisons made to Korea and Japan and Germany do not apply. We, of course, in Korea lost 55,000 troops there who died, with hundreds of thousands wounded and in Japan and Germany there were over half a million dead.

I agree with my friend from Kentucky that we have to do what we can to come out of the situation we have in Iraq. We certainly are there. We have to give our troops everything they need. They are under tremendous pressure. The situation there in the past week has been very difficult. We have to, as a Congress, do everything we can to let them know we support everything they are doing, and to make sure they have all the equipment and supplies they need to do the very best they are trained to do.

JOBS ACT

Mr. REID. Madam President, we have worked very hard on this side of the aisle to pass S. 1637, which is the bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to comply with World Trade Organization rulings, the so-called FSC bill. I want everyone to understand on our side of the aisle and on the other side of the aisle that Senator DASCHLE made to the majority leader, last night, I think, a proposal that should have been accepted last night; that is, from the 75 amendments that have been proposed on our side, that has been reduced to approximately 20 amendments, with very short time agreements on the 20, nothing more than 30 minutes, and one amendment is for as little as 5 minutes.

I also suggest that if we look at what has happened with this piece of legislation, there has been nothing on our side that has been dilatory. We have wanted to move forward on this bill, but in the entire time we have worked on this bill we have voted once. If you go back to years past, when a tax bill comes before the Senate, it is not unusual to have more than 100 amendments offered and disposed of here in the Senate.

I think the good-faith offer made by the Democratic leader to the Republican leader is something that should be accepted. This is a proposal that would be good for the country, and it is in keeping with what we have tried to do on this piece of legislation—let the Senate act in accordance with the traditions of the Senate. It is a far cry from what we should have been doing this past 2 weeks. We could have worked our way through all of these amendments, but that has not been done.

I would suggest it would be in the best interests of the country that the offer made by the Democratic leader to the Republican leader be accepted at the earliest possible date.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. DOLE). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. LIEBERMAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2305 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is recognized for 15 minutes.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. JEFFORDS. Madam President, in 2 weeks, this Nation will celebrate Earth Day. The first Earth Day was in 1970, 34 years ago. For three and a half decades, people from all walks of life have gathered on April 22 to celebrate the environment.

Since the first Earth Day, our Nation has had seven Presidents, including our current leader, President Bush. Four of the six former Presidents were Republicans: President Nixon, President

Ford, President Reagan, and former President Bush.

Each of these former Presidents has left their mark on our Nation's environment. For the next 10 minutes, I want to review the major policy and legislative accomplishments—and there were many—of these former Presidents.

At the same time, I will point out what the administration—the current Bush administration—is doing to that legacy left by four former Presidents.

That contrast is stark. Many of you would be surprised to learn that President Nixon's lasting policy legacy may well be on the environment. President Nixon signed into law some of the most comprehensive and sweeping environmental laws. Here is a list on this chart: National Environmental Protection Act, which was the basis for a lot of these situations; the Clean Air Act; the Clean Water Act; Endangered Species Act; Marine Mammal Protection Act; and the Safe Drinking Water Act.

We would all agree this is an impressive list. For the sake of time, I will not read the list for each of the subsequent three Republican Presidents. But the list is, in some cases, equally impressive.

Let's look at President Ford. The chart shows his greatest environmental accomplishment may be the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The bill helped reduce our Nation's solid waste output and has increased reuse and recycling.

Now let's go to President Reagan's list on this chart. This is amazing to some of us who didn't think we necessarily were doing much. The list includes: the Endangered Species Act; Safe Drinking Water Act; Clean Water Act reintroduced; Hazardous and Solid Waste Act, amending RCRA; Safe Drink Water Act amended; Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act; Nuclear Waste Policy Act; Water Resources Development Act, and the Lacy Act amended.

They all built great environmental records that make all of us proud. I was Republican at the time, and we were proud of the environmental record these Presidents produced.

Now I want to go back to President Bush, senior, for a moment. His list was fairly solid. His greatest environmental achievement may have been the Clean Air Act. Being on that committee at the time, I was involved in negotiating these changes. It wasn't easy. Sometimes we all have to give a little to get a lot. But there were results from his efforts.

Now we come to the current President Bush. Remember, we are simply looking at Republican Presidents and their significant environmental records. We are not going to the Democratic Presidents. Let's look at his chart. There it is. There is nothing there. It is blank. There is not one legislative accomplishment of importance on the environmental issue. None.

I bet you would like to know what they have been doing for the last 4

years on environmental policy. Or maybe you would not. I will tell you anyway.

The Bush administration has been at war with the Clean Air Act. The Bush administration has proposed to gut the Clean Water Act. The Bush administration has bankrupted Superfund, ending the cleanup of toxic waste sites. The Bush administration has slashed funding for drinking water and wastewater. The Bush administration has slowed and almost shut down environmental enforcement.

The next chart—need I continue?

Here is President Bush's record. What are these on the chart? These are environmental rollbacks. If we can take a look at this chart, it says: Weakening the new source review section of the Clean Air Act; no Federal oversight on the cleanup of nearly 300,000 miles of rivers and 5 million acres of lakes; delays in requiring national pollutant discharge elimination system permits; opens more public land for toxic waste dumps; loosens regulations on mercury emissions; exempts Pentagon from the ESA and MMPA rules; exemptions from Montreal Protocol for the pesticide methylbromide; withdrew the TMLL rule set to take effect under the Clean Water Act; increased fuel efficiency standards by a mere 1.5 miles per gallon over 3 years; capped wilderness designation at 22.8 million acres nationwide, no more; Clear Skies plan curbs mercury emissions to only 2 to 14 tons reduction by 2010; does not pursue legal investigations of polluting facilities accused of violating Clean Air Act and water standards; also, they have underfunded Superfund.

The administration has a growing credibility gap, maybe even a credibility chasm on air pollution policy and environmental policy in general. I believe the President has lost the trust of the American people when it comes to the environment.

There are opportunities for him to rebuild this trust, but I doubt that any of the suggestions that have been given will be taken seriously.

When this President came into office, I had the greatest hopes that we could all work together to solve the problems facing the American public. But to put it mildly, I have been greatly disappointed.

The former Presidents I mentioned earlier built a legacy of environmental progress. This legacy is being dismantled. We can only hope that a future President will look back and work to rebuild our environmental protections to make sure this Nation can go on to a better and a healthier future.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, what is the parliamentary situation?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority controls just under 11 minutes in morning business.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the distinguished Presiding Officer. As always, it

is good to see her, a longtime friend of our family, and I appreciate her service to this body.

THE FAIRNESS IN ASBESTOS INJURY RESOLUTION ACT OF 2004

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, we have had months of bipartisan negotiations on legislation to enact a national trust fund for victims of asbestos-related diseases. I am concerned that our distinguished majority leader and Senator HATCH have now introduced a partisan asbestos bill. We all agreed over the past couple of years of hard work on this issue that only a bipartisan bill will pass.

I held the first hearing on the problem of asbestos litigation a couple years ago. We worked closely with Republicans and Democrats, and I had hoped the bipartisan dialog over the past year would yield a fair and efficient compensation system that we could, in good conscience, offer to those suffering today from asbestos-related diseases and also to victims yet to come. But I am afraid the Senate majority has decided to walk away from those negotiations and to report to unilateralism by introducing a partisan bill.

I have offered, as has Senator DASCHLE, to work very hard on this issue. When I heard one was going to be introduced yesterday, I actually tried very hard to see if I could get a copy of it. Hours after it was introduced, we were finally given one.

We have all learned a great deal about the harms wreaked by asbestos exposure since that first Judiciary Committee hearing I talked about that I convened in September of 2002.

Asbestos is the most lethal substance ever widely used in the workplace. Between 1940 and 1980, more than 27.5 million workers in this country were exposed to asbestos on the job. Nearly 19 million of them had high levels of exposure over long periods of time. Even with all that, unbelievably, asbestos is still used today.

What we face is an asbestos-induced disease crisis—hundreds of thousands of workers and their families have suffered debilitating disease and death due to asbestos exposure. These are the real victims of the asbestos nightmare, and they must be the first and foremost focus of our concern and effort in this body. These are people who, by simply showing up for work, now must endure lives of extreme pain and suffering and often early death.

Not only do the victims of asbestos exposure continue to suffer, and their numbers to grow, but the businesses involved in the litigation, along with their employees and retirees, are suffering from the economic uncertainty created by this legislation.

More than 60 companies have filed for bankruptcy, and their bankruptcies have a devastating human and economic effect. Those victims who deserve fair compensation, of course, cannot get it from a bankrupt company.