

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. COLEMAN. Are we still in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. We are in morning business.

The Senator from Minnesota.

GOOD ECONOMIC NEWS

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, about 6, 7 months ago, I rose on the floor of the Senate to talk about some good economic news. We have gone through very difficult economic times in this country—a recession that began before President Bush got elected. There was a devastating impact on the psychology of American consumers because of corporate fraud, corporate malfeasance, the actions we saw with Enron and WorldCom, and Tyco, for which some of those folks involved in that will ultimately be brought to justice. But it had a devastating impact on the confidence of American consumers and the economy.

Then we had September 11, which had a devastating physical impact, devastating psychological impact, with great suffering across the board. And, again, beyond the hurt that so many families suffered and the Nation suffered, the economy suffered. The economy suffered, and the economy slowed down. Americas had not been attacked on its own shores, I believe, since the War of 1812.

In spite of that, look at where we are today, 3 years later. There is good news. With all the challenges we face in this world, sometimes you have to stand up and talk about good news.

When I rose on the floor of the Senate about 6 months ago, there was a little bit of good news, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle talked about: Let's not be premature. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle still lambasted, and continue to criticize, the vision and the actions of the President and this Congress in cutting taxes.

Today, I had a chance to review the most recent numbers by the Labor Department. Mr. President, 288,000 new jobs were created in April. And it is not just April. As the Presiding Officer from Oregon is well aware, what happens is the Labor Department often recalculates the reports from months before. And the month before the job numbers were very strong. They were at 308,000 new jobs in March. Well, in today's listing of the jobs for April, the March numbers have been revised upward to 337,000 jobs.

In fact, if you go back to March, what happened in March is that the Labor Department revised up the January and February job gains. So the total in January and February and March was over half a million new jobs created in this country over 3 months.

Now what we see is over a million jobs—a million jobs—created in this country in the last 8 months. That is good news. That is something Americans should celebrate.

When I was the mayor of St. Paul, folks used to say: Mayor, what are you doing for a kid today?

And I would say: One of the best things I can do for a kid is make sure mom and dad have an opportunity to work.

There are all sorts of good things that come with a job, not the least of which is health insurance. The best welfare program is a job. The best housing program is a job. There is the dignity that comes with a job, the impact it has on a family, and the lessening of the pressures that one sees in a family. So there is a whole range of great things that happen.

It is interesting; I am an optimist and have always been an optimist. Sometimes there are folks who look at what is good news and what is bad news, and at times I sense that with our friends on the other side of the aisle there is a dark cloud over there waiting for the rain to happen. But the sun is beginning to shine—and not beginning to shine, it is shining on Americans who are looking for work—a million new jobs in 8 months, 288,000 jobs in April. The reason is, in large measure, because of the tax cuts this Congress enacted.

Talk to any small businessperson, and they will tell you, when you give bonus depreciation, it increases their incentive to put money into new equipment. When you put money into new equipment, folks who produce that equipment have a job, and folks who run that equipment have a job. When you accelerate or increase expensing, again, it is an encouragement to small business. And small businesses are where the jobs have grown. The small business then reinvests in the business. When you reinvest in the business, you grow jobs. When you lower the top rate—which is not about tax cuts for the rich—it is tax cuts for small businesses.

I had an opportunity to be in Rochester, MN, the other day. We talked about taxes. I asked the business folks: How many of you are subchapter S corporations? A lot of hands went up. I am not an accountant, and I used to be a lawyer. But subchapter S corporations are taxed at the same level as personal taxes. So when we talk about cutting the highest rate, what is happening is we are cutting the tax load for the job creators in this country, the small business men and women.

Yesterday, there was good news. State initial claims for jobless benefits in April, in my State, fell 31.5 percent from last April, hitting the lowest level since before the 2001 recession. Initial claims nationally dropped, last week, by 25,000, to 350,000—the lowest number of claims since October 2000.

Retailer sales are up. Productivity is up. Consumer confidence is up. Home

buying is up. It is fascinating; the economy grew at a healthy 4.2-percent rate in the first quarter, up 4.1 percent in the previous quarter. When I read the Minneapolis Star Tribune yesterday, they were saying: April figures will be announced. Economists were expecting a gain of 150,000 jobs. Well, the economists were wrong.

We have already doubled what was reported by the Labor Department. The unemployment rate was supposed to remain constant at 5.7 percent, but it has dipped another tenth of a percent to 5.6 percent.

Mr. President, this is great news for about every American, except John Kerry. I hope we put the politics aside. I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle can now say, yes, President Bush was right that when you cut taxes, when you cut the tax load on small businessmen and businesswomen, it grows jobs; when you cut taxes and put money back in the pockets of moms and dads, it grows jobs.

This is not a politician standing up and talking; these are the facts. This is the data the Department of Labor has reported. The President's vision was clear, the President's vision was right. Congress was right to act on that vision. The great beneficiaries today are the moms and dads in America who can now look out and say there is more job opportunity out there, and that is a very good thing.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE APPALLING TREATMENT OF IRAQI PRISONERS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to reflect and respond to the reports of what has happened in Iraq over the last several weeks—the pictures emerging of U.S. soldiers abusing Iraqi prisoners, the appalling treatment of those in our custody.

I have struggled over the last several days to put into words my own reactions to these images from half a world away. I have been angered by it, and I have been, in some ways, sickened by it. This has besmirched the reputation of our country, damaged the reputation of our soldiers serving in Iraq, the vast majority of whom have served honorably, many of them heroically.

Yet, what is dominating the news not only in our country but around the world are images of American soldiers torturing and humiliating those we have captured. This does enormous damage to our cause against terrorism. It does enormous damage to America's standing in the world. Think of how we would feel if these images were of our

soldiers and American citizens being treated this way by Iraqis. What would be the reaction in America if we saw our soldiers being humiliated and abused in the most immoral ways?

This is, first and foremost, an issue of morality. What has happened is morally wrong. It is wrong to humiliate people. It is wrong to abuse people. It is wrong to torture people. Those are fundamental values. Those are American values. Those are values that are shared by virtually every person in this country. What has happened is not the America that I know, not the America that I love.

If we think about the larger effects of what has occurred, nothing can be more clear than that it has done enormous damage to our cause against terrorism. Before this happened, 71 percent of the Iraqis had come to see us as occupiers rather than as liberators. That is before this occurred.

What can be the reaction of Iraqis now? After all of the words about our intentions and what we hoped to do to help the Iraqi people emerge from under a dictatorship and move toward freedom and democracy and the most fundamental values that undergird this country, what can be their feeling about America now?

I remember so well the President saying we had ended the torture chambers of Saddam Hussein. I must say that made me proud, that we had done something good in this war, that we had ended the torture chambers of Saddam Hussein. I think we now have to ask, Have we just created our own? That is what the pictures show. That is what the stories say.

That is not America. That is not what we stand for. We cannot let that be the lasting image of what America has done.

In the last few days, the papers across the globe and television stations around the world have been full of condemnation and anger directed at America because there has been a failure, a failure of values, a failure of leadership, a failure to put the best American foot forward. These results will be long lasting, make no mistake about it.

I graduated high school from an American Air Force base in Tripoli, Libya, North Africa. I lived for 2 years in the Arab culture among Muslims. I know if one were to try to design something that would completely and totally enrage people raised in that culture, one could not have designed a scenario worse than what has happened. To have an American female in a prison where Iraqi men were naked, forced into homosexual positions, you could not design a circumstance that would more gravely enrage Muslim sensibilities than that.

Think of what our reaction would be. Think of the anger we would feel. In their culture, there is nothing more profoundly humiliating than that, and humiliation breeds anger, and anger breeds terrorism. We have created a recruiting poster for al-Qaida that will plague us for years.

Right at the heart of this is morality, fundamental morality, and it is imperative that we stand up with one voice and say this is wrong, it is morally wrong, and that we, first, admit to what occurred; that we pledge it will never happen again; that we move to make amends for those who have been injured and humiliated and tortured; and that we take steps to assure ourselves and others this will never happen again. Those are the basic steps of redemption under any moral code, and those are the steps that America must take now.

After September 11, there was a wave of sympathy and support for America all around the world. Muslims condemned what had occurred—or at least a significant majority did—and all across the globe people rushed to America's side. Now, if you take public opinion soundings across the world, what one finds is we have dissipated that wave of sympathy and support and replaced it with a rising level of disrespect for America. That has serious consequences because, in the war on terror, we need allies, we need people who will help out, we need people who will provide information on threats to America.

I think we have to seriously rethink how we are conducting this war on terror. I think the war in Iraq was an enormous diversion from the real war on terror. We must remind ourselves it was not Iraq that attacked the United States on September 11; it was al-Qaida.

Their acts were directed by Osama bin Laden, not by Saddam Hussein. As evil and repugnant as Saddam Hussein, his sons and his regime were, they were not the masterminds of the September 11 attack on the United States. That was the dirty work of al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden. They are the ones who ought to be our priority in holding people to account for the vicious murder of nearly 3,000 Americans on September 11. It was al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden who ought to have commanded top priority in our move to hold people accountable and responsible for those vicious attacks. Instead, I believe we have allowed ourselves to be diverted by a war in Iraq that had nothing to do with the September 11 attacks.

I hope that as a nation we will rededicate our effort to go after those who were responsible for the attacks on this country. It is now over 950 days since the September 11 attacks on this country, and still Osama bin Laden threatens America and American interests and our allies. Still he is issuing threats. Just most recently, he has put a bounty on the heads of those who stand with us.

If one looks at the priorities of our war on terror, we have 130,000 troops in Iraq and only 15,000 troops in Afghanistan. Many of our elite units were taken off the hunt for al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden and shifted to the Iraqi front to be replaced by units in

Afghanistan searching for Osama bin Laden whose specialty was Spanish culture. What earthly sense does this make in the war on terror?

Our top priority should have been to continue aggressively the search for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida and their network of supporters who continue to plan attacks on this country.

As I have searched for some way to understand what has occurred in Iraq, I was reminded yesterday in the New York Times of a prison experiment that was conducted at Stanford University in 1971. The headline in the New York Times story is "Simulated Prison in 1971 Showed a Fine Line Between Normal and Monster."

These experiments were conducted by the man who was my professor of psychology at Stanford University, Dr. Zimbardo. He took volunteers and randomly split them into groups of "guards" and groups of "prisoners." And he found within days of the prison experiment beginning that the guards had become swaggering and sadistic to the point of placing bags over the prisoners' heads, forcing them to strip naked, and encouraging them to perform sexual acts. This was not half a world a way in Iraq. This was on the campus of Stanford University in California. That experiment and studies like it have given, as the New York Times reports, insight into how ordinary people can, under the right circumstances, do horrible things.

Professor Zimbardo said that when the news from Iraq emerged, he was not surprised that it happened. He said: "I have exact, parallel pictures of prisoners with bags over their heads from the 1971 study," the prison experiment at Stanford University.

He went on to say that it is not that we put bad apples in a good barrel; we put good apples in a bad barrel. That barrel corrupts anything that it touches.

Maybe that is what occurred here. Maybe we put good apples, fundamentally decent people, in a bad barrel and that barrel has corrupted everything that it touched.

One thing that has been learned from these experiments is that in situations where people have absolute power over others, it is critically important that there are others who are watching, others who are monitoring, others who are ensuring that there is not abuse. The fact that proper oversight was not present is a failure of leadership, and it is a failure of leadership that goes right up the chain of command in our country.

I was asked yesterday, do I favor the resignation of the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Rumsfeld. I responded by saying, I want to see the full facts before I call for anyone's resignation or removal. I want to know what did he know, when did he know it, and what did he do about it.

Those tests do not just apply to the Secretary of Defense; those tests apply to everyone in the chain of command.

They apply to our commanders in Iraq. They apply to General Myers, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Those tests apply to the Secretary of Defense and they apply to the President of the United States. What did they know, when did they know it, and what did they do about it?

What has occurred here is wrong. It is morally wrong. It has done enormous damage to our country, damage that will last for a very long time. Those who are responsible should be held to account and we should make certain that nothing like this ever happens again. This is not America. These are not American values. This is not how America acts towards others.

The behavior shown in these photos and on these tapes are not the best of America. They are the worst of America, and we can do so much better. We are so much better.

I was also asked yesterday if I believe America should now leave Iraq immediately. Yesterday I had lunch with the young people working in my office for the spring semester, interns from all across my State. I asked them the question, What do you think we should do? Even those who felt passionately that America had made a mistake in going to war in Iraq believe that we simply cannot leave now; that we have an obligation to improve things; that we have an obligation to stabilize things; that we have an obligation to prevent the bloodbath that would certainly follow an immediate exodus by our country.

I voted against authorizing this war in Iraq because I did not believe it was in the national security interest of the United States. I believed we should not open a second front before we had finished business with al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden. I believed Iraq would be a distraction. I believed it would take us away from a successful prosecution of the real war on terrorism. As much as I feel strongly that that was correct, I also think it would be a mistake for the United States to exit precipitously from Iraq. The fact is, we are now responsible for what occurs there. We have an obligation to try to make this work.

I do not believe that means the United States has an obligation to make a country in the image of America.

I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes.

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

Mr. CONRAD. But I do believe we have a responsibility to bring stability and to give the Iraqi people a chance to make judgments about their own future. That, fundamentally, is what democracy is all about. It is not about America picking the leaders for Iraq. I must say, last week I was taken aback to read Mr. Bremer and others talking about how we are going to pick Iraq's new leaders. Think about that. How we are going to decide who Iraq's leaders

are going to be? That is not democracy. That is not the role of America. Our job is not to pick Iraq's leaders. How arrogant is that, to say we can go into a country and designate the leaders and think that those people would have any credibility among their own people?

If you want to set up a group for failure, have them chosen by the United States. And for us to tell the Iraqi people, these are your leaders, what does that have to do with democracy? Those are not the values of America. We would not permit for one moment another person to choose our leaders. What business do we think we have choosing theirs? I think the obligation we have is to help Iraq pick their own leaders and have a society where there is sufficient security for them to make those decisions and for them to be able to rebuild an economy that has been shattered by decades of despotic rule by Saddam Hussein, and now by this war.

This is an important moment in history for our country. We are being tested, and we need to apply the best of American values and the high standards of morality that have made this country great. We need to send a signal to the rest of the world about what we really stand for. We need to show all those across the globe that America is fully committed to the fundamental values of democracy and freedom and for the ability of people to choose their own leaders free from fear and intimidation and terror. That is a test that we have faced many times in our history, and it is a test that we have passed with flying colors.

At the same time, we should remind the world of the proudest moments in American history when, over and over, this country stood up against terrorism and fascism and communism and helped the rest of the world be free. That is in the finest traditions of America. Those are the values we embrace. That is the example we offer the world. Anything less detracts from America's greatness.

I hope in the days ahead that this body and the other body and the President of the United States will reflect on a new direction for our country in Iraq and in the war on terror. We are faced with a grave threat. I believe the strategy that has been pursued is one that, instead of reducing the threat to our Nation, has actually increased it because when one humiliates, that creates anger, and anger breeds terrorism and strengthens those who wish to bring America down.

So this is a turning point. We have an opportunity to choose which direction we take. So many times in our past we have been faced with these choices, and always America has responded with its best. I am confident that we will do the same now.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CUBA

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, yesterday President Bush announced he is going to devote more money, more resources, and more personnel to enforcing restrictions on travel to the country of Cuba.

Let me describe the absurdity of what is happening with respect to the use of resources by this administration in dealing with the country of Cuba. First let me say that Fidel Castro is a dictator. No one here has time for Fidel Castro. That includes myself. The Cuban people deserve to be free. But it is interesting to me that at a time when we are confronted with the threat of terrorism in this country, we see the administration obsessed with Cuba, using resources that ought to be used in order to combat terrorism being used instead to enforce a ban against U.S. citizens from traveling in Cuba. It is an outrage. This administration ought to be embarrassed about it.

Let me describe what I mean. There is an agency called OFAC—the Office of Foreign Asset Control—in the Treasury Department. Their job is to track terrorists and to track the money that goes to finance terrorism. That is their job, and they have people working full time to try to pull the cover off this web of money that moves back and forth to finance terrorists.

What are they doing at OFAC these days? I have a report from the Department of the Treasury. That report is in response to questions from myself and from other Members of Congress. It says that OFAC has two people investigating Osama bin Laden's wealth—that is, tracking money Osama bin Laden would use to further his efforts to commit acts of terrorism against this country and the rest of the world. Two people.

Do you know how many people they have tracking Americans who travel to Cuba? There are twenty-one people tracking Americans who travel to Cuba. Track them down, see if you can slap a big fine on them. They have 21 people working on that, and they have 2 people working on trying to find Osama bin Laden's money and shut down the ways he finances his acts of terrorism. It is unbelievable. They ought to be profoundly embarrassed down at the administration and the Treasury Department.

Let me give some examples. This is a picture of a woman named Joni Scott. Joan Scott is someone who came to visit me. Joni Scott went to Cuba 4 years ago to distribute free Bibles to the Cuban people. Guess what. In recent months these 21 sleuths down at