

have to do something about a gas pipeline from Alaska where some of our greatest reserves of energy are.

I already mentioned clean coal and certainly there are opportunities for us to ensure that the largest resource, fossil fuel, is available without being harsh on the environment. Indian energy, we have not allowed the tribes to be doing something on the reservations, which many of them would like to do. A lot of people resist nuclear energy. The fact is, we want clean generated electricity. Nuclear is probably the best opportunity that we have to do that.

The section is also there on renewables so, again, we can make some progress in terms of being able to utilize some renewable energy sources that will take some of the pressure off of the kind of production that we have now.

We have a great challenge. I think it is a challenge to this body to move forward on an energy policy and stop finding reasons to not have one and object to having one. It is the same people who complain about not having affordable energy, and that is kind of where we are. We can indeed change that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the time for the Democrats comes, Senator DORGAN be recognized for 10 minutes and Senator DURBIN for 10 minutes.

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

The Senator from Georgia.

WINNING THE WAR IN IRAQ

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise this morning to talk about several issues relative to what is happening in Iraq today. First, the terrible offenses that occurred at the Abu Ghraib prison that came forth a couple of weeks ago have obscured some of the positive things that have been happening relative to the war on the ground in Iraq. We made some great strides over the last couple of weeks and, once again, we have every reason to be extremely proud of our brave men and women who are carrying out this war against terrorism, because we are winning this war.

We are seeing more of the bad guys taken out in Iraq today, and a lot of that has been obscured by what happened at Abu Ghraib and the revelations that have been forthcoming relative to those incidents over the past couple of weeks.

With respect to Abu Ghraib and to the individuals who were involved in the atrocities that took place there, our Army is doing exactly what it is supposed to do relative to issues such as this. We are doing a complete and thorough investigation of the facts. Those who committed offenses for which they need to be held accountable are going to be held accountable, irrespective of their level of management.

I say that because these atrocities may have been carried out by privates or sergeants or any other enlisted or officer personnel up the line. If they were, then they are going to be held accountable. If any of these atrocities were carried out by civilians, they are going to be held accountable likewise.

Major General Taguba produced a very professional and comprehensive report on what did take place at Abu Ghraib. He found what happened there was a total lack of discipline and a failure of leadership. Our military forces want to be held accountable because those who are doing the great job over there—and this is 99.99 percent of our military personnel—want us to get to the bottom of this, just as everybody in America and every other individual around the world wants us to do. And we are going to do that.

Second, there was an announcement yesterday that the coalition forces discovered sarin gas in an artillery round, and that is a very significant fact. I don't think we can overstate the significance of this, but by the same token we need to be careful as to how far we go. There was a lot of criticism leveled at this administration for conducting this war on the basis that weapons of mass destruction were in Iraq and in the possession of Saddam Hussein and that was the sole reason we went to war with Iraq. That simply was not the case. We debated that and will continue to debate that down the road. But the fact is those of us who kept saying we know the weapons of mass destruction are there because Saddam Hussein admitted he had them—and he never told us what he did with them so we know they are there—that theory has now been validated.

But is this the be-all and end-all relative to the issue of weapons of mass destruction? I don't think so. I don't think we need to get overexcited. I think we need to continue to allow the Iraq Survey Team to do their investigation and at the end of the day we will find out what did happen, how many weapons of mass destruction exist today, and where those weapons are. We will proceed with the destruction of those weapons that once belonged to Saddam Hussein. It is important that we find and destroy these weapons of mass destruction so they can't be used by terrorists, as they attempted to do last weekend.

Third, I want to mention the killing yesterday of the President of the Iraqi Governing Council, Mr. Izzedine Salim. Mr. Salim was a respected member of the IGC. His leadership will be missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

However, his successor, Mr. Ajil al-Yawar, will lead the IGC over the next 6 weeks until political sovereignty is turned over to the new Iraqi government on June 30. The terrorists and anarchists fighting to keep Iraq from becoming a free and democratic state are not going to win. We are not going to let the killing of a fine individual such

as Mr. Salim keep the people of Iraq from forming a new, free and independent government and obtaining their democracy.

The perspective on these events is very important. We will turn over sovereignty to Iraq on 30 June. We have discovered weapons of mass destruction and we need to continue our search for others. We need to let our investigation on Abu Ghraib be completed before making pronouncements on who was responsible.

Last, I would like to relate that about 4 weeks ago, I had the pleasure of visiting 14 of our military institutions in Europe within a 4-day period. During that period of time, Senator SESSIONS, Senator ENZI, and myself had the occasion to visit with individual members of our Armed Forces such as those who belong to the 173rd Airborne Brigade, who are stationed at Caserma Ederly in Vicenza, Italy, who spent a year in Kirkuk, Iraq. They were the original occupying troops in Kirkuk. We had the occasion to visit with spouses of our soldiers who, today, are deployed to Iraq. We also had the opportunity to visit at Landstuhl Hospital at Ramstein, Germany, individuals who have been injured in Iraq. I have to say, every time I am around those men and women, my heart beats a little faster because they are not only the finest young men and women America has to offer, but they are doing a fantastic job of representing America, whether it is doing their duty of being fighting men and women or whether it is doing what they probably do best, and that is being the greatest ambassadors America has right now in that part of the world.

The men and women in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, for example, said when they marched into Kirkuk, the Iraqi people viewed them as simply an occupying military force, which was not going to be supportive of the goals that the citizens of Kirkuk wanted to see carried out; that is, to have their children educated, to have hospitals, to have water and sewer and power restored.

As the weeks and months went on, however, the members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade did exactly what the local people didn't believe possible: They rebuilt the hospitals, they rebuilt and opened the schools, they fixed the power grid so electricity could be restored to the citizens of that community, as well as increasing the availability of water and sewer, so at the point in time when the 173rd needed to be returned home, there were tears shed on both sides. The bonding between our fighting men and women, these soldiers and goodwill ambassadors, and the people of Kirkuk was exactly as we envisioned it should be; that is, our men and women had done a great job of liberating those people and at the same time had made good friends and had been great ambassadors for the United States in that part of the world.

At Landstuhl, I will have to say the attitude of soldiers who had received, in some cases, very serious injuries was unbelievable. One young man who was from the home State of the Presiding Officer, as he and I discussed, who had his right leg shot off below the knee, made a comment to me as I walked in the room—and he had a big smile on his face. He said:

Senator, I'm leaving here and I am going to Walter Reed Hospital and I am going to get a new leg and as soon as I get me that new leg I want you to know I am going back to be with my buddies in Iraq.

What greater attitude, commitment, and dedication can you have from any individual? That young man is simply a shining light out there today and should far overshadow the stories we see coming out of Abu Ghraib.

Also, the spouses of the soldiers who are deployed to Iraq today, the spouses we visited with, about 35 or 40 of them, had, again, an unbelievable attitude. Our military families are truly that. They are families. They stand side by side with their spouses and support their deployment to any part of the world. But particularly now with respect to this very difficult and complex deployment in Iraq, these spouses had the opportunity to engage with us and to come forward to complain about a number of things, but they never did. They were all positive and said they knew their husbands were doing the right thing, they were truly supportive of them, and once again our military families were a shining light of which we can all be very proud.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak on Democratic time in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized for 10 minutes.

FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me agree with the Senator from Georgia. The men and women in uniform representing the United States of America are our best. I have had a chance to meet with them, both the guard units in my State and their families, and to go to Walter Reed Hospital to meet those who have been seriously injured in combat. I have attended the funerals of those who have died from my State. My heart goes out to every single one of them and their families. They have given this country all we can ask and they have given Iraq millions of acts of kindness and bravery and good will, which we as citizens back home could never, ever repay.

But, having said all that, we cannot look beyond the fact that the policy and the decisions made by this administration that brought us into this war have raised the most serious and profound questions with the American people and with the Members of Congress. We understand now, sadly, that,

frankly, we were given the wrong reasons. We were wrong in the reasons the administration gave us for going to war. There were no weapons of mass destruction massed on our borders, poised to threaten our troops and poised to threaten others. There were no chemical and biological weapons, no nuclear weapons.

The administration was wrong when they talked about plutonium being shifted from Africa to Iraq. There was no evidence of that whatever.

There was no evidence whatever, despite the administration's statement, of the presence of al-Qaida in Iraq or any connection between Saddam Hussein and September 11.

This administration was wrong on the number of troops we needed. When General Shinseki boldly said we would need more forces to accomplish our goal, he faced derision from this administration. He has been proven right and, sadly, at a time when we were supposed to be bringing American troops home, we are bringing more troops into Iraq. We are escalating the number of forces that are necessary for us to protect even those who were on the ground.

We were wrong about our coalition. It was too thin and too weak at the start and still is today.

This is an American war, borne largely if not exclusively by American taxpayers, and almost exclusively by American troops. Despite the contributions by Great Britain and Poland and others, these are American forces whose lives are on the line.

We were wrong about the reaction of Iraqis who were supposed to greet us with parades and flowers as we liberated their country. Sadly, we see what is actually happening today. Now three-fourths of the Iraqis want Americans to leave. They are glad Saddam Hussein is gone, but now they want us to be gone. That was something that was not predicted.

We were wrong about the protection of our troops. The fact that our Humvees were not properly armored has meant that one out of four American lives were lost because of this lack of preparedness. We were wrong about body armor. A third of our troops in Iraq, as of last year, did not have body armor to protect them personally. We were wrong about protection when it came to the helicopters which sadly still do not have the necessary defensive equipment to fight off shoulder-fired missiles.

We have been wrong, as well, in terms of the human lives, the lives we have given; wrong in terms of the dollar costs. This administration in February said we need no more money to execute this war. As of last week, they said we need \$25 billion. Mr. Wolfowitz said it might be \$50 billion more to finish this war at least into the beginning of next year. And we were wrong in the prison at Abu Ghraib with improper personnel not properly trained, not properly supervised.

Frankly, we have been wrong on the impact of the war on terrorism. We believed somehow that standing our ground in Iraq would help us in the war on terrorism. It has made it more difficult. This has become a magnet for terrorists who come to Iraq to kill American soldiers and American civilians. That is something that was not predicted.

So this administration has been wrong—wrong in its policy, as we find every single day. The American people still stand foursquare behind our men and women in uniform. They are doing their patriotic duty and we are proud of them. But this administration has not prepared us, did not prepare us, for this invasion and, sadly, we are paying that price today.

There is another important element beyond foreign policy. It is the question of the domestic policies of this administration. The question which should be asked is not a question from a Democrat but one that was asked by President Ronald Reagan in 1980. It is very basic. The question you have to ask yourself every time we have an election is: Are you better off as an American today than you were 4 years ago?

Take a look at the state of our economy and you can understand we are not. The middle Americans across America have to say, frankly, we are not better off. In the first 2 years of the Bush administration, real income has dropped by almost \$1,500 per household. Growth and wages, remarkably weak. After growing at a healthy rate during the Clinton administration, wages have barely kept up with inflation under President George W. Bush. In fact, the Labor Department recently reported that in the last 12 months, wages and salaries grew at the slowest rate in over 20 years.

At the same time, Americans are facing skyrocketing costs. Take a look at this. Flat wages during the period that the President has been in office, average weekly earnings, are up 1 percent. Gasoline prices are up 25 percent, college tuition prices are up 28 percent, and family health care premiums are up 36 percent. These are the real costs of families across America.

So when this administration says, We are in recovery, things are looking a lot better, take a look at the reality of the bills that American families have to pay. These are, sadly, families who are not doing better today under President George W. Bush's economic plan.

For many Americans the problem is even worse than flat wages and high costs. For millions, the problem is because they have lost their job. We have lost 2.2 million private sector jobs under President George W. Bush. Under President Clinton, we increased the number of people working in America by 21 million. Under President George W. Bush we have lost 2.2 million jobs.

The manufacturing sector has been devastated, with jobs lost in 36 out of the 39 months under this President. We