

community and to uphold our American values with the same patriotic zeal exemplified by her father.

Last year, for the fourth consecutive year, I submitted a resolution in the Senate to designate the week of Veterans Day as "National Veterans Awareness Week." It explicitly underscores the need for our schools to develop educational programs to highlight the contributions of veterans in our country.

This past year, Ellen held a very moving ceremony. The school invited every friend, relative, or neighbor of a student who served in our military to come and speak at the ceremony in front of the entire school and faculty about their experiences.

Madam President, included in the list of speakers was the mother of LT Scott Travis, a Wilmington native, a graduate of Brandywine High School and West Point, who is currently serving in Iraq.

The ceremony brought real people with real stories into the classroom and gave the kids a tangible sense of what it meant and what it means to sacrifice for one's country. The climax was when students pinned medals on the veterans in attendance as a way to personally thank them for their service.

That is the kind of school Ellen runs. That is the kind of person Ellen is.

By the way, for the record, let me say that in my 31st year in the Senate, Rabbi Bernhardt is only the fifth guest Chaplain I have invited from Delaware, following in the footsteps of Father Jim Trainer from St. Patrick's Church, Rabbi Kenneth S. Cohen from Congregation Beth Shalom, and Father Robert Balducci from St. Anthony's Parish.

From where I sit, you are in good company and so are they.

I thank Rabbi Bernhardt for being here this morning. By the way, you should be very proud of your son sitting behind me who is a relatively new member of my staff. He is already having an impact in the conduct of business around here.

Again, I know I speak for all my colleagues when I welcome you and your family here today. Thank you for the sacrifices you have made for this country, and thank you for the values you are imprinting on the young men and women of my community.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, the distinguished ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee wishes to speak on an important subject. Will the Senator indicate how much time he wishes to take?

Mr. BIDEN. Madam President, I say to the Senator, I do not want to interfere. I want to speak for about 10 minutes regarding Ahmed Chalabi. I do not have to do it now.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I say to the distinguished ranking member, we have 25 minutes that have been allocated. We could easily, I am confident, get another 10 minutes. Does the Senator wish to speak right now?

Mr. BIDEN. Madam President, I would like to do whatever accommodates the Senate.

Mr. REID. Through the Chair to the distinguished Senator from Florida, how is the Senator's time schedule?

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I say there is never a dull moment in the life of this Senator from Florida. Since I have learned the ways of comity, accommodation, felicity, I yield to the distinguished Senator from the State of Delaware. In fact, in my remarks about are we better off now than we were 4 years ago, I was going to try to engage my distinguished colleague in a colloquy.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent there be 5 additional minutes on both sides for morning business. That will allow the Senator from Delaware to speak for 10 minutes. If my unanimous consent request is granted, that would allow him to begin now.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator will need an additional 10 minutes. All time in excess has expired.

Mr. REID. Our time is gone?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There are 23½ minutes remaining.

Mr. REID. Where did our time go? Did somebody speak?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The senior Senator from Delaware and the junior Senator from Delaware.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 10 minutes on each side, then.

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

AHMED CHALABI

Mr. BIDEN. Madam President, I thank my friend from Florida who knows much more about what I am going to mention today. He and I worked on what I am going to talk about for some time. And that is—there are reports coming in that the home and offices of Ahmed Chalabi were raided today in Baghdad.

I do not have clear evidence yet as to whether they were raided by the Iraqi government or by the CPA, but both the Senator and I have been incredible skeptics of this administration's reliance on this fellow, Ahmed Chalabi, who has been indicted, tried, convicted, and sentenced in Jordan.

For the last 2 years—although I have nothing personal against Mr. Ahmed Chalabi—I have been urging this administration, particularly the Secretary of Defense, the Vice President, and Mr. Wolfowitz: Do not put our eggs into Mr. Chalabi's basket.

Mr. Chalabi is the President of the Iraqi National Congress. I was so concerned about this that my friend from Nebraska, Senator HAGEL, and I were literally smuggled into northern Iraq about a month before the war began because we wanted to meet with the Barzani and Talibani clients in northern Iraq to determine what their attitude was, first, toward our invasion with Iraq—would they be with us? There were reports that they would have been, but we wanted to find out firsthand.

And B, we wanted to find out whether Ahmed Chalabi spoke for them. The leaders of both those clans said: We want to make it clear that the INC does not speak for us. We did form the INC with him, but he is out for himself, not us.

I could never quite understand the incredible preoccupation of the administration with Mr. Chalabi. I think that reliance has done us great damage in terms of establishing legitimacy.

Today's raid comes on the heels of an announcement earlier this week that the Defense Department belatedly, after well over a year, has cut off the \$340,000 monthly payment to the INC, headed by Mr. Chalabi.

Last month, I wrote to the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense asking them to explain why we continue to pay Mr. Chalabi a monthly stipend. The action was seen as sort of putting our thumb on the scale—we say we want the Iraqis to decide their outcome, and here we are pouring into one man, an outfit, \$340,000 a month.

It is no secret Mr. Chalabi has long been the favorite of the Pentagon civilians and the Vice President, although the CIA, the uniformed military, and the State Department have been adamantly opposed to him.

We recently had a meeting with the Secretary of Defense in a closed session, but I am allowed to say this in public, and I raised the question of funds to Chalabi and the phrase—well, I guess I cannot quote exactly what the phrase was. I cannot quote the Secretary. But the point is there has been a real difficulty in pushing back.

It has been clear for some time our close association with Mr. Chalabi has damaged American interests in Iraq. Chalabi is the best known figure in the Iraqi Governing Council, according to a poll taken. We appointed him. By the way, a poll taken a couple of months ago in Iraq shows that he is not only the best known member of the Governing Council, but he is also the least popular, with a negative rating of over 60 percent.

Chalabi, as my colleagues will recall, was flown in to southern Iraq literally days before the statue of Saddam fell. It was actually during the war; he was flown in to a portion of southern Iraq we had already conquered and passed. He had been flown in without the knowledge of the State Department and other senior officials. I guess he was going to be the triumphant Shi'a

who was going to march through the Shi'a territories heading up to Baghdad, except one thing, nobody liked him and nobody followed him.

I do not know what it took to get the message to this administration that this guy was not helpful but this guy was hurting our legitimacy. At that time, I rose in the Senate and said, what are we doing here? I think my friend from Florida as well, if not here in the Senate, I know in our hearings, said, what are we doing this for? How are we saying we are liberating the Iraqis, we are going to let them choose their government and we are flying in a handpicked guy?

Well, that sort of went south, figuratively speaking. It was clear we were attempting to put him in a place to take over the reins of Baghdad. Toward the end of that year, he organized the militia, which was implicated in instances of looting in Baghdad. The U.S. military wisely ordered the militia to disband, but there were some supporters here saying it is okay for him to set up a militia.

We are trying to disband militias, and we wonder why we have so little legitimacy. This is not Monday-morning quarter-backing. If need be, for the record, I will come back and lay out all the statements we made 2 years ago, 8 months ago, 10 months ago, as recently as a hearing 2 days ago in the Senate.

It has done us serious damage. High-ranking civilians in the Defense Department continue to back Mr. Chalabi, despite numerous warnings about his past dealings.

The King of Jordan made known his country's distaste for Mr. Chalabi. They did not hide it. The Foreign Minister of Jordan came to me personally and said, for God's sake, do not deal with this guy; do you not understand he is going to hurt you?

Mr. Chalabi has been convicted on fraud charges stemming from a failure of the Petra Bank which Chalabi headed. In recent months, Chalabi has been moving closer and closer to the religious elements in Iraq, apparently belying his claims to be a secular leader. His close association with hardliners in Iran, including Ayatollah Khamenei, has been a matter of mystery and some suspicion, but we continued to support him.

The reason for today's raid is not yet clear, although there were reports earlier this week that one of Chalabi's associates, the finance minister, is being investigated by Iraqi police for a scam involving government vehicles. There have been other reports of corruption allegations as well.

I am not making a judgment on that at this moment. We will wait to see. But I am making a judgment, did make a judgment, and will continue to make the judgment that Mr. Chalabi is hurting us, not helping us.

One other point; Mr. Chalabi's guys got in and got hold of a whole lot of intelligence data that was Saddam Hus-

sein's. He refuses to give it to us. He refuses to turn it over to the U.S. military. He will let us see it but not keep it. And this is our guy. It is like our guy in Havana. You know, our guy?

I do not know what it takes. It is like taking a wombat and banging it up the side of the heads of some of these guys and the civilians in the Defense Department.

This guy is bad news for the United States, whether the reason for the raiding of his headquarters and his home relates to corruption or not. We have tarnished our reputation by our association with this man. It is time to begin recouping it by ending our efforts to foist an unpopular leader on Iraqis and supporting a process which will produce more legitimate leaders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENSIGN). The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I was going to address the topic, "Are you safer than you were 4 years ago," but while we have the distinguished Senator from Delaware in the Chamber, I want to address a couple of issues with him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. The bottom line is it is a long time in coming. I hope this means we have listened to the sounds of voices in this administration. I say to my friend, we both know this: We have both tried to help this administration, but it is as though there is a San Andreas fault that runs down the middle of this administration, with two very different views of the world. One is held by Mr. Powell, the State Department, and the uniformed military, and the other being the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, and Mr. Wolfowitz, who are all fine, honorable, and decent men who have a very different view of the world.

The view of their world which they have been promoting has turned out not to be so accurate. I hope this is evidence of the fact the President is starting to listen to saner voices.

I facetiously said—nobody asked—if you had a baseball team and you had somebody who batted zero and it came time to put in a pinch-hitter, are you going to look at the batting averages? It is time to look at the batting averages, Mr. President. Listen to those folks in your administration. There are some very good ones who have better batting averages, and I hope this is beginning that recognition.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I want to posit a couple of questions to the distinguished immediate past chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. How much time do we have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida has 10 minutes.

Is there objection to the unanimous consent request? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. I did not hear the request.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I did not have a request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator wishes to pose questions to the other side.

Mr. SCHUMER. I apologize. I thought something was said about 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. How much time is allocated to this side on morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic side has 22 minutes remaining.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Is it my understanding this Senator would have 10 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Correct.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Does that give the Senator from New York enough time?

Mr. SCHUMER. Yes.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. All of my speech on "are you better off now than you were 4 years ago," I am going to save for another day. I want to take advantage of one of the most knowledgeable Members of the Senate. In thinking about the question of are you better off now than you were 4 years ago, are you safer now than you were 4 years ago, I have had the privilege of sitting at the knee of the former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He has taught me something about two countries where we better keep a laser eye focused, namely Iran and North Korea.

I ask the distinguished ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as I hold up this chart about suspected nuclear weapons in North Korea, are we safer now than we were 4 years ago?

Mr. BIDEN. Clearly we are not. That is not to suggest you are suggesting it is not good Saddam is gone. I think we are, in a marginal sense, safer because he is gone. But I think the effect of what we have allowed to happen, or what has happened in the rest of the world, has literally put us in more jeopardy.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Then, Mr. President, indeed this is what the Senator from Delaware has constantly preached. He has been a Johnny-one-note on how we ought to engage with other nations around this world, through diplomacy, to better the protection of the United States.

Is it the impression of the Senator from Delaware we have been dragging our feet with regard to North Korea, before we ever started engaging them in international and one-to-one discussions?

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I say to my friend—I will make two points here. One is, it was not only the Senator from Delaware and Florida, but also the Senator from Indiana, the Republican chairman, who pointed out we made a mistake by dismissing the policy of engagement of the last administration. Even the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. Powell, when Kim Dae Jong of South Korea

came, said we were going to continue engaging the North as Mr. Kim wanted us to and thought we should, as our Japanese friends thought we should, and the President summarily stopped that. I think that was another mistake.

I make another point about Iran. The neoconservative view of why we should have gone into Iraq alone is it would teach a lesson to the other malcontents in the world such as the Iranians. They were going to say, My God, look at the unilateral use of force; we better behave. I point out what my friend knows well and we talked about. Prior to our invasion of Iraq, Iran had a genuine democratic movement—not prowestern, democratic movement. It was the Majlis, their parliament, 195 people. There was a genuine movement.

You had the mullahs and the apparatus and the clerics who controlled security and controlled the intelligence apparatus, afraid of world opinion if they crushed that democratic movement.

What did they do? If, in fact, the neocons are correct, and having 140,000 troops in Iraq was going to teach Iran a lesson, in the midst of our greatest show of force in Iraq, the clerics in Tehran would have been afraid to touch the democratic movement, for fear of world reaction.

Obviously they were not frightened by our show of force. There is no democratic movement left. For instead the clerics crushed it. They disbanded it.

So that is another example of the two most dangerous states for the United States of America today if they spiral out of control—Iran and North Korea. Both present a greater threat to America today than they did 3 years ago.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I further ask the distinguished former chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee with regard to nuclear weapons and the acquiring of nuclear technology and the ability to make a bomb in Iran, are we safer today than we were 4 years ago?

Mr. BIDEN. As we both know, the details of that are classified, but we are allowed to say, and I give you my opinion, and I believe it would be the consensus of the intelligence community: No. We are not safer.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I further ask my friend from Delaware, given the fact of what we have heard in the testimony in the Foreign Relations Committee over the last week, and also in the Senate Armed Services Committee; given the fact my friend from Delaware and I have had long conversations about not only do we not need to pull out of Iraq but we need to increase our troop strength in Iraq because the alternative would be unthinkable, for us to turn tail and run and create a vacuum which would be filled by terrorists, which would only give succor and encouragement to the other radical elements in the region, including Iran, does the Senator from Delaware think

we are safer now in our international diplomacy results than we were 4 years ago?

Mr. BIDEN. No, we are not. But we could be if the President is willing to not stay the course but change the course. There is an opportunity, if the President begins to listen to the correct voices in his administration, to internationalize this, to bring in the major powers, to actually leave Iraq in December of 2005 with a representative government which will have a positive impact on the region over time. It is still possible, but the President must quickly call a summit meeting of the major powers; quickly get them to agree to sign off on Mr. Brahimi's plan of a new government; quickly get NATO to agree to have a NATO-led multinational force, sanctioned by the United Nations; and quickly, quickly demonstrate he understands the breadth and depth of the damage done by the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, bulldoze that prison down, build a hospital in its place, release those prisoners who should not be there and keep the others in a different environment and open it up. He still can do this. But my friend knows, we can't do it. Only one man, because of the majesty of his office, can do it: the President of the United States. He can do it. I hope he does not squander this last opportunity. I am hopeful he will not.

I believe he understands more now. I hope he begins to listen to the uniform military and Mr. Powell, what they have been counseling along with you and I and Senators LUGAR, HAGEL, MCCAIN, and others all along here. There is still time. But I believe this is the last serious chance he has to get it right by June 30.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I certainly agree with the Senator from Delaware. I will ask a final question of him. Why does the Senator from Delaware, one of the most knowledgeable in this entire body on international affairs—

Mr. BIDEN. I thank my friend.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Why, in his opinion, does the administration continue to resist the outreach of building consensus in the international community, to help us with problems such as Iraq and Iran and North Korea? Why is there resistance to that, I ask the Senator from Delaware?

Mr. BIDEN. First of all, I thank the Senator for his compliments that are excessive and not accurate, but I thank him nonetheless. But let me say in a second, I took the time 4 years ago to ask my senior staff to go back and get every major work written by the Straussians, the neocons, I mean it sincerely, and Tony Blinken, former National Security Agency, my chief guy, got together 11 or 12 books, the most seminal volumes written in the last decade by the neoconservatives. These are honorable, bright, serious people—patriotic Americans.

If you read what they say, they mean what they say. What they say is the value of America—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I ask unanimous consent it be charged to our time and that we have 1 additional minute so the Senator can finish his answer.

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

Mr. BIDEN. The bottom line is the neoconservatives believe our power is enhanced by leveraging power. Meaning if we go alone without any help, the malcontents of the world go: Oh, my God, look at them, they don't even listen to the rest of the world. They have this awesome power. We should listen to them.

It might work if we had an army of 12 million and a surplus of \$500 billion a year instead of an army that is one-twelfth and a deficit of \$500 billion a year. It doesn't work.

Now ideology has run head on into reality. For ideologues, like all honorable people, it is difficult to change. It is a little like me as a practicing Roman Catholic denying the Trinity. You can't deny the Trinity and be a Catholic. It is not possible. They cannot acknowledge they need the international community and stick to a thesis that has been theirs for the last 12 years. That is as quickly, succinctly, and as accurately as I can state it. As Samuel Clemens said: All generalities are false, including this one. I made a bit of a generalization, but I believe an accurate one.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, what we have gotten in a few minutes is a short course of what, in the opinion of this Senator from Delaware, and in the opinion of this Senator from Florida, we need to do: Internationalize the effort, build a consensus, reach out, bring in an international force such as NATO, led by the American military, bring in a senior international diplomat, prepare Iraq for governing itself, and be prepared to be there for the long haul.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired. The Senator from New York.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Florida for his persistence to get to the truth, and my colleague from Delaware, who succinctly described our problem brilliantly in terms of the ideology of the neocons running into reality. I could not agree more.

Ever since I was in college in the late 1960s, I would say to my colleagues, ideologues have bothered me. Anyone who thinks they have a monopoly on truth, and there is only one way to see the world, always gets us into trouble. They can be ideologues of the far left, they can be ideologues of the far right, they can be ideologues just on one issue. America is a place where we all