

many colleagues, in numerous Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings. This April, my colleague, Senator BROWNBACK, and I introduced S. Con. Res. 99 condemning the actions of the Sudanese Government. I have joined many of my colleagues in supporting Senator DEWINE's effort to direct urgently needed funds to Darfur for humanitarian relief, and I am a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 124 acknowledging the genocide that is unfolding in Darfur, and I commend the leadership of Senators CORZINE and BROWNBACK, the sponsors of this legislation.

This is a tremendously difficult and complex situation. I commend the Secretary of State for traveling to Darfur to raise the profile on this issue. I commend the efforts of the USAID to respond to the urgent humanitarian needs in CHAD and IDPs in Darfur.

The administration can and must do more. First, the President needs to put in charge a senior official who can speak authoritatively to Khartoum and to key regional players, someone who is focused on Sudan exclusively each and every day. It is almost inexplicable that this has not been done to date.

Since our former colleague, Senator Jack Danforth, left his post as the President's special envoy for Sudan to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, it appears that no one has been in charge of this issue on a day-to-day basis while this genocide unfolds. What kind of signal does this send about our seriousness? We need someone senior, with knowledge of the African and Arab worlds, put in place today to coordinate U.S. policy and deliver authoritative U.S. messages on a daily basis, to seize on fleeting opportunities, eliminate any confusion, match available resources with urgent needs, and constantly hold the Sudan Government's feet to the fire.

We also need serious thinking today about how to improve the security situation in Darfur. To date, the Government of Sudan has utterly failed to honor its commitments to disarm the janjaweed and to stop their brutal campaign.

Our strategy cannot simply consist of waiting for them to act. This is the same regime that orchestrated this misery in the first place. We cannot leave them in the driver's seat. So even as we push diplomatically for meaningful action from Khartoum, even as we do the hard work of building a strong, unified multilateral coalition to send a clear message about the serious consequences that will result from continued intransigence, we must develop plans to help people in spite of the Government of Sudan's policies. That means finding a way to provide security for Darfur's vulnerable populations and for the humanitarian organizations working to assist them.

We need to be working now to collect testimony and evidence so that those responsible for atrocities in Darfur can be held accountable for their crimes. This must not be an afterthought. It is

a central part of our obligation. And in addition to appropriately and sensitively collecting testimony, we should be making plans today to develop strategies to reach the survivors of rape in Darfur with medical assistance, counseling, and community-based support strategies to help address issues of stigma.

Ultimately, we need to think about underlying issues of political disenfranchisement that stoked the initial conflict in Darfur. The North-South peace process made real progress, and I applaud the efforts of the many African, European, and American diplomats who worked so hard to help the parties come to agreement. But the process only created real political space for two entities, the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement of the South. Neither the South nor the North are monolithic. We need to think today about political accommodations that can give the disenfranchised a voice in determining their own destiny.

I share the outrage of my colleagues. But I know that the people of Darfur—the malnourished children, the victims of rape, the broken families struggling to survive—this people need more than our outrage. They need our action.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded and I be permitted to speak as in morning business.

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

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, when major and hard-fought legislation nears enactment, the rhetoric on this floor can get a little overheated. Supporters of the measure sometimes overstate the importance of the legislation or exaggerate its benefits. Opponents make doomsday predictions of what will happen if the bill becomes law. Only the passage of time can answer those arguments, but by the time that answers are available, the Senate has often has moved on to other battles.

Today, I want to take a few minutes on the floor to call the attention of my colleagues and the American people to some promising indications that the doomsday predictions of opponents of the McCain-Feingold bill have not come to pass. As we told the Senate at the time, McCain-Feingold will not solve every problem in our campaign finance system, and it hasn't. Lately, there has been significant controversy over so-called "527 organizations," which the FEC has permitted to operate in violation, I believe, of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974.

Nonetheless, McCain-Feingold is working as it was intended to work. It

closed the political party soft money loophole, and it has restored some sanity to a system that had truly spun out of control over the last several elections. While it is still too early to reach a final conclusion, it appears that the cynics and the doubters were wrong. And that is good news for the American people.

When the Senate considered the McCain-Feingold bill in March 2001, we had just finished a hotly contested Presidential election in 2000. Nearly \$500 million of soft money was raised in that election by the two political parties, almost double what was raised in the 1996 election. Nearly two-thirds of that total was given by just 800 donors, who contributed over \$120,000 each to the parties. The biggest donors contributed far more than that. The most generous soft money donor, AFSCME, gave almost \$6 million, all to the Democratic party. SEIU gave a total of \$4.3 million, mostly to the Democrats. AT&T gave a total of \$3.7 million to the parties, the Carpenters and Joiners Union \$2.9 million, Freddie Mac and Philip Morris, \$2.4 million. Then we had the "double givers"—companies that gave money to both parties. In 2000, there were 146 donors that gave over \$100,000 in soft money to both of the political parties.

The appearance of corruption created by this avalanche of soft money was overwhelming. The public knew it; and we all knew it in our hearts. And the Supreme Court knew it when it upheld the McCain-Feingold bill against constitutional challenge in the case of *McConnell v. FEC*. The Court stated the following:

As the record demonstrates, it is the manner in which parties have sold access to federal candidates and officeholders that has given rise to the appearance of undue influence. Implicit (and, as the record shows, sometimes explicit) in the sale of access is the suggestion that money buys influence. It is no surprise then that purchasers of such access unabashedly admit that they are seeking to purchase just such influence. It was not unwarranted for Congress to conclude that the selling of access gives rise to the appearance of corruption.

In this election cycle, I am happy to report, political party soft money is no more. Not reduced, not held in check, not capped—it is just gone. I consider this one of the most significant developments in American politics in the last 50 years. In 2002, a colleague told me on this floor that he had just finished making an hour of calls asking for large soft money contributions. He said he felt like taking a shower. Now, many of my colleagues, including some who did not support our bill, tell me how happy they are to not have to make those calls any more. That's a huge change in how we spend our time, and how we relate to people who have a big stake in what we do on this floor.

But what about the political parties? When we were debating McCain-Feingold, we had a real difference of opinion on how the bill would affect the parties. On one side were Senators who

argued passionately that the bill would kill the political parties.

One Senator said the following during our debate:

This legislation seeks, quite literally, to eliminate any prominence for the role of political parties in American elections.

This legislation favors special interests over parties and favors some special interests over other special interests. Equally remarkable is the patchwork manner in which this legislation achieves its virtual elimination of political parties from the electoral process.

The same Senator claimed:

But under this bill, I promise you, if McCain-Feingold becomes law, there won't be one penny less spent on politics—not a penny less. In fact, a good deal more will be spent on politics. It just won't be spent by the parties. Even with the increase in hard money, which I think is a good idea and I voted for, there is no way that will ever make up for the soft dollars lost.

There isn't any way, he said, that they will ever make up for the soft dollars lost.

Twenty months after the McCain-Feingold bill went into effect as the law of the land, our two great political parties are alive and well. Apparently they do have something to offer to the American people other than fundraisers for lobbyists. A new study by Anthony Corrado and Tom Mann of the Brookings Institution reports that through the first 18 months of the 2004 election cycle, the national party committees raised \$615 million in hard money alone, which was more than the \$540 million that they had raised in hard and soft money combined at a comparable point in the 2000 election cycle. Let me say that again. As of June 30, the parties had raised more in hard money in this election cycle than they had raised in hard and soft money combined at a similar point in the 2000 cycle.

Remember the Senator who said there was "no way" that the parties could make up for the soft money they would lose under the McCain-Feingold bill. Well it turns out that Senator was wrong.

The parties are not just surviving, they are thriving. And they are doing this not just by taking advantage of the increased contribution limits instituted by McCain-Feingold. Corrado and Mann state the following:

While these increases in the contribution limits have provided the parties with millions of additional dollars, the growth in party funding in 2004 is largely the result of a remarkable surge in the number of party donors. Both parties have added hundreds of thousands of new small donors to their rolls.

The numbers are truly astonishing. The Republican National Committee has added a million new donors. The NRCC added 400,000 new contributors in 2003. The DNC has recruited more than 800,000 new small donors through direct mail alone. And these numbers don't include any new online contributions in 2004. And, of course, they don't include the hundreds of millions of dollars in hard money raised by the two major party presidential candidates.

The parties are stronger than they were before not just because they have raised more money than in 2000. Small contributors are a much better indicator of strength than big contributors. Small contributors volunteer, they are involved, they vote, and they inspire others to contribute and vote. I believe McCain-Feingold saved the political parties from the oblivion to which they were sending themselves with their reliance on the easy fix of soft money.

The argument over the effect of the bill on the political parties was just one of the disagreements we had when the bill was considered back in 2001. Another dispute concerned what would happen to all that soft money that had previously been contributed to the parties. Opponents of the bill expressed absolute certainty that the money contributed to the parties would simply migrate to less accountable outside groups. One Senator said the following during our debate:

Why do we want to ban soft money to political parties, that funding which is now accountable and reportable? This ban would weaken the parties and put more money and control in the hands of wealthy individuals and independent groups who are accountable to no one.

Another Senator quoted a prominent Republican lawyer who said: "The world under McCain-Feingold is a world where the loudest voices in the process are third-party groups."

Those of us who supported the bill certainly recognized that some donors would look for alternative ways to influence the political process. But we also thought that much of the money that was being given to the political parties was being given under duress. We argued that if Members of Congress and other public officials weren't asking for the money, much of it wouldn't be given at all. We had heard from countless corporate executives that the soft money system, which many had called legalized bribery, was really more like legalized extortion. I will never forget the words of Ed Kangas the former CEO of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. He said:

Businesses should not have to pay a toll to have their case heard in Washington. There are many times when CEOs feel like the pressure to contribute soft money is nothing less than a shakedown.

In 1999, on this floor, I said the following in a debate with another Senator who actually supported the soft money ban, but asserted that soft money would simply flow to outside groups:

I have this chart. It is a list of all the soft money double givers. These are corporations that have given over \$150,000 to both sides. Under the Senator's logic, these very same corporations—Philip Morris, Joseph Seagram, RJR Nabisco, BankAmerica Corporation—each of these would continue making the same amount of contributions; they would take the chance of violating the law by doing this in coordination with or at the suggestion of the parties, and they would calmly turn over the same kind of cash to others, be it left-wing or right-wing independent groups?

I have to say . . . I am skeptical that if they cannot hand the check directly to the political party leaders, they will take those chances.

On this dispute, with 3½ months to go before the election, the jury is still out. But once again, the early indications are that the doomsday predictions of opponents of the bill will not come to pass.

Not long ago, the Wall Street Journal reported that it surveyed the 20 top corporate donors in the 2002 election cycle and more than half, including Microsoft, Citigroup, and Pfizer, are resisting giving large contributions to the outside groups, the 527s, that are trying to raise unlimited contributions since the parties can no longer accept them. As the article noted:

The reticence illustrates an uneasiness on the part of some of the corporations to get sucked back into the world of unlimited political contributions that they thought campaign reform had left behind.

According to a Washington Post article in June:

[E]lection law lawyers said corporations are showing significant reluctance to get back into making "soft money" donations after passage of the McCain-Feingold law.

According to the Center for Public Integrity, which maintains the most complete database of information on 527s using the reports required by the disclosure bill we passed in 2000, 527s that focus on federal elections along with labor-funded 527s have raised approximately \$150 million as of June 30. This is far less than the \$254 million that had been raised in soft money by the parties at a similar point in the 2000 election cycle and less than half of the \$308 million raised in the first 18 months of the 2002 cycle. It is, of course, possible that 527 fundraising will pick up significantly in the wake of the FEC's determination in May that it will likely not regulate these groups as political committees in this election cycle. But the underlying problem with raising money for these organizations remain. That is very simple. It is central to this whole issue. They cannot offer the kind of access and influence that made the parties such effective soft money seekers prior to the enactment of McCain-Feingold.

There is no doubt that ideologically motivated wealthy individuals will continue to seek ways to influence elections. Most of the money being donated to the 527s is coming from such people. I continue to believe that many of these groups, since their stated goal is to influence federal elections, should be required to register as federal PACs, which can accept contributions of only \$5,000 per year from individuals. But even if they continue to operate outside the law, they are not going to replace the political parties. Without significant corporate support, they simply cannot raise the kind of money that the parties raised in 2000, much less the amounts that would have been raised under the old system in this election cycle.

So to those who forecast or believed the doomsday scenarios back in 2001 and 2002 when we considered the bill, or who continue to believe them today, I suggest you look at the numbers. McCain-Feingold is working, and the Senate should be proud that it passed. As we approach the 2004 elections, and the airwaves become saturated with political advertising, note the difference. Party ads are paid for with the contributions of millions of hard-working Americans proud to participate in the political process and looking to parties and to their government to represent them, not the special interests that used to write the big checks.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent I be recognized to speak in morning business.

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

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this may be the last day of Senate activity before we take a recess for August. In that recess, both major political parties will have their conventions in Boston and New York. Members will be back home in their States, some campaigning, some spending time with their families—a period of time we all look forward to each year. However, we leave this Senate with a great deal of unfinished business.

This morning, Governor Tom Kean, a former Governor of New Jersey, and Congressman Lee Hamilton of Indiana gave a briefing to Members of the Senate on the 9/11 Commission Report. Let me say at the outset that those two individuals, Governor Kean and Congressman Hamilton, as well as every member of this Commission, performed a great service for the United States of America. They have produced a report which, frankly, is a bargain. They were given an appropriation of some \$15 million, they had 80 staff people, and over a very short period of time by congressional standards did a more thorough analysis of the events leading up to September 11 than any analysis that has been done by a congressional committee. They did it in a bipartisan fashion, an analytical fashion, and they did it not looking for someone to blame or someone to assign responsibility but, rather, to learn so they would learn as a Commission and we would learn as a nation how to make America safer.

As Governor Kean this morning went through this Commission report, he outlined all of the occurrences, starting with the initial bombing of the

World Trade Center many years ago, that led up to September 11. As he read the list, it went longer and longer and longer, all of the clear evidence we had accumulated of activities by al-Qaida and other terrorists threatening the United States of America. When you heard this list, you reached the same conclusion he did; that is, why didn't we see it coming?

There was so much evidence leading in that direction. Governor Kean and Congressman Hamilton said many of our leaders, many of our agencies, many Members of Congress, and many American people were still thinking about the threat and danger of our world in terms of a cold war. Now we were facing a new danger, a danger which was not obvious to us, and very few people were prescient enough to see it coming.

He talked about how these al-Qaida terrorists on 9/11, with a budget of less than half a million dollars, managed to see weaknesses in our system of security, that they could bring a 4-inch bladed knife on a plane but not a 6-inch bladed knife. All they needed was a 4-inch knife. They used box cutters. They came on planes and threatened the crews and commandeered the aircraft. They knew the doorways to the pilots' cabin were not reinforced or locked. They put all this together into this hideous plan of theirs to crash airplanes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Well, the facts were there for us to see, and most of us missed it. But this Commission said: We need to look beyond that. We need to look to the next question: What should we be doing to make certain America is safer? What should we have learned from 9/11? And they identified several areas.

Congressman Hamilton said: We need more imagination. At one point he said—I suppose halfway in jest—we should have been reading more Tom Clancy novels and thinking about possibilities rather than just analyzing the way things had always been. We needed to make sure we developed imagination, developed a program that could respond to these new threats, capabilities. And we needed to make certain we had done everything we could to organize and manage our Government assets so they could be used most effectively.

Our friends in the military understand that. It is the reason why the United States of America has the best military in the world. About 10 years ago, Senator Goldwater and Congressman Nichols proposed some dramatic reforms in the military and its management to try to stop this competition among the branches in the military and bring them together, and it has worked. This cooperative effort has made our military even that much better today.

Well, this Commission report suggests we need to do the same thing when it comes to the 15 different intelligence agencies across our Govern-

ment that are responsible for collecting and analyzing information, to warn us of dangers ahead. Fifteen different agencies, with many extremely talented people, some with the most sophisticated technology in the world, but often dealing with obstacles and hurdles between agencies that should not exist.

They gave us examples: that one agency would know of the 19 terrorists on 9/11 and that many of them were dangerous people, but it was not communicated to the Federal Aviation Administration to keep them off airplanes; that we would establish standards which said: If you were identified by our Government as a dangerous person, we are going to search your baggage, but we are not going to stop you from getting on a plane. All of these things suggest we need to be smarter and better and tougher in the future.

The proposals they came up with are going to be controversial. They will be discussed at length by Members of Congress and a lot of others. But they are on the right track.

First: to give to one person new authority over these intelligence agencies. Senator FEINSTEIN of California, my colleague, has one approach. The Commission has another approach. But the idea is to vest in that person more authority to get the job done.

Second: to force together all these different agencies, 15 different agencies, into a counterterrorism network that works and cooperates. That is something that is long overdue.

And then, third: to look at Congress, because we have a role in this, too. Congress did not do as good a job as it could have done. We have a Senate Intelligence Committee, of which I am proud to be a part, and the House Intelligence Committee. But we need more oversight. We need to be able to develop the skills, with staff and our own commitment, to ask hard questions of these intelligence agencies, to ask what they are doing, whether they are being imaginative enough, whether they are cooperating with other agencies.

We need to ask hard questions about the appropriations for these agencies. I happen to serve on the Intelligence Committee and on the Appropriations Committee. So I sat through both hearings recently. I will tell you what happened in our Appropriations Committee hearing. It was a meeting of the Defense Subcommittee, in the closed room upstairs.

Then-Director of the CIA George Tenet presented a lengthy analysis of the intelligence threats to the United States, about 150 pages, and went through it. On about page 110, he started talking about the appropriations. That is what we were there for. We were there to discuss the money needed for our intelligence operations. But the first 110 out of 150 pages were all about the threats around the world and how serious they might be.

When it came time for members of the Appropriations subcommittee to

ask questions, they dwelled on the front part of Mr. Tenet's presentation, the first 110 pages. They dwelled on questions related to threats to the United States.

I am way down the line on that committee. By the time it came, an hour and a half later, to my questions, I said to Director Tenet: May I ask you a question about your appropriations? It was the first question asked about that at that hearing. We spent less than 10 minutes asking about the money that was to be spent and why.

My question to Director Tenet at the time was: What is the most significant part of your budget? How has it changed from last year? And why do we need it?

Well, that is an obvious question in any Appropriations hearing. But we never got to it until extremely late in the hearing. We can do better.

One of the suggestions from Congressman Hamilton is to look for a joint Intelligence Committee between the House and the Senate. There is only one viable analogy, when we did the same thing with atomic energy 40 years ago. No one in Congress today served at that time. It would be interesting to see how it worked.

Another is to give to the Senate Intelligence Committee and House Intelligence Committee authorizing-appropriating authority. For most people following this debate, this sounds so arcane it does not sound important, but it is: to give to one committee the authority to look at the programs and how they are working and then look at the budget and see how it matches up. That is important.

We need to expand the Senate Intelligence Committee staff. We do not have enough people. How can we possibly keep track of 15 different agencies, thousands of employees, the reaches of these agencies into countries all around the world, in the heavens above and the Earth below, and do this with literally a handful of staff people?

On the Senate Intelligence Committee, which I have served on for 4 years, I have one staff person whom I share with another Senator. That is not good enough. Part-time staff will not do the job.

Again, let me say, the 9/11 Commission report is a great service to America. The men and women who spent the time to make it a reality deserve our thanks and praise. President Bush was right yesterday. This is not a matter of blaming President Clinton or blaming President Bush. We are called on, as Members of Congress, in a bipartisan fashion, to think of ways to change the law to make America safer. I think that is what people across America expect of us.

Let me tell you what we can do today in a bipartisan fashion. We are hours away from leaving. We will be off, as I said, for the August recess. We will leave behind this Senate Calendar of pending legislation. On the back page

of this calendar, the first item: the Homeland Security appropriations bill. It has been on this calendar since June 17—over a month now. We will leave town. We will leave Washington for 6 weeks, without passing the Homeland Security appropriations bill.

We should have done that a long time ago. We should be moving toward a conference to make sure that when October 1 comes, the new fiscal year, we are ready to move, we are ready to send the resources that are necessary not only to the Department of Homeland Security but to State and local first responders. That is a critical issue.

Let me give you an example. The President's budget request for Homeland Security has a total appropriation of \$32.6 billion. This is a 7.7-percent increase over last year. In the House of Representatives, they appropriated \$33.1 billion, slightly more than the Senate. But the problem is within the appropriations request itself.

President Bush's budget request for the Department of Homeland Security represents a dramatic cut of \$1 billion in money for State and local first responders. I have said it repeatedly, God forbid another act of terrorism hits the United States. People in the streets of America are not likely to look for the number of the White House or of the Senate. They will dial 911. They will be looking for first responders in their community.

When we cut money, as the President's budget does, for State and local first responders, we are shortchanging our line of defense, our hometown line of defense against terrorism.

When you make these cuts to these State and local units of government, let me give you an example of some of what we in Illinois and other places may find at risk.

We need the money that has been cut in the President's budget for homeland security. We need it to specially train and equip local and State teams, firefighters, policemen, medical responders. We need it for interoperable communications.

I was surprised to learn a few years ago that in my State of Illinois, with 12.5 million people, there is no single network for the police and firefighters and ambulance services and hospital trauma centers to communicate. They each have different radio systems, different frequencies. What is wrong with this picture? We need them all together. If something should happen in my State or in a neighboring State, in South Carolina, wherever it happened to be, the first responders in that State should have a common communications system. When President Bush's budget cuts money for State and local responders, it reduces the likelihood that we can develop those systems. We need standardized training, methods to share intelligence, and we need mutual aid plans.

Most people, when they think of dangers and threats in the State of Illi-

nois, automatically think of the great city of Chicago that may be a target. I hope it never happens. We had an exercise 2 years ago to try to simulate what might happen if we had such a tragedy. We quickly learned that if something did happen, we would need a dramatic increase of first responders, that the existing police and firefighters in Chicago and most major cities were inadequate to the task. We would almost have to double their numbers. That means reaching out to surrounding communities in mutual aid, so if it is a situation in downtown Chicago or in a suburban area, surrounding units would come to their assistance. That is done today over and over again across America. When the tornado hit Utica, IL, a few months ago, they had fire departments and first responders from all over the region coming together. But in order to make this mutual aid happen, we need money for the State and local responders to develop it. That line in the budget was cut by President Bush. It needs to be restored by Congress. We need to do that before we go home.

Within this same Senate calendar, you will also find other provisions of homeland security, such as a provision to increase the safety and security of nuclear powerplants. We have six nuclear powerplants in Illinois. These are important for us. They provide more than half of our electricity. They need better protection. We need better coordination of the fire and police and medical units around them.

We also have in our State—and it is probably the reason why we have been as prosperous as we have throughout our history—so much transportation, intermodal facilities. I visited at the old Joliet arsenal out in the area where Shell is. All of these trainyards and interstate highways—each one of them is vulnerable and needs to have special protection. We are a significant source of our Nation's food supply. We have many great universities.

Our State is not unique. Virtually every State can tell the same story of areas where we need to focus our attention and resources. We have these four bills on the calendar that would address some aspects.

One of the bills provides for greater security and defense of nuclear power facilities. That is one that is obvious. We will leave the Senate today without enacting that legislation and moving it to conference committee.

We also have a provision for the chemical industry. Obviously, here is a part of the private sector that is really vulnerable. Legislation has been developed to make it safer, and it sits on the calendar while we spend our time spinning our wheels on the Senate floor.

The same thing for our ports with the thousands of containers that come in on a daily basis, and our rail facilities. Each one of these areas has a special piece of legislation on this calendar that we have failed to address as we leave to go on our August recess. I

hope there won't come a moment in the next 6 weeks when we look back and say: We really should have done our work. We should have spent less time on the Senate floor embroiled in these political debates that spin our wheels and go nowhere and more time doing things people care about.

FURTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES

I have devoted this period of time in my speech on the 9/11 Commission report and homeland security, but I will say that we are remiss if we leave Washington without thinking of other issues that have a direct impact on the families and businesses across America. Some are extremely obvious. Pick a State. Pick a city. Go to any business, large or small, and ask them their No. 1 headache today. It is likely that most will respond: The cost of health insurance. It is a cost which is crippling businesses, denying coverage to many people, it continues to go up and out of sight, and reduces protection for the people who are supposed to be helped.

What have we done in Washington in the Senate on the issue of the affordability of quality health care and health insurance? Absolutely nothing. We don't even talk about it. We act as if it is not a problem. It is the No. 1 complaint of businesses and unions and families in Illinois. How can this representative body, charged with changing the laws and making life better in America, have a session that is void of any meaningful debate on the cost and availability of quality health care? We will have done that. We will adjourn without having seriously considered it.

The second issue is the state of the economy, whether we are prepared to help those industries which have struggled during the last recession, particularly manufacturing, whether our trade laws are adequately enforced, whether we are training and equipping the workforce of the future.

The third issue is obvious to most: What are we going to do about energy? Are we going to continue to be dependent for decades to come on the Middle East, drawing us into the intrigue of Saudi Arabia and those surrounding countries and all the other sources or are we going to move toward energy independence? We had a debate on an energy bill that went nowhere. Sadly, that bill didn't get very serious about the real issues. Can you imagine a debate on energy policy in America that does not even address the question of the fuel efficiency of America's cars and trucks? That was our debate. We decided, because the special interest groups, the manufacturers, and some of their workers didn't want to get into energy efficiency, that we would consider an energy bill that did not address the No. 1 area of consumption of energy in America—the fuel efficiencies of cars and trucks.

We can do better. America can have a good, strong, growing economy that is environmentally responsible and energy efficient. We have done it before,

and we can do it again. What is lacking is leadership, on the floor of the Senate, in the House, and in the White House. That is critically important.

Of course, the one issue I started with is the issue that I will end with—America's security defense. As we speak on the Senate floor today, just a few minutes away by car are Walter Reed Hospital and the Bethesda Naval Medical Center. In the wards and rooms of those two great medical institutions are men and women who served our country valiantly in Iraq, many of whom suffered extremely serious injuries. I have been out with colleagues to visit with them from time to time and can't help but be impressed. They are the best and brightest in America. They are young men and women who stood up, took the oath, put on the uniform, and risked their lives for America. My heart goes out to them every day and many just like them who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and all around the world.

We have to be mindful of the fact that our situation in Iraq is a long-term commitment. No matter what you might have thought when we decided to invade Iraq—and I was one of 23 Senators who voted against the use-of-force resolution at that time—we all come together now believing that we need to provide every resource our men and women in uniform need to finish their mission and come home safely. That is something that should never be far from our minds, as well as the question of what we are going to do to make America safer here at home.

We talk about a war on terrorism, but former Senator Bob Kerrey of Nebraska at the 9/11 Commission meeting made an observation we should not forget. He said to Donald Rumsfeld and George Tenet, who appeared before the Commission, that it really isn't a war on terrorism. Terrorism is a tactic. The question is, Who is the enemy using the terrorism tactic? That is the real question. What should we be doing now to discover the plots and dangers across the world that might come to threaten the United States but also to reach out to the next generation in countries around the world to let them know we are a compassionate, caring people with values they can share and that their lives will be better for that.

It goes beyond military strength and intelligence. It goes into diplomacy and leadership around the world so that this country, as we may hear from time to time, is not only strong at home but respected around the world.

We can do our part. We need to reach out in different areas where we have not as much in the past. Yesterday, I spoke on the floor about the situation in the Sudan. It is a situation where literally a thousand people a day are losing their lives to what is a horrible genocide occurring in that country. We need to do more.

The United States has spent over \$100 million so far in food aid. We need to be a political force, too, to push that

Sudanese Government to do what is right and to work with the United Nations so that we say to the world: The United States is not interested in treasure or territory; we are a caring people, a humanitarian people who care about some of the poorest places on Earth, such as the Sudan.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. DOLE). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. WYDEN. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. WYDEN. I also thank my friend from Tennessee, Senator ALEXANDER. I know he wants to speak as well. I will not be long.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

(The remarks of Mr. WYDEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2723 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. ALEXANDER pertaining to the introduction of S. 2721 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, this morning at about 10 a.m. we were given an opportunity to meet with Governor Kean and Lee Hamilton, the cochair of the 9/11 Commission. That is the subject of the news today. I know both men well. I know Governor Kean better. We served as Governors at the same time. I have known a lot of Governors. He was Governor of New Jersey at the time he served. My judgment was he was the best Governor in the country. Those leadership characteristics certainly showed themselves with this report.

Mr. Hamilton said he had been working actively with the directors of the CIA in every administration since Lyndon Johnson. In a few words, he gave us a very impressive presentation. I believe this is an impressive report. It is an impressive committee. It has had impressive leadership, and it certainly will command my attention as one Senator. I intend to read it all the way through, and I intend to take seriously the recommendations. I hope all Americans will take time to read it.

Terrorism, as they remind us, whether or not we like it, is the greatest challenge today to our national security. It will be for our lifetimes and perhaps much longer than that.

This is a hard matter for us to come to grips with in the United States of

America, because it seems too remote from us. It seems as if it is on television. That is hard to say after 9/11 when 3,000 people were killed in an hour.

But as Mr. Hamilton gave his report to us, he emphasized four areas of failure—not President Bush's failure, not President Clinton's failure, but our failure. In fact, he said both Presidents were active and busy and interested and working hard on the threat. But in these four areas, we as a country failed.

First was the failure of imagination. We didn't imagine what could have happened that day. Second was a failure of policy. A third was a failure of capability. And fourth was a failure of management.

It made me think, if I may give a personal reflection. I have thought about it many times because I have heard various people suggest, "Why didn't President Bush think of this?" or "Why didn't President Clinton think of this?" As the Chair knows, I was busy in the mid 1990s trying to occupy the same seat President Bush occupies today. I was a candidate for President of the United States in 1994, 1995, and 1996. I thought back many times. It never once occurred to me a group of people might fly airplanes into the World Trade Center and into the Pentagon and try to fly them into the Capitol.

It never occurred to me. And it also never occurred to me that if I should by some chance be successful in that race, that within a year and a half of taking office I would suddenly be interrupted in a meeting in Florida with some schoolchildren, and in a short period of time I would have to decide whether to shoot down a plane load of U.S. citizens on a commercial airline headed toward Washington, DC. It never occurred to me.

I thought for a long time: Maybe that is just me. Maybe I am naive and have not had enough experience, but I have asked other public officials with a lot more experience. I did not ask the Presiding Officer, whose husband was a candidate for our country's highest office, if that occurred whether they might have to shoot down such an airplane. Maybe with her background in transportation, she would have thought of that, but I didn't. And I think most policymakers did not. Obviously, many people in intelligence didn't.

What Mr. Hamilton was saying, and Governor Kean, is we are going to have to imagine all of the things that could be done, some of us at least, and think about them and take those things very seriously in the future.

As fortunate as we are to live in this big country with remote, safe places, far away from a lot of the fighting we see on television, an unfortunate part of living in today's world is there are real threats and we are going to have to imagine those things that even candidates for the highest office in our

land a few years ago would not have ever imagined.

I salute the Commission for its work. I thank them for it. I like the fact that it is unanimous, without a single dissent, without a dissenting opinion. I thank them for their job.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLEXANDER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FINANCIAL SOLICITATIONS ON MILITARY BASES

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to express my concern about a rider included in the Department of Defense appropriations conference report that we will be taking up shortly. This rider is from the House Defense appropriations bill. It will limit the ability of the Department of Defense to address deceptive sales practices on our military bases.

This week, the New York Times has published a two-part series which included disturbing reports of financial advisers taking advantage of service men and women on our military installations. These articles contained evidence which indicate that recently enlisted service members are required, at many installations, to attend mandatory financial advisory classes. In those classes, it has been discovered that sales agents use questionable tactics to sell insurance and investments that may not fit the needs of our young men and women in uniform.

Mr. President, I commend to my colleagues the articles from the July 20 and July 21 editions of the New York Times titled "Basic Training Doesn't Guard Against Insurance Pitch to G.I.'s" and "Insurers Rely on Congress to Keep Access to G.I.'s."

Mr. President, as you well know, our men and women in uniform today are being called upon to sacrifice, sometimes—for more than 900 of them—the ultimate sacrifice. All of them are separated from their families. They are putting their lives at risk in the service of our Nation.

It is almost unimaginable that in addition to their sacrifice they would be exposed to less than scrupulous financial advisers at the installations at which they serve. However, instead of protecting our service members, a culture of financial abuse persists on our military bases. As soon as I learned of these reports, I immediately wrote to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, asking for an immediate investigation of these practices, as well as immediate action to prevent these abuses from continuing.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my letter to Secretary Rumsfeld be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, July 20, 2004.

Hon. DONALD RUMSFELD,
Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I write to urge you to conduct an immediate investigation into reports about efforts by financial advisors to take advantage of our men and women in uniform through the use of deceptive sales practices. I am greatly alarmed by these reports which indicate that recently enlisted service members at many installations are required to attend mandatory financial advisory classes in which sales agents use questionable tactics to sell insurance and investments that may not fit the needs of people in uniform.

Today our men and women in uniform are being called upon to sacrifice, be separated from their families, and to put their lives at risk in service of their nation. They should not, under any circumstances, be exposed to less than scrupulous financial advisors at the installations at which they serve. However, instead of protecting our service members, a culture of financial abuse persists at military installations. It should not be too much to expect that our service men and women are protected from this behavior through the enforcement of post policies and regulations restricting disreputable financial practices. In short, our men and women in uniform should never be the unwitting prey of self-interested sales agents at military installations.

In addition to conducting a thorough investigation, I urge you to establish a financial education program for enlistees and review the practices whereby sales agents are given unfettered access to new recruits. This financial education program should include a component that equips soldiers to recognize that an attempt is being made to entice them to purchase financial services that are not in their best interest.

With our men and women in uniform serving bravely in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, we owe it to them to make sure they are not solicited for questionable financial schemes at the installations where they live.

I thank you for your consideration of my request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely yours,

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON.

Mrs. CLINTON. I have also written to and spoken to both Chairman WARNER and Ranking Member LEVIN from the Senate Committee on Armed Services, to ask for hearings on this issue when we return in September. However, I was alerted yesterday that there is a provision in the Department of Defense conference report that would prohibit the Department of Defense from taking immediate action to address these financial abuses on our military installations.

Specifically, section 8133 of the conference report does not allow any changes to the Department of Defense Directive 1344.7, entitled "Personal Commercial Solicitation on DOD Installations," until 90 days after a report containing the results of an investigation regarding insurance premium allotment processing is submitted to the House Committee on Government Reform and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

With that investigation still ongoing, it could be months—maybe years, for