

recitation of the historic and incredible times in terms of the history of the United States and the Dakota tribes. It was enormously interesting.

As we all know, this issue in terms of Native American land and rights is something that is incredibly close to the heart of my friend, the Senator from South Dakota. I thank him for this statement this morning, particularly on this day of celebration for so many Native Americans. It was an extraordinary statement and comment about our history. All of us would be better citizens if we took to heart the history of our country and its history in regard to Native Americans. I thank him for his comments.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be reminded when I have only 1 minute left out of the time left to me.

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

SENATOR KERRY'S IRAQ PLAN

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, yesterday, Senator KERRY laid out his plan for Iraq and for enlisting international support to ease the burden on our troops, restoring stability to Iraq, and bringing our troops home in honor. It is a clear warning that conditions are worsening in Iraq and changes are urgently needed. His speeches have been praised for his thoughtfulness and realistic vision for advancing America's interests in that troubled region.

I ask unanimous consent to have Senator KERRY's speech printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 20, 2004]

KERRY LAYS OUT IRAQ PLAN

Following is the text of Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry's speech delivered in New York.

(Joined in progress) KERRY: I am really honored to be here at New York University, at NYU Wagner, one of the great urban universities in America. Not just in New York, but in the world. You've set a high standard, you always set a high standard for global dialogue, as Ellen (ph) mentioned a moment ago. And I intend to live up to that tradition here today. This election is about choices. The most important choices a president makes are about protecting America, at home and around the world. A president's first obligation is to make America safer, stronger and truer to our ideals.

Only a few blocks from here, three years ago, the events of September 11th remind every American of that obligation. That day brought to our shores the defining struggle of our times: the struggle between freedom and radical fundamentalism. And it made clear that our most important task is to fight and to win the war on terrorism.

With us today is a remarkable group of women who lost loved ones on September 11th, and whose support I am honored to have. Not only did they suffer unbearable loss, but they helped us as a nation to learn the lessons of that terrible time by insisting on the creation of the 9/11 Commission.

I ask them to stand, and I thank them on behalf of our country, and I pledge to them,

and to you, that I will implement the 9/11 recommendations. Thank you.

In fighting the war on terrorism my principles are straightforward. The terrorists are beyond reason. We must destroy them. As president I will do whatever it takes, as long as it takes, to defeat our enemies.

But billions of people around the world, yearning for a better life, are open to America's ideals. We must reach them.

To win, America must be strong and America must be smart.

The greatest threat that we face is the possibility of Al Qaida or other terrorists getting their hands on nuclear weapons. To prevent that from happening we have to call on the totality of America's strength: strong alliances to help us stop the world's most lethal weapons from falling into the most dangerous hands; a powerful military, transformed to meet the threats of terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction; and all of America's power—our diplomacy, our intelligence system, our economic power, our appeal to the values, the values of Americans, and to connect them to the values of other people around the world—each of which is critical to making America more secure and to preventing a new generation of terrorists from emerging.

We owe it to the American people to have a real debate about the choices President Bush has made, and the choices I would make and have made, to fight and win the war on terror.

That means that we must have a great and honest debate on Iraq.

The president claims it is the centerpiece of his war on terror. In fact, Iraq was a profound diversion from that war and the battle against our greatest enemy.

Iraq was a profound diversion from that war and from our greatest enemy, Osama bin Laden and the terrorists.

Invading Iraq has created a crisis of historic proportions and if we do not change course, there is the prospect of a war with no end in sight.

This month, we passed a cruel milestone: more than 1,000 Americans lost in Iraq. Their sacrifice reminds us that Iraq remains overwhelmingly an American burden. Nearly 90 percent of the troops and nearly 90 percent of the casualties are American.

Despite the president's claims, this is not a grand coalition.

Our troops have served with extraordinary bravery and skill and resolve. Their service humbles all of us. I visited with some of them in the hospitals and I am stunned by their commitment, by their sense of duty, their patriotism. When I speak to them, when I look into the eyes of their families, I know this: We owe them the truth about what we have asked them to do and what is still to be done.

Would you all join me? My wife Teresa has made it through the traffic, and I'm delighted that she is here. Thank you.

In June, the president declared, The Iraqi people have their country back. And just last week he told us, This country is headed toward democracy; freedom is on the march. But the administration's own official intelligence estimate, given to the president last July, tells a very different story.

According to press reports, the intelligence estimate totally contradicts what the president is saying to the American people and so do the facts on the ground.

Security is deteriorating for us and for the Iraqis. Forty-two Americans died in Iraq in June, the month before the handover. But 54 died in July, 66 in August and already 54 halfway through September. And more than 1,100 Americans were wounded in August; more than in any other month since the invasion.

We are fighting a growing insurgency in an ever-widening war zone. In March, insurgents attacked our forces 700 times. In August, they attacked 2,700 times; a 400 percent increase.

Fallujah, Ramadi, Samarra and parts of Iraq are now no-go zones, breeding grounds for terrorists, who are free to plot and to launch attacks against our soldiers.

The radical Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who is accused of complicity in the murder of Americans, holds more sway in suburbs of Baghdad than the prime minister.

Violence against Iraqis, from bombings to kidnappings to intimidation, is on the rise.

Basic living conditions are also deteriorating.

Yes, there has been some progress. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our soldiers and civilians in Iraq, schools, shops and hospitals have been opened in certain places. In parts of Iraq, normalcy actually prevails.

But most Iraqis have lost faith in our ability to be able to deliver meaningful improvements to their lives. So they're sitting on the fence, instead of siding with us against the insurgents.

That is the truth, the truth that the commander in chief owes to our troops and to the American people.

Now, I will say to you, it is never easy to discuss what has gone wrong while our troops are in constant danger. But it is essential if you want to correct the course and do what's right for those troops, instead of repeating the same old mistakes over and over again.

I know this dilemma firsthand. I saw firsthand what happens when pride or arrogance take over from rational decision-making. And after serving in a war, I returned home to offer my own personal views of dissent. I did so because I believed strongly that we owed it to those risking their lives to speak truth to power. And we still do.

Saddam Hussein was a brutal dictator who deserves his own special place in Hell. But that was not—that was not, in and of itself, a reason to go to war.

The satisfaction that we take in his downfall does not hide this fact: We have traded a dictator for a chaos that has left America less secure.

Now, the president has said that he miscalculated in Iraq, and that it was a catastrophic success.

The first and most fundamental mistake was the president's failure to tell the truth to the American people.

He failed to tell the truth about the rationale for going to war, and he failed to tell the truth about the burden this war would impose on our soldiers and our citizens.

By one count, the president offered 23 different rationales for this war. If his purpose was to confuse and mislead the American people, he succeeded.

His two main rationales, weapons of mass destruction and the Al Qaida-September 11th connection, have both been proved false by the president's own weapons inspectors and by the 9/11 Commission.

And just last week, Secretary of State Powell acknowledged those facts. Only Vice President Cheney still insists that the Earth is flat.

The president also failed to level with the American people about what it would take to prevail in Iraq. He didn't tell us that well over 100,000 troops would be needed for years, not months. He didn't tell us that he wouldn't take the time to assemble a genuine, broad, strong coalition of allies. He didn't tell us that the cost would exceed \$200 billion. He didn't tell us that even after paying such a heavy price, success was far from assured.

And America will pay an even heavier price for the president's lack of candor.

At home, the American people are less likely to trust this administration if it needs to summon their support to meet real and pressing threats to our security.

In the dark days of the Cuban missile crisis, President Kennedy sent former Secretary of State Dean Acheson to Europe to build support. Acheson explained the situation to French President de Gaulle. Then he offered to show him highly classified satellite photos as proof. De Gaulle waved him away, saying, "The word of the president of the United States is good enough for me."

How many world leaders have that same trust in America's president today? This president's failure to tell the truth to us and to the world before the war has been exceeded by fundamental errors of judgment during and after the war.

The president now admits to miscalculations in Iraq. Miscalculations: This is one of the greatest underestimates in recent American history.

His miscalculations were not the equivalent of accounting errors. They were colossal failures of judgment, and judgment is what we look for in a president.

And this is all the more stunning, because we're not talking about 20/20 hindsight, we're not talking about Monday morning quarterbacking. Before the war, before he chose to go to war, bipartisan congressional hearings, major outside studies and even some in his own administration, predicted virtually every problem that we face in Iraq today.

The result is a long litany of misjudgments with terrible and real consequences.

The administration told us we would be greeted as liberators; they were wrong. They told us not to worry about the looting or the sorry state of Iraq's infrastructure; they were wrong. They told us we had enough troops to provide security and stability, defeat the insurgents, guard the borders and secure the arms depots; they were tragically wrong.

They told us we could rely on exiles like Ahmed Chalabi to build political legitimacy; they were wrong. They told us we would quickly restore an Iraqi civil service to run the country, and a police force and an army to secure it; they were wrong.

In Iraq, this administration has consistently overpromised and underperformed. And this policy has been plagued by a lack of planning, by an absence of candor, arrogance and outright incompetence.

And the president has held no one accountable, including himself.

In fact, the only officials—the only officials who've lost their jobs over Iraq were the ones who told the truth.

Economic adviser Larry Lindsey said it would cost as much as \$200 billion. Pretty good calculation. He was fired.

After the successful entry into Baghdad, George Bush was offered help from the U.N., and he rejected it, stiff-armed them, decided to go it alone. He even prohibited nations from participating in reconstruction efforts because they weren't part of the original coalition, pushing reluctant countries even further away. And as we continue to fight this war almost alone, it is hard to estimate how costly that arrogant decision really was.

Can anyone seriously say this president has handled Iraq in a way that makes America stronger in the war on terrorism?

AUDIENCE: No!

KERRY: By any measure, by any measure, the answer is no.

Nuclear dangers have mounted across the globe. The international terrorist club has expanded. Radicalism in the Middle East is on the rise. We have divided our friends and united our enemies. And our standing in the world is at an all-time low.

Think about it for a minute. Consider where we were and where we are.

After the events of September 11th, we had an opportunity to bring our country and the world together in a legitimate struggle against terrorists. On September 12th, headlines and newspapers abroad declared that, "We are all Americans now."

But through his policy in Iraq, the president squandered that moment and, rather than isolating the terrorists, left America isolated from the world.

We now know that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, and posed no imminent threat to our security.

The president's policy in Iraq took our attention and our resources away from other more serious threats to America, threats like North Korea, which actually has weapons of mass destruction, including a nuclear arsenal, and is building more right now under this president's watch; the emerging nuclear danger of Iran; the tons and kilotons of unsecured chemical and nuclear weapons in Russia; and the increasing instability in Afghanistan.

Today, warlords again control much of that country, the Taliban is regrouping, opium production is at an all-time high and the Al Qaida leadership still plots and plans, not only there, but in 60 other nations.

Instead of using U.S. forces, we relied on warlords, who one week earlier had been fighting on the other side, to go up in the mountains to capture Osama bin Laden when he was cornered. He slipped away.

We then diverted our focus and our forces from the hunt for those who were responsible for September 11th in order to invade Iraq.

We know now that Iraq played no part. We knew then on September 11th. And it had no operational ties to Al Qaida.

The president's policy in Iraq precipitated the very problem that he said he was trying to prevent.

Secretary of State Powell admits that Iraq was not a magnet for international terrorists before their war; now it is, and they are operating against our troops.

Iraq is becoming a sanctuary for a new generation of terrorists who could someday hit the United States of America.

And we know that while Iraq was a source of friction, it was not previously a source of serious disagreement with our allies in Europe and countries in the Muslim world.

The president's policy in Iraq divided our oldest alliance and sent our standing in the Muslim world into freefall.

Three years after 9/11, even in many moderate Muslim countries, like Jordan, Morocco and Turkey, Osama bin Laden is more popular than the United States of America.

Two years ago, Congress was right to give the president the authority to use force to hold Saddam Hussein accountable. This president, any president, would have needed that threat of force to act effectively. This president misused that authority.

The power entrusted to the president purposefully gave him a strong hand to play in the international community. The idea was simple: We would get the weapons inspectors back in to verify whether or not Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and we would convince the world to speak with one voice to Saddam, disarm or be disarmed.

A month before the war, President Bush told the nation, "If we have to act, we will take every precaution that is possible. We will plan carefully. We will act with the full power of the United States military. We will act with allies at our side and we will prevail."

Instead, the president rushed to war, without letting the weapons inspectors finish their work. He went purposefully, by choice, without a broad and deep coalition of allies. He acted by choice, without making sure that our troops even had enough body armor.

And he plunged ahead by choice, without understanding or preparing for the consequences of postwar. None of which I would have done.

Yet today, President Bush tells us that he would do everything all over again the same way.

How can he possibly be serious? Is he really saying to America that if we know there was no imminent threat, no weapons of mass destruction, no ties to Al Qaida, the United States should have invaded Iraq?

My answer: resoundingly, no, because a commander in chief's first responsibility is to make a wise and responsible decision to keep America safe.

Now the president is looking for a reason, a new reason to hang his hat on—it's the capability to acquire weapons.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, my fellow Americans, that was not the reason given to the nation, that was not the reason the Congress voted on. That is not a reason today; it is an excuse.

Thirty-five to 40 countries have greater capability to build a nuclear bomb than Iraq did in 2003. Is President Bush saying we should invade all of them?

I would have personally concentrated our power and resources on defeating global terrorism and capturing Osama bin Laden.

I would have tightened the noose and continued to pressure and isolate Saddam Hussein—who was weak and getting weaker—so that he would pose no threat to the region or to America.

The president's insistence that he would do the same thing all over again in Iraq is a clear warning for the future. And it makes the choice in this election clear: more of the same with President Bush or a new, smarter direction with John Kerry that makes our troops and America safer. That's the choice.

It is time, at long last, to ask the questions and insist on the answers from the commander in chief about his serious misjudgments and what they tell us about his administration and the president himself.

In Iraq, we have a mess on our hands. But we cannot just throw up our hands, we cannot afford to see Iraq become a permanent source of terror that will endanger America's security for years to come.

All across this country, people ask me and others, what we should do now every stop of the way. From the first time I spoke about this in the Senate, I have set out a specific set of recommendations from day one, from the first debate until this moment. I have set out specific steps of how we should not and how we should proceed.

But over and over, when this administration has been presented with a reasonable alternative, they have rejected it and gone their own way. This is stubborn incompetence.

Five months ago in Fulton, Missouri, I said that the president was close to his last chance to get it right. Every day this president makes it more difficult to deal with Iraq, harder than it was five months ago, harder than it was a year ago, a year and a half ago.

It's time to recognize what is and what is not happening in Iraq today and we must act with urgency.

Just this weekend, a leading Republican, Chuck Hagel, said that, we're in deep trouble in Iraq. It doesn't add up to a pretty picture, he said, and we're going to have to look at a recalibration of our policy.

Republican leaders like Dick Lugar and John McCain have offered similar assessments.

We need to turn the page and make a fresh start in Iraq.

First, the president has to get the promised international support so our men and women in uniform don't have to go it alone.

Last spring, after too many months of delay, after reluctance to take the advice of so many of us, the president finally went back to the U.N., and it passed Resolution 1546. It was the right thing to do, but it was late.

That resolution calls on U.N. members to help in Iraq by providing troops, trainers for Iraq's security forces and a special brigade to protect the U.N. mission, and more financial assistance and real debt relief.

But guess what? Three months later, not a single country has answered that call, and the president acts as if it doesn't matter.

And of the 13 billion that was previously pledged to Iraq by other countries, only \$1.2 billion has been delivered.

The president should convene a summit meeting of the world's major powers and of Iraq's neighbors, this week, in New York, where many leaders will attend the U.N. General Assembly, and he should insist that they make good on the U.N. resolution. He should offer potential troop contributors specific but critical roles in training Iraqi security personnel and in securing Iraqi borders. He should give other countries a stake in Iraq's future by encouraging them to help develop Iraq's oil resources and by letting them bid on contracts instead of locking them out of the reconstruction process.

Now, is this more difficult today? You bet it is. It's more difficult today because the president hasn't been doing it from the beginning. And I and others have repeatedly recommended this from the very beginning.

Delay has only made it harder. After insulting allies and shredding alliances, this president may not have the trust and the confidence to bring others to our side in Iraq.

But I'll tell you, we cannot hope to succeed unless we rebuild and lead strong alliances so that other nations share the burden with us. That is the only way to be successful in the end.

Second, the president must get serious about training Iraqi security forces.

Last February, Secretary Rumsfeld claimed that—claimed that more than 210,000 Iraqis were in uniform. This is the public statement to America.

Well, guess what, America? Neither number bears any relationship to the truth.

For example, just 5,000 Iraqi soldiers have been fully trained by the administration's own minimal standards. And of the 35,000 police now in uniform, not one—not one has completed a 24-week field training program.

Is it any wonder that Iraqi security forces can't stop the insurgency or provide basic law and order?

The president should urgently expand the security forces' training program inside and outside of Iraq. He should strengthen the vetting of recruits, double the classroom training time, require the follow-on field training. He should recruit thousands of qualified trainers from our allies, especially those who have no troops in Iraq. He should press our NATO allies to open training centers in their countries.

And he should stop misleading the American people with phony, inflated numbers and start behaving like we really are at war.

Third, the president must carry out a reconstruction plan that finally brings tangible benefits to the Iraqi people, all of which, may I say, should have been in the plan and immediately launched with such a ferocity that there was no doubt about America's commitment or capacity in the very first moments afterwards. But they didn't plan.

He ignored his own State Department's plan, he discarded it.

Last week, the administration admitted that its plan was a failure when it asked

Congress for permission to radically revise the spending priorities in Iraq. It took them 17 months for them to understand that security is a priority, 17 months to figure out that boosting oil production is critical, 17 months to conclude that an Iraqi with a job is less likely to shoot at our soldiers.

One year ago, this administration asked for and received \$18 billion to help the Iraqis and relieve the conditions that contribute to the insurgency. Today, less than \$1 billion of those funds have actually been spent. I said at the time that we have to rethink our policies and set standards of accountability, and now we're paying the price for not doing that.

He should use more Iraqi contractors and workers instead of big corporations like Halliburton.

In fact, he should stop paying companies under fraud investigation or corruption investigation. And he should fire the civilians in the Pentagon who are responsible for mismanaging the reconstruction effort.

Fourth, the president must take immediate, urgent, essential steps to guarantee that the promised election can be held next year. Credible elections are key to producing an Iraqi government that enjoys the support of the Iraqi people and an assembly that could write a constitution and yields a viable power-sharing agreement.

Because Iraqis have no experience in holding free and fair elections, the president agreed six months ago that the U.N. must play a central role, yet today, just four months before Iraqis are supposed to go to the polls, the U.N. Secretary General and administration officials say elections are in grave doubt, because the security situation is so bad, and because not a single country has yet offered troops to protect the U.N. elections mission.

The president needs to tell the truth. The president needs to deal with reality, and he should recruit troops from our friends and allies for a U.N. protection force.

Now, this is not going to be easy. I understand that.

Again, I repeat, every month that's gone by, every offer of help spurned, every alternative not taken for these past months has made this more difficult and those were this president's choices. But even countries that refused to put boots on the ground in Iraq ought to still be prepared to help the United Nations hold an election.

We should also intensify the training of Iraqis to manage and guard the polling places that need to be opened. Otherwise, U.S. forces will end up bearing that burden alone.

If the president would move in this direction, if he would bring in more help from other countries to provide resources and to train the Iraqis to provide their own security and to develop a reconstruction plan that brings real benefits to the Iraqi people, and take the steps necessary to hold elections next year, if all of that happened, we could begin to withdraw U.S. forces starting next summer and realistically aim to bring our troops home within the next four years.

That can be achieved.

This is what has to be done. This is what I would do if I were president today. But we can't afford to wait until January and I can't tell you what I will find in Iraq on January 20th.

President Bush owes it to the American people to tell the truth and put Iraq on the right track. Even more, he owes it to our troops and their families whose sacrifice is a testament to the best of America.

The principles that should guide American policy in Iraq now and in the future are clear. We must make Iraq the world's responsibility, because the world has a stake in the

outcome and others should have always been bearing the burden.

That's the right way to get the job done. It always was the right way to get the job done to minimize the risk to American troops and the cost to American taxpayers. And it is the right way to get our troops home.

On May 1st of last year, President Bush stood in front of a now-infamous banner that read Mission accomplished. He declared to the American people that, in the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed.

In fact, the worst part of the war was just beginning, with the greatest number of American casualties still to come.

The president misled, miscalculated and mismanaged every aspect of this undertaking and he has made the achievement of our objective—a stable Iraq, secure within its borders, with a representative government—far harder to achieve than it ever should have been.

In Iraq, this administration's record is filled with bad predictions, inaccurate cost estimates, deceptive statements and errors of judgment, presidential judgment, of historic proportions.

At every critical juncture in Iraq and in the war on terrorism, the president has made the wrong choice.

I have a plan to make America stronger.

The president often says that in a post-9/11 world we can't hesitate to act. I agree. But we should not act just for the sake of acting.

George Bush has no strategy for Iraq. I do and I have all along.

George Bush has not told the truth to the American people about why we went to war and how the war is going. I have and I will continue to do so.

I believe the invasion of Iraq has made us less secure and weaker in the war on terrorism. I have a plan to fight a smarter, more effective war on terror that actually makes America safer.

Today, because of George Bush's policy in Iraq, the world is a more dangerous place for America and Americans; just ask anyone who travels.

If you share my conviction that we cannot go on as we are, that we can make America stronger and safer than it is, then November 2nd is your chance to speak and to be heard.

It is not a question of staying the course, but of changing the course.

I am convinced that with the right leadership, we can create a fresh start, move more effectively to accomplish our goals.

Our troops have served with extraordinary courage and commitment. For their sake, for America's sake, we have to get this right. We have to do everything in our power to complete the mission and make America stronger at home and respected again in the world.

Thank you, God bless you and God bless the United States of America.

Thank you.

WIDENING OF THE INCOME GAP

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I draw to the attention of the Senate an issue which many of us have been concerned about for some period of time. Now it has reached the front page of some of the leading newspapers of this country, and it is something that is of central concern to families all over this Nation. I refer to the excellent opening yesterday of a series by the Washington Post, yesterday's called "As Income Gap Widens, Uncertainty Spreads." This is an enormously interesting column.