

Kremlin's lack of transparency, the government's lack of accountability, and from widespread corruption and ineptitude. And so a reasonable observer might guess that the Kremlin seeks governmental change that addresses these problems. But a reasonable observer would be wrong.

Instead, Mr. Putin has proposed changes that would concentrate his personal power and nearly extinguish the embers of democracy in his country. His allies have told journalists that the president planned for months to centralize political authority, and merely took advantage of the Beslan seizure to unveil the decision. And, as the Washington Post has pointed out, he has not removed security officials who have failed to prevent repeated terrorist strikes over several years.

The total effect of President Putin's new proposals would be to move Russia a long way down the road to autocratic rule. He would eliminate the popular election of Russia's 89 regional governors, and instead appoint them himself. He would eliminate independent members of parliament, so that Russians could vote only for political parties rather than specific candidates, Political parties—such as like the powerful one headed by Mr. Putin—would determine the slates. In last December's elections, district races accounted for every independent and liberal now serving in the Duma. Under Mr. Putin's plan, these races would be abolished. I speak of all of these ideas as "proposals" because the electoral changes require parliamentary approval. But that should not be difficult—Mr. Putin's party controls more than two-thirds of the seats.

As shocking as these recent moves are, they are simply the latest and most egregious in a long string of anti-democratic actions. In his time in power, Mr. Putin has tried to eliminate independent media by imposing restrictive laws. These have led to the takeover or arbitrary closing of all independent national television channels. The international media watchdog group Reporters Without Borders ranked 166 countries in its annual World Press Freedom report. Russia came in 148th. Last year, five reporters were killed under suspicious circumstances, and many reporters were harassed, imprisoned, or physically beaten.

But the media is not the only sector to fear the wrath of an increasingly authoritarian Kremlin. Mr. Putin has asserted control over Russia's energy industry and used government power—including imprisonment—against executives who oppose him. The world has watched with concern over his single-handed attempt to put Russia's largest privately held oil company out of business. And, having lost their rights to free speech and press and to engage freely in an open market, the people of Russia are now on their way to losing the right to vote.

The Kremlin's imposition of old-style central control will not make the peo-

ple of Russia safer, it will merely curtail their freedoms. But terrorism in Russia does not result from too much freedom. If anything, it stems in part from the Kremlin's reluctance to address the legitimate aspirations of the Chechen people for autonomy or independence. Moving in the opposite direction, increasing central control and decreasing the say of citizens in how their nation is governed, will do nothing but aggravate the problems for which Mr. Putin proposes solutions.

Sadly, many Russians have responded to the Kremlin's new proposals not with outrage but with fearful plaudits. Regional leaders—many of whom may lose their jobs when they are replaced by Kremlin appointees—have nevertheless praised Mr. Putin's power grab. The Tass news agency ran a headline last week entitled "Regional leaders hail Putin's latest moves as a panacea for all Russia's ills." This kind of response is eerily familiar, a reminder of the ridiculous propaganda fed to the Russian people and the world by the Soviet police state. I thought that the Russian people have moved beyond this sordid past, throwing off the shackles of oppression and ushering in a new day of freedom. I will bet that the people of Russia though the same. But obviously Mr. Putin and the Kremlin have other ideas.

As the world's beacon of freedom and democracy, the United States must make clear our fierce opposition to the path that Russia's leadership is currently on. As much as we value Russia's cooperation in other areas of our bilateral relationship, they will have little meaning if Moscow reverts to its old ways. Mr. Putin, the world is watching your next move.

Mr. President, 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. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

NO PLAN FOR IRAQ

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, earlier today at the United Nations the President of the United States painted a pretty picture of the occupation of Iraq. But the President's picture was far from reality. The reality is the situation facing our soldiers, the very limited Iraqi security forces, and, importantly, the Iraqi people.

The reality is that today Iraq is in flames. A horrifying wave of violence has struck yet again, targeting the Iraqi police, Government leaders, innocent civilians, and our very own troops. The death toll in Iraq continues to mount. As of today, more than 1,030 American troops have died in this war, a war that should not have been fought, a war which was wrong in the beginning, wrong today.

More than 700 Iraqi police have perished in the short time since the force has existed. The numbers of civilians killed in President Bush's preemptive war is unknown. They may never be known. But it numbers in the thousands—the widows and the orphans who have been left alone, the tears that have been shed.

Who is responsible for this bloodshed in Iraq? Is it a small group of religious radicals, or the secret agents of Osama bin Laden, or terrorists who might otherwise sneak out onto the streets of New York City? No, no, and no. An ever growing pile of press reports indicates that the insurgency is larger and more broad than the White House will admit.

On Wednesday, September 15, the Wall Street Journal reported that "Iraq's once highly fragmented insurgent groups are increasingly cooperating to attack U.S. and Iraqi government targets, and steadily gaining control of more areas of the country."

That was the Wall Street Journal of Wednesday, September 15.

Meanwhile, the Commander in Chief, President Bush, seems to be in the dark about the worsening situation in Iraq. Faced with the spread of violence in Iraq, the President continues to speak of Iraq as a country of free people. But what liberty, what liberty, is there to be enjoyed when the police are being killed by the scores, the chances of a peaceful election have been thrown out the window, and many Iraqis are too afraid to send their children to school?

One must begin to question whether the President is getting the bad news about what is happening on the streets of Baghdad and Fallujah or if he is simply ignoring it. Surely the Commander in Chief has a responsibility, has the obligation, to change his strategy when it has been proven a failure. Instead, the White House blindly insists that the problems of Iraq will sort themselves out if we simply maintain a resolve to stay the course. Did the American people really want to stay the course that has resulted in the deaths and the injuries of thousands of our troops?

Now the President wants to spend another \$3.4 billion in reconstruction funds to again try to bolster the same Iraqi security forces that have been outgunned and inadequately trained to take on the insurgents in Iraq. This is even more evidence, is it not, even more evidence that the administration had no plan, that the administration has no plan for postwar Iraq, other than to throw more money at the problem and hope for the best.

As the cost of the war continues to spin out of control, we must remember that last fall the Bush administration promised that its request for the biggest foreign aid package in half a century would bring security and stability to Iraq. The White House got enough Members of Congress to vote for \$18.4 billion to buy that pig in a poke, and the President got unprecedented flexibility to spend that reconstruction

money almost as he sees fit. Has that reconstruction money helped to get our troops out of harm's way? Has it helped to bring our men and our women home? No. In fact, our troops are under a greater number of daily attacks now than they were when the President asked for his massive foreign aid program.

As the President wants to spend more and more money in Iraq, our troops are getting sucked ever deeper into the bloody quicksand of the Middle East. Most astonishing yet, the White House has not held anyone in the administration accountable for the mess that has become Iraq. It is business as usual in the White House bubble.

The Pentagon botched plans for post-war Iraq as if there ever were any, and the shame of Abu Ghraib has further turned world opinion against the United States. But instead of holding someone at the Department of Defense accountable for those mistakes, the Vice President said that we have the "best Secretary of Defense the United States has ever had."

The CIA failed to detect Osama bin Laden's plot to attack New York City and Washington, DC, and then it produced faulty intelligence that the White House used to take our Nation to war against Iraq.

The White House misled the American people. It is a war we should never have fought. It was wrong from the beginning; it is wrong today.

Instead of holding someone at the CIA accountable for those mistakes, the President praised the former CIA Director as "a strong leader on the war on terrorism."

The U.S.-run occupation government in Iraq mistakenly disbanded the Iraqi Army, bungled the management of \$18.4 billion in reconstruction funds, and turned a blind eye to the rising flames of anti-Americanism in Iraq.

Instead of demanding accountability for mistakes made by the Coalition Provisional Authority, rumors abound that its former head, Ambassador Paul Bremer, could be up for a promotion to Secretary of State.

How about that? He didn't have time, he said, to come back before the Appropriations Committee of the Senate—I was there and asked him. No. He said he didn't have time. I will not have time when the time comes to vote for him as Secretary of State if such nomination is ever presented to this body.

For all the mistakes that have been made in President Bush's unprovoked war on Iraq under the doctrine of preemption, which is unconstitutional on its face, and therefore it is fundamentally flawed, not a single administration official has been held accountable for the mess that Iraq has become. Not a single administration official has been called to step aside for the mistakes they have made. In fact, the only senior administration official the White House has seen fit to fire is the former Secretary of the Treasury, who

dared to question the fiscal responsibility of more massive tax cuts. If this President cannot hold his advisers accountable for their mistakes, then the people should hold this President accountable for his poor judgment.

The situation in Iraq has been elevated beyond a crisis. The White House plan for holding Iraqi elections in January 2005 is shaky and becoming more so with each new attack on our troops. Instead of demonstrating the leadership to bring more countries in to assist in rebuilding Iraq, the President pays lip service to international help.

The President has only proposed to sink more taxpayer money into the same failed policies that brought us to this point. We are falling deeper and deeper and deeper into debt. The President has failed to act to counter the surge in violence that is costing the lives of our men and women in uniform.

How long can this bumbling by the White House go on? How long must our troops be tied down in Iraq? How long will we struggle without a plan to end the spreading violence? How long will it take for our country to turn away from this dead-end policy created by the dead-brained thinking in this White House?

How long, Mr. President? How long?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, before I present the Legislative Branch appropriations bill, let me take a moment of personal privilege to thank my colleagues for allowing me last night's unanimous consent agreement to appear on the floor of the Senate in traditional clothing of a Cheyenne chief.

This is a very special day in the lives of all Native Americans, and a very special day in my life, too. I would hope my fellow Senators would have time to visit our Nation's newest Smithsonian jewel—the National Museum of the American Indian.

I have just come from speaking at the opening and ask unanimous consent that my remarks at that opening be printed in the RECORD.

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

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
SENATOR BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL SEPTEMBER 21, 2004

Senator Dan Inouye, my friend and colleague, to whom we owe so much, often says that Washington is a city of monuments and yet, there is not one monument to the Na-

tive people of this land. This magnificent structure is that monument and in it we will tell our story.

Indeed it is a monument to the Mimbres, the Anasazi, the Toltecs and Hopewell, the Chacoans, the Mayans and hundreds of other cultures now long gone, who lived in communities called Tikal, Tenochtitlan, Cahokia and a multitude of other enlightened communities while European cities were in their infancy.

They were communities inhabited by farmers and doctors, teachers and craftsmen, housewives and soldiers, priests and astronomers, who with all their collective wisdom could not have known that earth mother would someday be called real estate. They knew not alcohol or drug abuse, Tuberculosis or Cholera, Smallpox or Aids or even the common cold. How much we can learn from them.

It is a monument to the millions of Native people who died of sickness, slavery, starvation and war until they were reduced from an estimated 50 million people in North and Central America to just over 200,000 souls in the United States by 1900. Only 400 years after the old world collided with their world, the Native people of this land became America's first endangered species.

In spite of this sad truth, this beautiful structure is also a monument to the 190 thousand American Indian Veterans who served with honor and courage in our armed forces, defending a nation that was founded on religious freedom, yet practicing their own was often against the law. They faithfully carried out the orders of the Commander in Chief, even though before 1924, they could not legally vote for him because they were not considered citizens.

It is a monument to our elders, who as children, were taken from their loved ones and placed in boarding schools that often had the adage: "kill the Indian to save the child."

All too often they were beaten for speaking their Native language or praying to their Creator. All too many chose suicide as their only alternative, but those who endured though shorn of their hair and stripped of their dignity were never shorn of their spiritualism or stripped of their pride. They are our mothers and fathers.

It is a monument to a people who were here before the birth of a boy king in Egypt called Tutankhamen and before the Greek poet Homer wrote the Iliad and before Caesar watched Roman chariots race in the Circus Maximus and before Christ walked the hills near the Sea of Galilee.

It is a monument to their gifts to humanity. Native Americans are much more than a sum of gifts. They are more than squash and tomatoes, corn and beans and potatoes, pumpkins and peanuts, and all the medicines derived from plants that began as Indian lore and are now used to save lives around the world.

Their supreme gift to the world, in my view, even surpasses the treasures you will see in this beautiful building. It was a unique system of self-governance never before tried in the monarchies of Europe or Asia. It is called Democracy. It was a system copied from the Council Fires of the Iroquois Confederacy by Benjamin Franklin and penned for a new fledgling United States of America. It is still used by this Nation and is copied, in part, by almost every emerging Democracy in the world.

This system was best described by President Abraham Lincoln as a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

And last, we open this monument to all the dreamers who helped make today come true.

As I leave public office in a few short months, I am reminded of a stanza from the