

President Bush doesn't understand that American families are tired of just talk. They want action. He's done nothing for four years to help, and now he wants another chance. He doesn't deserve it. JOHN KERRY offers real solutions, not excuses and empty promises. It's time for a change.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have spoken with the two leaders. I ask unanimous consent that following the 15 minutes in morning business for the Republicans, which has already been allotted, there be a half hour of additional morning business equally divided between both sides. There will be no who is first. It will be whoever gets the floor during that time. An additional half hour, and each side will get 15 minutes.

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

The Senator from Oklahoma.

"ILLEGAL" WAR AND THE RULE OF LAW

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I had the opportunity to watch Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary General, address the U.N. delegates. I wish he had seen what we all witnessed a few minutes ago when the great Prime Minister Allawi from Iraq gave one of the best messages I have ever heard to a joint meeting.

Much has been made about the Secretary General's remarks in an interview last week in which he called the war in Iraq "illegal." Several of my colleagues, including Senator COLEMAN, have addressed this issue on the Senate floor, so I will not belabor the point. It is not an illegal war.

I would like to reemphasize that the liberation of Iraq was carried out to enforce Security Council resolutions. These were the serious consequences with which Saddam was threatened if he continued his illegal acts—his illegal acts.

Secretary General Annan's remarks seem to be based on the idea that without explicit Security Council permission, any military action is illegal under international law.

I remind my colleagues that in 1999, NATO forces had been conducting air operations in Kosovo for 72 days before the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution granting its blessings. I have not heard any condemnation of the NATO's action as being illegal.

Secretary General Annan's address centered on the rule of law. I want to read a brief excerpt of what he said. He said:

Yet today the rule of law is at risk around the world. Again and again, we see fundamental laws shamelessly disregarded—those that ordain respect for innocent life, for ci-

vilians, for the vulnerable—especially children.

To mention only a few flagrant and topical examples: In Iraq, we see civilians massacred in cold blood, while relief workers, journalists and other noncombatants are taken hostage and put to death in the most barbarous fashion. At the same time, we have seen Iraqi prisoners disgracefully abused.

That is what the Secretary General said.

I am not going to suggest that the abuses of Abu Ghraib prison were not wrong. They were wrong. I will say more about that in a minute.

My point is the Secretary General, by lumping these two things together, has put terrorists and insurgents on the same level as America. This is a fundamental difference between a nation that recognizes the rule of law and punishes its own citizens if they violate it, and groups of outlaws whose charter is written in blood and whose tactics solely rely on violations of the rule of law. The people of the United States should know this, and so should the Secretary General.

The instances of prisoner abuse that have received so much media attention during the past few months were violations of these standards. A handful of the violators were already being punished. It was already taking place long before the media frenzy took place.

America had to deal with Americans violating the rule of law, and it has done so head on. But I suggest the United Nations itself is not above the rule of law. We are just now beginning to learn how the United Nations allowed the U.N. Oil for Food Program to degenerate into little more than another source of income for Saddam Hussein's bloody regime.

The U.N. response to allegations of wrongdoing has been half-hearted at best. Is this the rule of law trumpeted by the Secretary General? Let's be clear. A country's adhering to the rule of law does not mean that its citizens will not do bad things. We must do everything we can to prevent such occurrences, but despite our best efforts or the best efforts in any country, it is not going to be totally successful.

People are, well, only human. We know that. The rule of law is borne out in identifying, condemning, and punishing those who violate the standards on which we all agree. This is exactly what we do in America.

The U.N. states a commitment to the rule of law. We will continue to work with other nations in this international forum to effect change for the better. But I and many of my colleagues share skepticism as to whether the U.N. can effectively realize its noble goals. If the past is any indication, we can expect a lot of talk and very little action.

In Iraq, we are fulfilling, to quote the Secretary General, "our responsibility to protect innocent civilians from genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes." If this is not the rule of law, I would like to know what it is.

All the criticisms the Secretary General was aiming at the United States

were refuted directly or indirectly by Iraqi Prime Minister Allawi when he spoke to our joint meeting. I am overwhelmed by it, and certainly hope the Secretary General also heard his greatly, profound remarks.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I have a brief inquiry. My understanding is that with the unanimous consent agreement, I will now have longer than 10 minutes, if I need it, to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

AMERICA HAS A STRONG ALLY IN IRAQ

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I thank my friend for his comments. I want to talk about several issues, but let me say with regard to the whole question of illegal status of the freedom we are winning, along with the Iraqi people, in Iraq, there are many people in the international community for whom the definition of "international legality" is quite flexible, depending upon what it is they happen to want at any particular moment.

I was serving in the Congress, albeit on the other side of the Capitol, in the 1990s and remember when, at the urgent request of the Europeans, particularly the western Europeans, the United States assembled a coalition and used its military power to prevent genocide in southeastern Europe, to protect the Kosovars from genocide that was being conducted by Milosevic and the Serbs at the time.

The nations that wanted to do that asked the Security Council for a resolution of support and were denied it because, if you will recall, Mr. President, the Russians threatened to veto it, just as the French indicated 2 years ago they would veto any resolution of support for our action in Iraq.

Now you would think that to be consistent with the position they are now taking, some of the Western European countries, in particular the French and Germans, would have said at the time, If you can't get a Security Council resolution, then we don't want to intervene in Kosovo and prevent genocide there. But that was not the position they took at all. They insisted, they urgently pleaded with the United States to lead a coalition of nations to intervene for humanitarian reasons at that point, notwithstanding the fact they could not get a Security Council resolution because they recognized then what we have been consistent in recognizing all along: That we always seek the support of international alliances, and we have support of an international coalition in Iraq. We always seek to operate within international bodies and get the support of the U.N. when possible, but we protect our freedom with or without the support of that body in any given circumstance.

That is what we did in Kosovo when we prevented genocide, and that is what we are now doing in Iraq.

I want to add a few more words along those lines and then talk some about health care. Let me say how moved I was by the eloquence of Prime Minister Allawi and the way in which he represented the aspirations of freedom and free people everywhere.

I think of two statements in particular, one in which he quoted Prime Minister Blair in saying that whenever people are given a choice, they choose freedom over tyranny, democracy over dictatorship, and the rule of law over the rule of the secret police. It does not matter whether the people who are being asked to choose are of the Islamic faith or the Christian faith or the Jewish faith or any other faith; it does not matter where they live or the circumstances under which they are raised; there is a universal desire placed in the human heart by our Creator for freedom. We are seeing that desire in Iraq, and we saw it with Prime Minister Allawi today.

I was tremendously impressed by his courage. He probably has the biggest target on his back of anybody in the free world, and yet he stood there and said not only do the Iraqi people want freedom—and I made a note of this comment—as you have stood with us, we will stand with you in the ongoing battle against terrorism.

I think this is a vindication of the underlying strategy that the United States is following with its allies and the coalition in freeing Iraq.

There were two strategic goals in going into Iraq. One of them was to remove a regime and a person who even if there had never been a 9/11 was on his own a serious organic threat to the security of the region and the freedom of the United States.

We saw this and lived it in the 1990s. We saw him attack his neighbors twice. We saw him plow missiles into his neighbors. He developed weapons of mass destruction. He had stockpiles of sarin gas and other chemical and biological weapons. He showed he was willing to use them on his own people and on his neighbors.

We had tens of thousands of American personnel, American airplanes and warplanes in the region specifically designed to contain him year after year. I could see the Clinton administration building up toward a policy that would end this threat to American interests and American freedom and the stability of the region, and it was necessary to remove him. That was part one.

Part two, necessitated by 9/11, was to replace Saddam Hussein, in corroboration with the Iraqi people, with a democracy that respected human dignity, stood for human rights, would fight for human rights and be an ally with us in the war against terrorism. We heard from Prime Minister Allawi today the determination of the Iraqi people to do that and to be an ally.

I was greatly encouraged that this man, who represents a nation that is in some turmoil, that is coming out of decades of totalitarian rule and terror and is in a weakened condition, stood defiantly against the terrorists with courage. Many others, who are in stable countries and have much more power, are trying to appease them. The Iraqis know the danger of tyranny and terrorism. They have lived it, and they are going to stand with us in fighting it in the future.

The existence of this new democracy in Iraq will be a standing rebuke to the vision of the terrorists of a Pan-Islamic world dominated by terrorism, totalitarianism, and twisted religious extremism. Prime Minister Allawi made that point clearly and made it without apology to anybody, and he made it again and again. And have we not seen several of those from the dais on the other side of the Capitol in this Congress? I thought it was an inspiring and brilliant speech. We owe it to ourselves, to our own freedom, to our allies and our own courageous people to see this through and to win this in Iraq.

I was also tremendously encouraged by his statement that we are succeeding there. Anybody who looks at the facts in an unbiased way can see that. Most of the country is stable. We are constantly seeking new ways to stabilize the rest of it, in part through the application of military power on our own or with our allies, in part through negotiations with people who are not yet committed completely to the terrorists on the other side. He made that very clear. They are using a combination of political and military tools to stabilize the country in anticipation of the elections in January. Hearing him, I have full confidence those elections will go forward.

I am proud of what we have done there and proud of the resolution of the American people. I want my constituents in Missouri and constituents around the country to take satisfaction in what we have done through their resolution and through the sacrifice of the men and women in the American military.

HEALTH CARE IN AMERICA

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I will take also a few minutes, putting on a little different hat because I had not intended to talk about health care today, but my friend from Massachusetts spoke with his usual vigor and eloquence on this subject and I thought perhaps a few words in response were warranted.

I agree with my friend about one thing—there certainly is a very big difference between the approach of the President to resolving the problem of the uninsured and costs in health care and the approach of my friend and his colleague from Massachusetts, Senator KERRY. There is no question that there is a problem in this country because

too many people do not have health insurance. I have been leading a fight on this issue for at least 7 or 8 years. There are about 45 million people who at any given time are uninsured. The interesting thing is that most of those people are working people, and they are working on farms or for small businesses.

There is a reason why a disproportionate number of the people who are uninsured are working for small business. It is because health insurance costs more to purchase for small groups. The administrative costs to small businesspeople of buying health insurance for their employees is about three times the administrative costs of buying it for national pools, for the employees of big companies.

It is interesting to note that if one looks at the people in the country who have health insurance, everybody, except the employees of small business, gets their health insurance through some kind of national pool, public or private. They are either employees of big national companies, they have it through a big labor union plan, they work for the Federal Government, or they are participants in Medicare or Medicaid. Everybody else is part of a big national pool because of the efficiencies and the lower costs that are available if one does that except the employees of small business and farmers who are relegated to trying to buy health insurance to cover 5-, 6-, 8- or 10- people units. It costs more. They do not get as much health insurance for it. In many cases it becomes unaffordable, so the small business does not provide health insurance at all to their employees.

How many more minutes do I have? I do not want my eloquence to consume all of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). The first half hour of morning business has expired. We are now into the second half hour, and we are at the beginning of the majority's 15 minutes.

Mr. TALENT. So approximately 15 minutes remaining. I thank the Chair.

I have talked literally to hundreds of small businesspeople who are suffering with this problem. They want to provide health insurance to their employees. They would like to because, of course, in almost all cases the owner is an employee of the corporation, like my brother is, for example. He runs a little restaurant in Missouri. He is an employee of the corporation. He would love to get health insurance for the whole company. Then he would be able to get it, too, at better rates than buying it on the individual market. He cannot because it costs too much for small businesspeople.

What is the President's solution? It happens to be a solution I have been working for for a number of years, so naturally I think the President is right. His solution is to allow small businesspeople to pool through their national trade associations to buy health insurance. For example, the