

I doubt the President or the Secretary of Defense will answer these questions. Instead of answers, we get rhetoric that conflicts with just about everything we hear or read, including from some of this country's most distinguished retired military officers who served under both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Six months ago, the Vice President said the insurgency was in its last throes. That was just the latest in a long string of grossly inaccurate statements and predictions and false expectations about Iraq.

Secretary Rice, when asked recently when U.S. forces could begin to come home assuming the Administration's rosy predictions come true, could not, or would not, even venture a guess.

Without answers—real answers, honest answers—to these questions, I will not support the open-ended deployment of our troops in a war that was based on falsehood and justified with hubris.

Even though I opposed this war, I have prayed, like other Americans, that it would weaken the threat of terrorism and make the world safer, that our troops' sacrifices would be justified, and that the President had a plan for completing the mission.

Instead, it has turned Iraq into a training ground for terrorists, it is fueling the insurgency, it is causing severe damage to the reputation and readiness of the United States military, and it is preventing us from addressing the inexcusable weaknesses in our homeland security.

The Iraqi people, at least the Shiites and Kurds, have voted for a new constitution, as hastily drafted, flawed, and potentially divisive as it may be. Saddam Hussein, whose capacity for cruelty was seemingly limitless, is finally facing trial for his heinous crimes. Elections for a new national government are due by the end of the year. By then, it will be more than 2½ years since Saddam's overthrow, and we will have given the Iraqi people a chance to chart their own course. The sooner we reduce our presence there, the sooner they will have to make the difficult decisions necessary to solve their own problems in their own country.

Our military commanders say that Iraq's problems increasingly need to be solved through the political process, not through military force. We must show Iraq and the world that we are not an occupying force, and that we have no designs on their country or their oil. The American people need to know that the President has a plan to bring our troops home.

Once a new Iraqi government is in place, I believe the President should consult with Congress on a flexible plan that includes pulling our troops back from the densely populated areas where they are suffering the worst casualties and to bring them home.

It is also long overdue for Congress and the White House to reassess our policy toward this region.

The President has declared democracy is taking root throughout the Middle East, and there have been some small, positive steps. But they are dwarfed by the ongoing threat posed by Iran, Syria's continued meddling in Iraq and Lebanon, repression and corruption in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, the danger that the momentum for peace from Israel's withdrawal from Gaza will be lost as settlement construction accelerates in the West Bank, and the widespread—albeit mistaken—belief among Muslims that the United States wants to destroy Islam itself.

Just as the White House's obsession with Iraq has diverted our resources and impeded our efforts to strengthen our defenses against terrorism at home, so has it made it more difficult to constructively, with our allies, address these regional threats.

As I have said, I did not support this war, and I believe that history will not judge kindly those who got us into this debacle by attacking a country that did not threaten us, after deceiving the American people and ridiculing those who appealed for caution and for instead mobilizing our resources directly against the threat of terrorism.

I worry that many of our young veterans who have gone to Iraq and experienced the brutality and trauma of war and may already feel guilty for having survived, will increasingly question its purpose. As the architects of this war move on to other jobs, I fear we are going to see another generation of veterans, many of them physically and psychologically scarred for life, who feel a deep sense of betrayal by their Government.

If President Bush will not say what remains to be done before he can declare victory and bring our troops home, then the Congress should be voting on what this war is really costing the Nation.

We should vote on paying for the war versus cutting Medicaid, as some are proposing; or pay for the war versus cutting VA programs that are already unable to pay the staggering costs of treatment and rehabilitation for our injured veterans; or pay for it versus rebuilding our National Guard; or rebuilding FEMA; or securing our ports and our borders; or investing in our intelligence so we can finally capture Osama bin Laden; or investing in health care for the tens of millions of Americans who cannot afford to get sick; or fixing our troubled schools, so our children can learn to do a better job than we have of making the world a safer place for all people.

These, and the tarnished reputation of a country that I love and so many once admired as not only powerful but also good and just are the real costs of this war.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I put all Senators on notice that we will

soon be starting the debate on an amendment to be offered by Senator DURBIN. We had expected to go on the bill at 10, with morning business scheduled from 9:30 to 10, but morning business has run a little late. One of the Senators asked for an extension of time, which was not objected to. Now Senator STABENOW has asked for 5 minutes, which we will agree to. Senator HARKIN and I are on the floor, and we are anxious to proceed with the business of the bill. I know Senator HARKIN would like to make a comment.

Mr. HARKIN. If the distinguished chairman would yield, I am sorry I was off the floor momentarily, but did the Senator from Pennsylvania do anything about the amendment that is pending?

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, the request was made to have the amendment which is pending accepted by a voice vote. It is really in the nature of a technical amendment. The amendment reduces Federal administrative costs for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services by \$15 million with no cuts coming from oversight and enforcement. This reduction is necessary to bring the Labor-HHS bill into compliance with its allocation ceiling. Concerns have been raised that this reduction would reduce the funds available to administer the new prescription drug program. This is not the case—the reduction will come from administrative overhead, supplies and contracts. We had talked about having a vote on it this morning at 10:30, but in light of the request that we not vote on that amendment but vote on the Durbin amendment, that is acceptable to this side.

As I said before, Senator STABENOW has asked for 5 minutes, and we are prepared to yield that time. But we want to put all Senators on notice we are anxious to proceed with the bill, and I will expect to start on the Durbin amendment at about 10:24 and expect to vote on it sometime between 10:45 and 11.

Senator HARKIN and I, backed by the leaders, have said that we are going to do our best to enforce 20-minute votes, 15 and a 5-minute extension. So all Senators should know when we start the Durbin vote that it will be limited to 20 minutes to the extent that Senator HARKIN and I can prevail on that. When we finish the Durbin vote at about 11:15, we would be pressing to have amendments filed. We have a long, complicated bill. There is an amendment lined up at 2:15, but if we are to move this bill along and to avoid pressing for third reading and final passage, we want to avoid lengthy quorum calls.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO ROSA LOUISE PARKS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I appreciate the courtesies extended to me by the distinguished Senator from Pennsylvania and the distinguished Senator from Iowa.

I rise to pay tribute to one of the giants of American history. Today we honor the remarkable life and legacy of Rosa Parks, who died just last evening at the age of 92.

The Detroit News today says:

Courage in the face of oppression; resistance in the face of injustice. That is the enduring legacy of Rosa Parks, whose defiance on a racially segregated Montgomery, Ala., bus lit the flame of the modern civil rights movement and inspired freedom movements from South Africa to Poland.

The Detroit Free Press today:

When Rosa Parks refused to get up, an entire race of people began to stand up for their rights as human beings. Her refusal to give up her bus seat to a white man was a simple act that took extraordinary courage in Montgomery, Ala., in 1955. It was a place where black people had no rights that white people had to respect. It was a time when racial discrimination was so common, many blacks never questioned it. At least not out loud. But then came Rosa Louise Parks.

I am so proud Rosa Parks was a resident of Michigan. We have claimed her for many years and are so proud that she has left her legacy to all of us, particularly in Detroit, MI.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks left work in her hometown of Montgomery, AL, and boarded a bus headed for home. When the bus became crowded, she was ordered by the bus driver to give up her seat to a white male passenger. She refused. Rosa Parks was arrested, and 4 days later the Montgomery bus boycott began. The boycott lasted for over a year until the Montgomery buses were officially desegregated in December of 1956.

Rosa Parks was a courageous woman who did what she believed was fair and right. She is a testament to the power of one individual willing to fight for their beliefs. Her actions set the civil rights movement in motion and set a precedent for protest without violence. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Rosa Parks for her contribution to freedom and justice for all men and women in this country. Truly, her actions changed the course of history.

Rosa Parks moved to Detroit in 1957 and it became home for her for nearly 50 years. In 1977, she and Elaine Easton Steele founded the Raymond and Rosa Parks Institute for Self-Development in Detroit to offer guidance to young African-Americans. The institute's many programs include the annual Pathways to Freedom bus tour that exposes young African Americans to landmarks of the civil rights era.

The people of Michigan take great pride in the fact that Rosa Parks became part of our community in our great State. She devoted her life to public service, to helping people, and to helping to serve as a role model for our children. She made such an impact on our country and on the people of the metro Detroit community that the actual bus where Rosa Parks made her defiant stand is now on display at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI.

Children from all over the world have come to see the bus that became this

symbol of the civil rights movement. Nicknamed the Mother of Civil Rights, President Clinton awarded Rosa Parks the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996, the highest civilian award this country can bestow. Mrs. Parks also received the Congressional Gold Medal in 1999. Earlier this year, Senator LEVIN and I introduced a bill to name a Federal building in Detroit after Mrs. Parks. We think it is important that we recognize her in this way to thank her in some small way for her incredible contribution to our country. It is an honor she richly deserves, and I believe it is important that we pass this bill this week in the Senate, just as the House has passed the bill, so that we can together, in a unanimous way, say: Thank you, Rosa Parks.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I join others the world over in mourning the death and giving thanks for the life of Mrs. Rosa Parks. Someone once said that in the instance Rosa Parks refused to move, somewhere in the universe a gear in the machinery shifted. Jim Crow had finally met his match.

Rosa Parks was an accomplished seamstress who helped us all see that America's great strength is the fact that we are one cloth sewn together in a splendid coat of many colors. It is often reported that Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus that day in Montgomery, AL, because her feet were tired.

That was not so. She said many times:

I was not physically tired—or no more than I usually was at the end of a working day. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in.

It would be more than a year before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled Montgomery's segregated buses were unconstitutional.

To this day, the Montgomery bus boycott remains the largest and most successful act of civil disobedience in the history of the United States of America, all inspired by this simple, courageous woman. For 381 days, tens of thousands of hard-working middle class, lower class, and all classes of African Americans walked miles to work every day in the heat, in the cold, in the rain. Many of the boycotters, including Mrs. Parks and her husband Raymond, lost their jobs, but they never lost their faith. They persevered with courage and with dignity.

In the end, they did not just change the law; they changed our Nation, and they changed the world. The image of Rosa Parks sitting quietly on that bus waiting to be arrested is etched forever in our national consciousness, but it is not simply refusing to give up her seat that made Rosa Parks so great. It was a refusal to give up hope, especially her hope in young people.

In 1955, Mrs. Parks was the leader of the Montgomery NAACP local youth organization. It is one of the lesser known parts of her story that the evening she was arrested she was in the process of rejuvenating that youth

group. Her dedication to the next generation is the reason she founded the Raymond and Rosa Parks Institute for Self-Development in Detroit, MI. Her faith was tested, but it was never broken. After Mrs. Parks was robbed and beaten in her own home in 1992, she implored people "not to read too much into the attack."

"Young people need to be taught to respect and care for their elders," she said. "Despite the violence and crime in our society, we should not let fear overwhelm us. We must remain strong. We must not give up hope; we can overcome."

This morning's Detroit Free Press has a wonderful story on Mrs. Parks' life and legacy. In it, U.S. Appeals Court Judge Damon Keith, a longtime friend of Mrs. Parks, recalls when another living icon of freedom, Nelson Mandela, visited Detroit in 1990.

When he got off the plane, a long line of dignitaries was waiting to greet the great man. President Mandela scanned the line until his eyes rested on a tiny woman. "He chanted Rosa, Rosa, Rosa Parks," Judge Keith recalls.

President Mandela told Mrs. Parks that she was his inspiration during the long years he was jailed on Robbins Island, and that her example had inspired South Africa's freedom fighters. Later, in a 1993 speech to the NAACP, Nelson Mandela called Rosa Parks "the David who challenged Goliath."

Ms. Johnnie Carr, Mrs. Parks' longtime friend, said Mrs. Parks always believed that the Montgomery bus boycott was "ordained by God." It was meant to be. But it almost did not happen. In her autobiography, Mrs. Parks wrote that, had she not been so tired that day, she would have waited for the next bus, because she would have recognized the driver of the Number 7 bus as the same man who had put her off the bus years earlier for refusing to board through the back door.

On that earlier occasion, in 1943, Mrs. Parks had just tried, unsuccessfully, to register to vote. Twelve years later—the morning after the long Montgomery bus boycott ended—Mrs. Parks again boarded the Number 7 bus, paid her fare, and took her seat in the front of the bus. By coincidence—or perhaps by divine design—the bus driver that day was the same man who had called the police to have her arrested more than a year earlier. His name was James Blake. And he lived in a little town call Equality, GA.

The Detroit Free Press this morning quotes from one of the last interviews Rosa Parks gave. A decade ago, in an interview with that newspaper, Mrs. Parks was asked how she hoped to be remembered. She replied, "I'd like people to say that I'm a person that always wanted to be free, and wanted it not only for myself—freedom for all human beings."

That is a great tribute to a great lady who we remember today.

I yield the floor to the chairman of the committee.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Senator from Illinois for yielding. Before proceeding to his amendment, I would like to commend the Senator from Michigan and the Senator from Illinois for their comments about the great leadership of Rosa Parks to the civil rights movement, and to associate myself with those comments.

I thank the Senator from Illinois.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3010, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3010) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006 and for other purposes.

Pending:

Specter amendment No. 2197, to reduce administrative costs in the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

AMENDMENT NO. 2197

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I move to vitiate the yeas and nays on amendment No. 2197 and proceed to adopt the amendment by voice vote at this time. I cleared this matter with Senator HARKIN.

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

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2197.

The amendment (No. 2197) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, before Senator DURBIN begins, may I again remind my colleagues at the conclusion of this debate, which I would expect to be somewhere in the nature of 20 minutes, we will proceed to a rollcall vote. We expect it to be 15 and 5, limited to 20 minutes, and then we are anxious to have other amendments offered to proceed at that time.

Mr. DURBIN. Would the chairman yield for a question?

Mr. SPECTER. I do.

Mr. DURBIN. I say to the chairman, I believe this amendment may be non-controversial. I do not know if there will be any time taken in opposition to the amendment. I would certainly be prepared to agree at 10:45 the vote would take place, if that would be appropriate, and then I would explain the amendment.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Senator from Illinois for that statement. Perhaps we ought to just formalize it in a unanimous consent agreement that the vote will occur at 10:45.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2196

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside any pending amendment and call up amendment No. 2196, which is filed at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] proposes an amendment numbered 2196.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit to Congress a plan for changing the numerical identifier used to identify medicare beneficiaries under the medicare program)

After section 221, insert the following:

SEC. 222. Not later than June 30, 2006, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall prepare and submit to Congress a report outlining—

(1) a detailed plan for expeditiously changing the numerical identifier used to identify medicare beneficiaries under the medicare program so that a beneficiary's social security account number is no longer displayed on the identification card issued to the beneficiary under such program or on any explanation of medicare benefits mailed to the beneficiary; and

(2) the costs of implementing such plan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, according to the Federal Trade Commission, identity theft is the fastest growing crime in America, striking 27.3 million Americans who have been victims in the last 5 years. Not only is identity theft increasing, it is becoming more expensive. Several years ago, I received a phone call from a credit agency at my home in Springfield, IL. They said: Richard Durbin, we knew that we would finally catch up with you.

I said: What are you talking about?

They said: It is your credit card charges with a major chain of stores that were incurred in Denver, CO.

I said: I didn't incur any credit card charges.

It turned out my identity had been stolen. It took some time, and I finally got it straightened out, but I was one of the lucky ones.

Today's victims of identity theft spend an average of \$1,400 in out-of-pocket expenses to remedy their situation, an increase of 85 percent from years past.

A recent survey indicates that identity theft cost Americans \$52.6 billion in 2004—much of it accrued by businesses forced to write-off fraudulent charges.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, seniors are more vulnerable to fraud than other demographic groups.

In 2004, consumers over the age of 50 reported \$152 million in fraud losses to the FTC, which is likely only a small fraction of the fraud that took place.

A Social Security number is a key for an identity thief. With it, he or she can open a new credit card or bank account, as well as access existing accounts.

One of the main actions Federal, State and local governments instruct you to take in protecting yourself from identity theft is guarding your Social Security number.

Many States and local governments have gone further to protect their citizens. Twelve States have passed laws restricting the use of Social Security numbers, including Illinois where private insurers are prohibited from using Social Security numbers as patient identifiers.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government continues to print Social Security numbers on Medicare cards, leaving 40 million seniors with their Social Security numbers in plain sight.

Almost one-third of identity thieves get access to your personal information by stealing your wallet, checkbook or credit card.

If a senior's wallet is stolen, access to a Social Security number would be simple. Just look on their Medicare card.

Walter Hornby from Bartlett, IL wrote to me to tell me about what he calls a "Catch-22 situation." After he fell victim to identity theft, he was advised never to carry anything in his wallet that includes his Social Security number.

Mr. Hornby wrote:

All Medicare cards have Social Security numbers emblazoned on them in large print. I am sure many seniors carry their cards with them as proof of insurance, leaving them open to identity theft.

Mr. Hornby called CMS and the Social Security Administration, but was told it would "take an act of Congress to correct this situation." That is why we are here today.

According to a recent poll by the AARP, most seniors agree with Mr. Hornby. What is the percent of adults over the age of 50 who want Social Security numbers to appear on various documents? They asked of these seniors, How about Medicare cards? Yes, 25 percent; no, 70 percent. Seniors get it. They understand their vulnerability, but they don't know which way to turn. You need a Medicare card if you go to a hospital or provider. They want to have easy access, but there sits their Social Security number which could turn out making them vulnerable to identity theft.

A reporter asked a CMS spokesperson about whether the agency plans to change beneficiary identity numbers as a result of the rise of identity theft from seniors, and here is what he said:

We're looking at all sorts of alternatives, but right now our greatest priority is implementing the prescription drug program. We