

We are going to spend \$80 million for the Advanced Technology Program. Granted, that is less than what we spent before, but since 1990 the American taxpayers have given over three-quarters of a billion dollars to Fortune 500 companies for technology programs where they, in fact, could have financed those things themselves.

We are going to spend \$1.5 million to study highly migratory sharks, \$825,000 to study Hawaiian monk seals, and \$235,000 to study yellow-finned tuna. We are going to spend \$7 million on the Alaska Fisheries Marketing Board, which this year just spent \$500,000 to paint an airplane to have a salmon on it.

The priorities are wrong. We need to readjust the priorities. I hope my colleagues will look at that and make the effort.

The other thing I think is critical with this bill and is underfunded—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be informed the majority's time has expired.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am prepared to yield 2 minutes from the minority time to the Senator from Oklahoma.

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

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Illinois.

Byrne-JAG funding is cut in this bill. If there is anything we know that our sheriffs, our police departments, our drug courts, our drug rehabilitation programs need, it is help in terms of fighting the battle on drugs. I am very disappointed. The Senate passed \$900 million for Byrne-JAG grants. It was paid for. It was offset when we passed it through the Senate. It came with full offsets to prioritize, to meet the needs of those people who are presently caught up in drugs.

In Oklahoma, we have had fantastic results with drug courts and drug rehabilitation. Eighty-one percent of the people who now come through these drug courts have a full-time job and never regress back to drugs. What we know is drug treatment works. What we know is drug courts work. It is time for us to reconsider our priorities.

I ask the Members of this body to reconsider this conference report in light of the lack of priorities that should be there.

With that, I yield the remainder of my time and thank the Senator from Illinois for his courtesy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this morning's newspapers across America have lead stories that I think are a grim reminder to us of the reality of life in Washington and the challenges we face. The lead stories in most newspapers across America relate to a vote on the Senate floor yesterday. I believe it was a historic vote. By a vote of 79

to 19, Republican and Democratic Senators said it is time for change in this administration's policy in Iraq.

Certainly, when you look at the statistics, it is understandable: Over 2,060 of our best and bravest soldiers have lost their lives in Iraq. Over 15,000 have been gravely wounded, some of them with injuries that will change their lives. And, of course, 25,000 or 30,000 innocent Iraqis—innocent Iraqis—have died during the course of this war.

This war has gone on for over 3 years, after the administration promised us, in the words of Secretary Rumsfeld, that he could not imagine we would be there for more than 6 months. It is now beyond 3 years; no end in sight.

The American people are frustrated, as they should be; frustrated by the fact that this administration made a case for the war in Iraq that was false. You can recall it, as I do, the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, Condoleezza Rice, even Secretary of State Powell, making statements about the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq that were a threat to the Middle East and to the world that could easily fall into the hands of terrorists; statements over and over again about nuclear weapons, Condoleezza Rice talking about mushroom clouds that we could fear if we did not invade Iraq and stop Saddam Hussein; and, of course, linking our national tragedy of 9/11 with Saddam Hussein, saying that somehow he had connections with al-Qaida.

Well, it turned out all of those things were false—every single one of them—so false to the point where the President had to do something I do not think has ever been done in the history of this Nation. He had to apologize and recant a remark he made in his State of the Union Address about this yellow cake coming from Niger in Africa so the Iraqis could use it to make nuclear weapons. It turned out it was a phony. It was not true.

So we were drawn into a war under false pretenses. We all knew how terrible Saddam Hussein was, but we certainly came to understand that the specific reasons given for the invasion of Iraq turned out not to be true, one after the other. Weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons, connections with al-Qaida, yellow cake from Niger, so-called mobile biological weapons laboratories—all of these things turned out to be totally false.

It is understandable the American people are concerned about it because if you measure an abuse of power by a government, could there be an abuse of power any worse than misleading the people of a country into believing that a war is necessary?

That is, of course, why the Senate Democrats took to the floor just 2 weeks ago and demanded that the promised investigation of this administration for the potential misuse of intelligence be completed by the Senate Intelligence Committee. It has been over 20 months—20 months—since we

were promised that this honest investigation would take place, and nothing has happened.

There have been small parts of it that have been addressed, but I think we all know what the story is. The Senate Intelligence Committee, under the control of the President's party, does not want to open that door and look inside. Well, why should we? Why should we reflect and dwell on the past? Some say: Let's look forward. But if we do not get to the heart of this issue, the truth of the matter, if we are not honest with the American people and straightforward as to what happened leading up to that invasion of Iraq, then I think we are derelict in our constitutional responsibilities.

This Congress is designed as one branch of Government to serve as oversight of the executive branch of Government. The failure of the Senate Intelligence Committee, for more than 20 months, to produce this intelligence analysis, which they promised, is proof positive they are dragging their feet, unwilling to accept the responsibility which they have publicly proclaimed.

So yesterday we passed on the floor, by a vote of 79 to 19, a clear statement to this administration that the policy in Iraq must change. No. 1, we said the year 2006 will not just be another year in Iraq, another year of casualties, another year of death, another year of our despondency over whether this is going to end well. It will be a year of significant transition. That is what the Democratic amendment said. That is what was adopted.

Secondly, we served notice on Iraqis that it is their responsibility, not the American responsibility, to secure their own country and to build a political coalition that can defeat the insurgency. I had hoped we would have even stronger language to say to the Iraqis: We are not here indefinitely. We want to bring our troops home. The Republican side watered down that language, but the message was still clear.

The third element is important as well. Accountability is essential. This administration must be held accountable for whether we were prepared not only for the invasion of Iraq but for what occurred afterwards. You know what happened afterwards. Secretary Rumsfeld visited with our troops, and a soldier came forward, held up his hand to ask a question, and said: Mr. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, why is it that we soldiers have to scavenge through junk piles to find pieces of armor to stick on these humvees to protect ourselves? A moment of great embarrassment for the Secretary, but I am glad that soldier had the courage to stand up and say what we already knew.

We were not prepared. We sent our troops into combat without the necessary humvee armor, without the necessary body armor, without the necessary protection for our helicopters. It was done, and in some respects too late

and too little. We lost American soldiers' lives and many were injured because we did not have the right equipment in place.

So now what we are saying is that this administration must be held accountable, to report to Congress every 90 days to tell us in Congress the progress that is being made in protecting our troops, in preparing the Iraqis to defend their own country, in moving that country toward stability, and in moving us to the point where American soldiers can start coming home. That was passed yesterday, 79 to 19.

As the President stood on Veterans Day and in an unprecedented political speech attacked his Democratic critics for saying they did not agree with his war policy, this Senate, on a bipartisan basis yesterday, 79 to 19, said to the President: Your policy in Iraq must change. We need to start looking to bring American soldiers home. And 2006 is the year to begin that process in earnest.

That is why it was a historic vote. Of course, as we look at the statements made in the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq, there is a recurring theme. It turns out that the major sources of intelligence that were passing through the administration and to the American people were passing across the desk of Vice President CHENEY.

Lieutenant Colonel Wilkerson, chief of staff to Secretary of State Colin Powell, referred to a cabal, a cabal led by Vice President CHENEY and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, a cabal which set the stage for the invasion of Iraq. The man speaking was not a partisan Democrat. He was the chief of staff to the Secretary of State in the Bush administration, Colin Powell. I think it makes clear that throughout the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq, our Vice President, RICHARD CHENEY, was making statements that did not reflect the truth of what was occurring in Iraq.

Repeatedly, he said Iraq had links to al-Qaida, and that was proven false. Repeatedly, he said Iraq was an imminent threat to the United States, and that was proven false. Repeatedly, Vice President CHENEY said Iraq was trying to acquire nuclear weapons, and that was proven false.

On "Meet the Press," on March 16, 2003, the Vice President said: "And we believe he [Saddam Hussein] has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons." False.

In addition, there were statements made about whether Iraq was trying to acquire uranium from Africa, statements made by the Vice President which turned out to be false, and statements, of course, relative to aluminum tubes. I knew something about that debate because as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I listened as the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy debated whether these aluminum tubes were really all about nuclear weapons. There was a

real division within the administration, and I would walk outside the Senate Intelligence Committee room and hear statements made by the Vice President saying: There is no debate. It is all about nuclear weapons.

Now, I could not repeat what I had heard in the Senate Intelligence Committee. I was prohibited from saying it publicly. I knew what he said was false. It is one of the reasons I voted against that resolution to go to war in Iraq.

But again and again the Vice President was taking information, intelligence information, giving it to the American people selectively, making certain that it was always the strongest spin toward the immediate need for a war, and that is how we ended up in the position we are in today.

It is a lot easier to get into a war than it is to get out of one. And we have learned that with the cost in human lives and the cost to America's Treasury.

AMERICA'S ENERGY CRISIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the second story on the front pages of this morning's newspapers relates to the energy crisis in America. You do not have to describe that to any American who has filled up their gas tank in the last several months. And in the weeks ahead, when you start paying your home heating bills, if you live in one of the colder parts of America, you will see the energy problems we are facing.

Of course, it reflects the fact we have no energy policy in this country. In the White House, with the President and Vice President, we have two men who have long careers with the energy industries and with oil companies, and the energy policy they are pushing reflects it.

What did we have in the so-called Energy bill signed by the President just in August of this year? A \$9 billion subsidy to oil companies, a \$9 billion subsidy to companies which are realizing record-breaking profits at this very moment.

Why in the world would we be sending subsidies, Federal taxpayers' dollars, to these oil companies at a moment in time when they are realizing the largest profits in history? I think every American knows why. When you go to the gas station to fill up your car or your truck, and you put that charge on your credit card, the money from your credit card is going directly to the boardrooms of these oil companies that are realizing more money than they ever have in history.

We wanted to know who wrote the administration's energy bill, and we could not find out. Neither the President nor the Vice President, who was leading the effort to create this energy policy, would tell the American people who was part of it.

This morning's front page story in the Washington Post tells us who was part of it. A document obtained by the Washington Post this week shows that

officials from ExxonMobil, Conoco before its merger with Phillips, Shell Oil, and BP America met in the White House complex with Cheney aides who were developing the national energy policy, parts of which became law and parts of which are still being debated.

It comes as no surprise. We suspected as much. A lawsuit was filed to specifically determine whether the oil company executives wrote this Energy bill. That lawsuit was fought all the way to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court ruled that the White House didn't have to tell the American people who was involved. Now this memo tells us.

The reason it is important is that last week the executives of these oil companies came before Congress. You probably heard about the hearing before the Senate Commerce Committee. Senator Maria Cantwell of Washington insisted that these oil company executives be sworn in and testify under oath, as the tobacco company executives did a few years ago. But Senator STEVENS, chairman of the committee, refused to allow them to be sworn in. Why? So they couldn't be held accountable if they didn't tell the truth.

Unfortunately, some of the statements made in responses to questions by Senator LAUTENBERG raised serious questions as to whether those oil company executives were candid and forthcoming in terms of their involvement in this very bill, the Energy bill, which this memorandum tells us was prepared with the oil company executives. Once again, the special interests trumped America's families and consumers, businesses and farmers. The Energy bill was written with the Vice President's direction that rewarded oil companies at a time when we should have been sensitive to protecting American consumers. Unfortunately, it reflects what has been happening in this capital for too long.

LEWIS LIBBY INDICTMENT

Mr. DURBIN. The third issue is one which everyone is aware of; that is, the fact that for the first time in over a century, some high-level staffer in the White House has been indicted. Lewis "Scooter" Libby was indicted a few weeks ago, charged with perjury and obstruction of justice related to the Valerie Plame affair. Everyone is aware of it now. Joe Wilson, former Ambassador, sent to Africa to determine whether assertions by the administration about yellow cake uranium coming from Africa to Iraq were true, reached the conclusion they were not. When he published that conclusion, he was attacked in the press by Robert Novak in a column where Mr. Novak said two White House sources had told him that Joseph Wilson's wife Valerie Plame was a CIA agent.

In fact, she was an undercover agent whose identity was being protected. But the White House, in an effort to discredit its critics and to silence