

end strength of the reservists, Army and Marine Corps, so we can begin to take steps to relieve the stress of these overstretched Active military personnel.

This bill should be at the top of our Senate agenda, but I am sorry to say it is not. It is hard to comprehend that since May this bill has been literally languishing. It was reported out of the Armed Services Committee in May. We worked for a couple of days on it here on the floor. The Senate was not permitted to complete action on this important measure. We were working on this bill for a short time in July before the leader decided to set it aside in favor of the gun liability legislation. The gun liability legislation is the law. It has been signed by the President. The Defense authorization bill should be the law so our troops who are on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan can get the help they need and give the families of the approximately 2,000 men and women who have been killed in Iraq the knowledge that we are doing something to help the people on the ground and to help the hundreds of thousands of veterans who have been spawned as a result of this war. This doesn't take into consideration the tens of thousands who have been injured and wounded in this war. Those fighting in Iraq deserve it. Those fighting in Afghanistan deserve it. Our veterans deserve it.

Americans can do better than this. The Defense bill should be taken off the back burner and placed on the front burner right now.

Our troops—I repeat—and the victims of Katrina are literally crying for our help. In the days ahead, we will owe the victims of Katrina and all the American people something in addition to relief. We will owe them answers. Four years after 9/11, the Government was supposed to be prepared for a crisis such as Katrina. Yet, as we all saw, the Federal Government was not, and we owe it to the American people to find out why.

Today on public radio, they had a number of pieces on Katrina, but the one that stands out in my mind was the story of St. Bernard Parish President Henry "Junior" Rodriguez who told of how it took 5 days before anybody came to help his parish of some 80,000 people. And the fifth day, did we see FEMA coming to help them, or American troops? No. His first sign of help was the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. "Junior" Rodriguez deserves to know why it took so long to get his parish help. All Americans should know.

Americans can do better. When we searched for answers following 9/11, Democrats and Republicans came together and established an independent blue ribbon commission that was a great success. Too bad we didn't follow all the recommendations. But Democrats, Republicans and, most importantly, the American people embraced its answers. Senator CLINTON has pro-

posed that we need another independent commission, and we need it now.

I close by reminding everyone that times have changed. Times are different today than they were 2 weeks ago. We now have different priorities after Katrina, and our actions in the weeks ahead should reflect these new priorities. It is not business as usual for the families along the Gulf, and it should not be business as usual for us here.

Nowhere is this more clear than in the budget that is before this body. I spoke about that budget the night it came before us. I read a letter written to me by the mainline Protestant churches in America. They said please tell everyone this budget which you are about to pass is immoral. This is certainly worse than it was then.

I point out to everyone the results of the recent Census Bureau report which show that poverty rose for the fourth year in a row. Incomes dropped again, and more Americans are going without health care than the year before—almost a million more than the past year without health care.

Combine these facts and figures with the images of Katrina—images of the poorest and neediest among us bearing the brunt of a national tragedy—and ask yourself this question: Should we proceed with this budget that was immoral the night it was passed and even more so now, that cuts taxes for the rich and cuts Medicaid by \$10 billion, cuts food stamps, student loans, and other programs for the neediest among us? The answer, of course, is no. We must revisit these priorities in the budget resolution.

America can do better. We can't change the past, but we can change the future. We can put the Senate's priorities in line with the American people, and there is no excuse not to do that.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business. The previous order provided morning business between 2 and 3 equally between the majority and minority. The minority has consumed 30 minutes in morning business. So the Senator, if he wishes to speak, would have to ask unanimous consent to be allowed to speak on the majority's time.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask consent to speak for 10 minutes in morning business.

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

NUCLEAR STRIKE PLAN

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I read an item on the front page of the Washington Post yesterday which was both surprising to me and also extraordinarily disappointing: "Pentagon Revises Nuclear Strike Plan." The strategy includes preemptive use of nuclear weapons. Let me read a portion of this and describe why I am so dismayed.

The Pentagon has drafted a revised doctrine for the use of nuclear weapons that envisions commanders requesting presidential approval to use them to preempt an attack by a nation or a terrorist group using weapons of mass destruction. The draft also includes the option of using nuclear arms to destroy known enemy stockpiles of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons.

The draft Pentagon document is titled "Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations." It is written under the direction of Air Force GEN Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. According to the article in the Post, the document is currently available on the Pentagon Web site. It describes new circumstances might call for preemptive use of nuclear weapons by this country.

We saw what has happened with respect to a natural disaster in the Gulf Coast of this country. We saw the devastation of that. Yet that would perhaps be a fraction of the devastation if we have a nuclear device go off in one of America's cities, a terrorist acquiring a nuclear weapon and detonating it in one of America's cities. This country has a responsibility to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, to preach to the world that nuclear weapons must never again be used. Yet this country is now developing policies and putting them on the Web that say here is a new approach in which we might use a preemptive strike of a nuclear weapon.

If we get the Defense authorization bill back in the Senate soon, we will have a debate about the development of a new kind of nuclear weapon, a bunker buster nuclear weapon, an Earth-penetrating bunker buster nuclear weapon. Why? Because this Administration thinks we need a new designer nuclear weapon to bust bunkers.

We ought not be building nuclear weapons. We ought not build new nuclear weapons. We have stockpiles of thousands of nuclear weapons, the detonation of one of which by a terrorist group would kill thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of people.

The role for this country is to provide world leadership to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, not to be talking to the world about conditions under which we might use nuclear weapons preemptively. It is stark raving nuts to be doing this. I cannot understand what they can possibly be thinking about.

The fact is we have American soldiers fighting in the country of Iraq. This Senate authorized the President to initiate hostile actions against Iraq based on a substantial body of intelligence given to us by our intelligence

organization, most of which turns out to have been absolutely wrong. Dead wrong. Yet we are talking about preemptive strikes with nuclear weapons. I don't understand it.

If I might, by consent, I will show something from my desk. Mr. President, I ask I be permitted to show this. It is a portion of a wing strut from a Soviet Backfire bomber.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Why do I have this in my desk? We did not shoot this bomber down. We sawed the wing off this bomber, paid for with American taxpayers' money. Does anyone know why? Because of arms control agreements by which we reduced the number of nuclear weapons and the number of nuclear delivery systems—and that includes missiles, bombers and submarines. So I have in the Senate a piece of a wing from a Soviet bomber that used to carry nuclear weapons that would threaten this country.

How did that happen? Because Senators Nunn and LUGAR and others, along with President Clinton, working on arms control agreements, had the foresight to put together a program by which we reached agreements by which we reduce the number of nuclear weapons and reduce the number of carriers of those nuclear weapons. So I have part of a wing strut from a Backfire bomber.

I also have ground-up copper wire from a Soviet submarine that used to carry nuclear tipped missiles aimed at this country.

That is our job. Our job is to reduce the nuclear threat. Not use the threat of nuclear weapons against other countries or talk about conditions under which we would use the nuclear weapons in a preemptive strike. This is nuts.

We will start debating this once again in the Senate. We have these folks, and we have plenty of them here, who want to build new nuclear weapons. They want to start testing the ones we have. We do not need to test nuclear weapons. We know they work. And they want to build new nuclear weapons, Earth-penetrator bunker busters. It is exactly the wrong thing for this country to do.

HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, over the past few days, as we have talked about the heartbreak of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina, I have noticed that certain firms have been hired now to go in and provide assistance. One of the firms is the Halliburton Corporation. I have held hearings in the policy committee about this company, because there have been numerous serious allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse involving it, and yet none of the Senate's authorizing committees will investigate it.

Every time you talk about Halliburton someone says, you are criti-

cizing the Vice President because he used to be president of Halliburton.

Well, this has nothing to do with the Vice President. It has to do with the American taxpayers getting bilked by a company that is overbilling. I will not go through the whole list of scandals. We have had hearing after hearing to explore them, because the authorizing committees will not. But this is a company that was paid to feed 42,000 soldiers in Iraq; yet they were only feeding 14,000. That means they are overbilling by 28,000 meals a day. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. It is unbelievable the amount of waste, fraud, and abuse that is going on.

And now, when it comes to dealing with Katrina, no-bid contracts, once again, win Katrina work. And we hear that Halliburton is now getting millions of dollars to do hurricane related work. I wonder who is minding the store? And when will someone start to care?

Incidentally, a woman by the name of Bunnatine Greenhouse was demoted last week in the Pentagon. She was the highest ranking civilian ever in the Corps of Engineers. She rose to that position, getting outstanding reviews all along the way. And then she spoke up. In the good old boy network, when they wanted to award no-bid contracts to Halliburton in Iraq, she spoke up. All of a sudden she gets demoted. She spoke up because she said what was going on was scandalous. The American taxpayer takes a bath as a result of all of this.

Let me tell you what she has told the Congress. Bunnatine Greenhouse, the highest ranking civilian employee in the Corps of Engineers, who refused to sign the no-bid contracts that went under a buddy system to Halliburton in Iraq, says:

I can unequivocally state that the abuse related to the contracts awarded to KBR [Halliburton] represents the most blatant and improper contract abuse I have witnessed during the course of my professional career.

For blowing the whistle, she gets demoted. This is a woman who has had outstanding reviews by everyone along the way.

We have heard from people who worked for Halliburton who testified that the managers of this company said, When U.S. Government auditors come, do not dare speak to them. If you do, one of two things will happen. You will be fired or we will send you to the hot spots where there is active fighting in Iraq.

These are people who testified that they are providing food service to American soldiers and routinely serve food, the date stamp of which is expired, and they are told by Halliburton managers, feed it to them anyway.

I hope some day, some way, the people in Congress who have the capability to issue subpoenas and hold oversight hearings will finally start doing their job. We ought not go back to the same well for the reconstruction with re-

spect to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina. The victims of that hurricane need help. They need good help. The American taxpayer shouldn't be taking a bath while that help is given.

I yield the floor.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Will the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator is expired.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I ask unanimous consent for 2 minutes for the Senator.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. If the Senator will yield, I caught the tail end of the Senator's comments about Halliburton. Of course, we have people who work in Louisiana for Halliburton, but I most certainly understand the Senator's concern if there are these accusations against Halliburton in Iraq. We want to be very careful with our reconstruction dollars right here at home, that companies we ask to do work are doing good work, being accountable to the taxpayers.

As the Senator knows, while it may be hard to track some of this across the ocean, it will be easier when it is in the United States. I don't know if the Senator would have any suggestions. Are there other companies that can do some work along the lines of reconstruction other than this one company? Does the Senator know?

Mr. DORGAN. In response to the Senator from Louisiana, I understand in circumstances such as this, we will not go out and get bids and ask for 30 days. We want people in the field working quickly. But the fact is we have a lot of great companies out there in this country with a great ability to mobilize and move quickly. My only point is, I want the victims of this hurricane to receive help now, immediately. I want the American taxpayer to find that help was delivered effectively and efficiently. I don't want it running through people's hands into people's pockets where it shouldn't go.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I hope, Mr. President, as we lay out the rebuilding efforts for the Gulf Coast region and the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we can do better than what the Senator has spoken about.

On that subject, just for the record, I think maybe the Senator from Louisiana, Mr. VITTER, and I would like to submit for the RECORD a list of Louisiana-Mississippi-based contractors that can do great work in the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast region. We understand that Halliburton is a Texas company. We are happy for our Texas counterparts. As I said, many people in Louisiana work for Halliburton. I think we have several thousand people who do. But I want this Senate to know—Senators on both sides of the aisle—we have a lot of Louisiana and Mississippi contractors who can build houses, et cetera.