

do next. We are agreed on several things. We need better enforcement. America cannot absorb every person who wants to live here. We need better border security, and those amendments passed this morning overwhelmingly on a bipartisan basis. We need to work with employers to make sure they are following the law in the people that they hire. We are considering now an amendment, a bipartisan amendment, so agricultural workers can come here to harvest the fruit and vegetables that are an important part of our lives and our economy and not be arrested for doing it—giving them a chance. We are also going to address, before this day is over, whether we will make criminals of all of the people who are here.

I certainly hope those who are following this debate understand that if the 11 million undocumented are to come out of the shadows and be part of America, they won't do it with the threat of going to jail or being deported. What we need to do is establish a sensible, tough, but fair process so that those who have come, who work hard, pay taxes, raise their families, obey the law, learn English, and want to be part of America have a chance. They can be given a chance over a longer period of time than those who go through the regular legal process. That is only fair. They should not be able to jump in front of others in line. But ultimately if we give them a path to legalization, a path to dignity, we will be a better nation for it.

They want to be part of America and its future. They left their home countries, as many of our parents and grandparents did, to come to this great Nation. We see it in the hundreds of thousands who have come out in the streets of major cities, as they stand and say in Spanish: Si, se puede—yes, we can. They chant, as they do in Chicago: USA, USA—that they love this country as much as almost any other citizen. Giving them a chance to become an important part of America's future will make us an even stronger country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT JONATHAN ADAM HUGHES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask the Senate to pause for a moment today to remember the heroism and sacrifice of SGT Jonathan Adam Hughes.

"Sergeant Hughes was a proud member of Bravo Battery, First Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery, and he will always remain a member. He has earned that right." So says Sergeant Hughes's wife, Sara Hughes, on her husband's time in the Kentucky Army National Guard. She continues, "He will never have to re-enlist or extend his contract, for it has been extended forever."

On March 19, 2005, Sergeant Hughes and three other Kentucky Guard sol-

diers were traveling south in a Humvee, escorting a 30-truck convoy to Camp Liberty, the loading and unloading zone for supply trucks near the Baghdad International Airport.

Suddenly, at a point about 30 miles from Camp Liberty, an explosive device hidden in a car detonated. The other soldiers in the Humvee were injured; Sergeant Hughes, of Lebanon, KY, was killed. He had served his Nation as a citizen-soldier for almost 4 years. He was 21 years old.

For his valorous service, Sergeant Hughes was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart and the Combat Action Badge. He had previously received the Army Good Conduct Medal, and he was awarded the Kentucky Distinguished Service Medal, for demonstrating all the qualities of a great soldier, remaining combat-focused while decisively engaged with the enemy, performing his duties and accomplishing his mission.

Adam, as his family and friends called him, was inspired to enlist in the Kentucky National Guard after his time in Junior ROTC at Marion County High School, where he graduated in 2002. After Sergeant Hughes's death, the flag outside Marion County High flew at half-staff in his honor and memory.

SFC Twymon Ray, Jr., also from Lebanon, KY, served with Sergeant Hughes and reports that one couldn't have asked to work alongside a finer soldier. Sergeant Hughes excelled at whatever task was put before him. When given an order, he would often reply with the rejoinder, "Gotcha, boss, gotcha covered."

On March 18, 2005, the day before the fatal attack, Sergeant Hughes and his unit were leading a convoy when they came upon another convoy, headed in the opposite direction, that was under attack. Being in the lead Humvee, Sergeant Hughes's team moved forward to engage the terrorists, a group of three or four cars with gunmen in their trunks.

As the terrorist drivers weaved between the tractor-trailers, the gunmen would open the trunks and fire at the truck drivers. Sergeant Hughes, who had volunteered to serve as his unit's gunner that day, engaged two of the cars, immediately drawing fire from both sides of the road.

SGT Brian Mattingly, Sergeant Hughes's team leader, recalls hearing shots "ping" off the armor of the Humvee he and Adam were in. The team was able to rescue two Iraqi-national truck drivers who had been targeted by these malicious killers. Sergeant Hughes was successful in chasing the enemy off and allowing both convoys to continue on their way without further attack.

During his downtime in Iraq at Camp Anaconda, Adam built a desk and book shelf from plywood the squad had acquired to hold his treasured pictures of his wife, Sara, and their young son, Peyton. Adam was also a cook. He

asked his mother and grandmother to send him a frying pan, and he would fry up potatoes after a unit run to Baghdad to pick up food and other supplies.

Adam Hughes also used his downtime in Iraq to work on his Humvee or play video games. He grew up as an avid outdoorsman, and especially enjoyed hunting and fishing.

Sergeant Hughes was laid to rest last year in Holy Name of Mary Cemetery, outside Lebanon, KY. I was honored to be one of the many who went to pay my respects that day to a courageous American hero. A lot of people love and miss Adam Hughes, and they will remember his bravery, his can-do optimism, and his sacrifice.

CPT Lawrence Joiner, commander of Sergeant Hughes's company, remembered Adam for his quiet and shy disposition, saying, "Words cannot express our love and brotherhood. . . . He will forever be a part of our lives."

Adam was blessed to have a loving family and many friends. His wife Sara is present today, and we thank her for sharing her memories of her husband with us. I also commend Mrs. Hughes for her tremendous compassion for the families of other Kentucky Guard soldiers who have fallen in service of our country, which she has shown by attending funerals and helping other soldiers' families cope with their loss.

Mrs. Hughes has brought her son, Peyton, who is almost 2 years old, to the Capitol today to honor his father. Accompanying the Hughes family is SGT Keith Cox, who served with Sergeant Hughes, his wife, Libbi, and their children Kyle and Mariah. The Hughes family is lucky to have such friends during this difficult time.

Adam also leaves behind a loving family: his mother, Karen Hill; his father, John Hughes; and his two sisters, Nikki Hill and Claire Hughes.

"There are no great words in a time of deep tragedy. But surely there are great men in the midst of great tragedy." Those are again the words of Sara Hughes. How true and how profound.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in saying that America can never repay the debt we owe SGT Jonathan Adam Hughes or the Hughes family. We are truly blessed to live in a country where so many brave men and women volunteer to wear the uniform and defend freedom, here at home and across the world.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VITTER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING
BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate remain in a period of morning business until 5:15 this afternoon, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. LOTT. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed in morning business for 15 minutes.

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

REPORT ON TRIP TO PAKISTAN,
AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, TURKEY,
AND ENGLAND

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I returned on Saturday evening from a trip to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, and England. The trip was led by a very dear friend of mine and a great leader of this Senate who happens to be the Presiding Officer at the moment, Senator WARNER of Virginia, and it included Senator SESSIONS, Senator THOMAS, Senator BINGAMAN, Senator SALAZAR, in addition to myself.

I know if the Presiding Officer was allowed to speak in the position in which he sits that he would be the first to acknowledge that this was one of the most extraordinary trips either one of us has ever taken in the 28 years we have served together in the U.S. Senate.

The focus of the trip was to assess the situation in Afghanistan and Iraq. We also conveyed to the men and women of our Armed Forces the extraordinary support for them in the Congress and throughout the Nation, regardless of our debates and differences over Iraq policy.

In meeting with our troops, including many from my home State of Michigan, it was they who lifted our spirits. As always, I came away deeply impressed by the professionalism, dedication, and high morale of our troops. They are truly America's finest.

The situation in Afghanistan is hopeful. President Karzai has led his nation with a firm and steady hand. He has successfully, albeit gradually, neutralized the warlords and demobilized and disarmed their forces. The Taliban has indeed regrouped to some extent and, together with a much weakened al-Qaida, are capable of causing casualties among the Afghan Army and coal-

ition and NATO forces, but they are not a threat to the Afghan nation.

Meanwhile, the Afghan Army is growing stronger, the training of the Afghan police is improving, a large number of provincial reconstruction teams are helping with local governance, and NATO is assuming more of the burden of providing security throughout the country. Serious work does remain, including the need to deal with poppy cultivation and the drug traffickers. But overall the situation in Afghanistan provides grounds for optimism.

Sadly, the same cannot be said of Iraq. The situation in Iraq is deeply troubling and threatens to grow worse. Since the recent attack on the Golden Mosque in Samarra, there has been a huge increase in sectarian violence. The increase is so significant that our senior military leaders in Iraq say it has replaced the insurgent attacks on Iraqi and coalition forces as the No. 1 security problem there.

Although there has been some progress in training the Iraqi Army, even a stronger Iraqi Army cannot prevent a civil war. Only the political and religious leaders and the police can do that. The police are not making significant progress in coming together as a cohesive force. In some critical areas, including Baghdad, where the militias continue to dominate, the police are not reliable and are still likely to respond to the sectarian calls of the clerics and the militias instead of the government.

Do we need to succeed in Iraq now that we are there? Yes, because the outcome there will have a major effect on the region and on our own security. I define success as a stable Iraq with a government of national unity supported by a reliable national army and police who are not weakened by sectarian fissures.

To achieve that success, General Casey, the Commander of U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq, reiterated to us that there is no military solution to the violence without a political solution.

We need to do everything we can to help the Iraqis achieve a prompt political solution, which means the quick formation of a government of national unity involving representatives of the three main Iraqi factions. It also means a highly sectarian individual would not be heading up the Ministry of Defense or the Ministry of the Interior. The alternative to a prompt formation of a government of national unity by Iraqi leaders is a continuation of this drift to all-out civil war.

In Baghdad we met with Prime Minister Jaafari, who was nominated by the dominant Shiite faction—the United Iraqi Alliance—as their candidate for Prime Minister in the new government. Although he was confident that a national unity government would be formulated by the end of April, his optimism was not widely shared by others we met. Moreover, his

one-vote victory for the nomination to continue on as Prime Minister is being contested from both within and without the Shiite coalition. I shared with him the letter to President Bush that Senators COLLINS, JACK REED, and I had written, the bottom line of which is that:

A prompt political settlement is not only essential to the Iraqis, it is a condition of our continued presence.

I told him his “end of April” commitment to President Jaafari, in my judgment, met that test of a prompt political settlement.

We also met with leaders from the two main Sunni Arab parties: Mr. Hashimi and Mr. Samarai of the Iraqi Islamic Party, and Mr. Mutlak of the Iraqi Dialogue Council. They were not optimistic about the negotiations and forcefully advocated a decisional role rather than a facilitating role for the United States in the negotiations. Mr. Mutlak argued:

You are responsible for this mess and you must correct what you have done. You have to dictate the result.

The Sunni leaders were also of the view that Iraq has been in the midst of a civil war between the militias and the innocent Iraqis for some time, and they voiced their concern about Iranian influence over the Shiite parties. I told them, and I know the other members of our codel, of our delegation told them as bluntly as we know how that their dictator was removed at a great loss of American blood and treasure and that the Iraqis and only the Iraqis will decide their own fate, and that our continued presence should depend on their promptly choosing a path of reconciliation and unity against violence and terror.

On our second day in Iraq we met with the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad. One constant theme we found in Iraq and elsewhere in the region was the high regard with which all hold our Ambassador, Mr. Khalilzad. Unfortunately, although the parties are finally talking, more than 3 months after the elections, Ambassador Khalilzad was not encouraging that a political solution is in sight. He is putting modest pressure on the Iraqis. For instance, he told the Iraqis our response to continued deadlock of Iraq's political leaders might not be to their liking. He has told the Iraqi political leaders: It is your decision, and after you make it, we will make our own decision in response.

Although his statement is on the right track, it is still too subtle. It is too oblique. The political leaders of Iraq are deadlocked, feuding while Iraq descends toward all-out civil war. There is little chance of achieving a government of national unity without our pointedly and forcefully persuading the parties to make the compromises necessary to achieve it.

But what is the leverage that could be used to pointedly persuade the Iraqi leaders to make those needed compromises? We can't dictate to them