

victory in the battle to control spending. It is my goal to accomplish just that before I leave the Senate.

So just like every family has to make tough tradeoffs and live within their means, Congress should, too.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, our valiant troops are now serving in their fourth year in Iraq. Day after day, they have demonstrated courage, skill, and bravery. They do not ask for much. But all of us owe them a lot.

At the top of the list of things we owe them is an honest debate about what is going on in Iraq.

Yesterday, Democrats offered an amendment to express the sense of the Senate that Iraq not grant amnesty to terrorists who kill our troops as part of their reconciliation plan. The amendment came in response to reports that the Iraqi Prime Minister was in favor of such a proposal.

But instead of joining us in a debate about this amendment, the majority, the Republicans, decided to play a political game and quickly claimed the Iraqi Prime Minister had been "misquoted" and offered some procedural gimmicks to stop a vote from taking place on this amendment.

But, just this morning, there is more news that the Prime Minister has talked about and does favor amnesty to those Iraqis who kill American troops. It is all over the country in the news. For example, it is on page 22 of the Washington Post. The aide who first leaked the story has now resigned, but he stands by what he said. Today, he is quoted as saying:

The prime minister himself has said that he is ready to give amnesty to the so-called resistance, provided they have not been involved in killing Iraqis.

What that says is just what we said yesterday: Amnesty will be granted to those who kill Americans, but not to those who hurt Iraqis.

I think this sounds like it deserves the Senate's attention. Doesn't it seem like we should weigh in on this, and tell the Iraqis there will be no "get out of jail free" cards for those who kill our troops?

We should have had that debate yesterday. But instead of having the debate, the Republicans cut and run from the debate. In effect, they are filibustering their own Defense authorization bill, not allowing the matter to move forward—stopped in midday. It does not make sense. Until we know exactly where the Iraqis stand, President Bush must come forward and tell the Iraqis to stand down.

Terrorists who kill our troops should not be set free. Our soldiers have given too much in the name of Iraqi freedom.

Mr. President, there is something else we owe our troops: an acknowledgement of their tremendous sacrifice.

Yesterday, as we know, we had a moment of silence in this Chamber because we lost our 2,500th troop in Iraq.

Mr. President, 2,500 of our finest have been killed in Iraq. The reason we had a moment of silence is because it was a solemn milestone, which we should acknowledge.

But over at the White House, I guess they have a different feeling. They apparently view this sad occasion differently. With all the news around the country today, there is a quote from Tony Snow, the President's Press Secretary, who said, in response to the news: "It's a number." "It's a number." "It's a number."

I say to Tony Snow, and others at the White House, it is more than a number. It is somebody's son or daughter. It is someone's father or mother, a neighbor, an uncle, or an aunt.

Nevada has lost 39 soldiers in Iraq—39. Every one of them is more than a number. I wonder how—and they are now my friends—two Nevadans, who came to visit me before Memorial Day—and they came to the Memorial Day ceremonies we had at the Boulder City Veterans Home, where last year we buried more than 2,000 veterans—I wonder how John Lukac's and William Salazar's parents feel about their sons being just numbers.

They are not numbers. They are no more numbers than the people who have been wounded. They are not numbers. They are people, in many instances, who have lost arms or legs or eyes or are paralyzed. They are not just numbers.

I think maybe we should discuss briefly what a Republican Congressman said yesterday. I know this man. I know him well. I have been going to the House gym for a lot of years. He is a man by the name of WAYNE GILCHREST. He is my friend. He is a Republican Congressman from Maryland.

We were standing in the House gym. I have known him for many, many years. And because of our knowing one another—he was shaving actually, with his shirt off. And on his back he had—I noticed it for years—a real scar.

I said: WAYNE, what is that scar?

He said: I was shot.

I said: Tell me about it.

He was in Vietnam. He was a sergeant. He raised his arm to fire, and as he did that, somebody shot him through the chest. The bullet came out of the back. He has a big scar in the back. The words he remembers are: "Sarge's been shot. I hope he's not dead."

He survived, but after many months in hospitals. He was a school teacher. He came back from Vietnam and taught kids. Now he is a Member of Congress, and has been for some time.

Here is what he said in yesterday's Washington Post:

I can't help but feel through eyes of a combat-wounded Marine in Vietnam, if someone

was shot, you tried to save his life . . . While you were in combat, you had a sense of urgency to end the slaughter, and around here we don't have that sense of urgency.

That is a direct quote. He went on to say:

To me, the administration does not act like there's a war going on. The Congress certainly doesn't act like there's a war going on. If you're raising money to keep the majority, if you're thinking about gay marriage, if you're doing all this other peripheral stuff, what does that say to the guy who's about ready to drive over a land mine?

Republican Congressman WAYNE GILCHREST.

John Lukac is just a number? William Salazar is just a number?

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business until 10:45 a.m., with Senators able to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, my understanding is that we are to end morning business and go on to the bill at 10:45. The hour of 10:45 has arrived, and I note that the chairman and ranking member are not here. I believe they are at a briefing. They are expected to be here shortly. But what I would like to do is ask consent that I be allowed to speak in morning business for up to 10 minutes. When the chairman of the committee and the ranking member arrive, I will ask them for permission to continue, if necessary, but if they have other business, I will understand that. I think the priority is the Defense authorization bill.

So I ask unanimous consent to continue in morning business for 10 minutes.

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

INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor today to talk about the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and some frustration—I should say enormous frustration—that I and Senator McCAIN have about what is happening with a piece of legislation that is so very important.

In this country, we have responsibility for health care for two groups of people: Federal prisoners who are incarcerated in prison—we are responsible for their health care. If they get

sick, they go to an infirmary, they go to a hospital, we are responsible. We provide health care for Federal prisoners. We also have trust responsibility for providing health care for American Indians. That is our trust responsibility.

It is interesting and enormously disappointing to me that we spend twice as much per person on health care for Federal prisoners as we do in providing health care, as is our obligation, for American Indians.

I want to talk a little about that because we have written a piece of legislation called the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, which builds on a piece of legislation that was passed some while ago. I want to talk about what American Indians are facing out in the country with respect to health care.

Let me describe it first with respect to a story. This is a very typical story about a member of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, which is called the Three Affiliated Tribes in North Dakota. It is a story about a fellow who had diabetes. By the way, I held a hearing some years ago on that reservation. On that reservation, the rate of diabetes is not double, triple, or quadruple the rate of diabetes elsewhere. At that reservation, at that point, it was 12 times the rate of diabetes that existed elsewhere.

The person I am speaking about on the Three Affiliated Tribes or Fort Berthold Reservation is Laidmen Fox, Sr. He was a Native American who had struggled, as other members of his family had, with diabetes. He had his feet amputated. Later he had his knees amputated. Finally, his entire legs were amputated. He was on dialysis. And, finally, the doctors told him he would have to have his hands amputated. At that point, Mr. Fox said he wanted to be taken off of the dialysis machine and to be taken home to die. He died 2 years ago. He went home to be with family and friends, having lost his feet, his knees, then his legs, and then told he would lose his hands. He died, was taken off dialysis.

Just this last February, his daughter—who was 41 years old, and blind from diabetes, and also on dialysis—chose to have herself taken off the machine and went home to die in a similar manner.

We now have in this country something nobody wants to talk about. We ration health care for American Indians. Yes, there is health care rationing. There is something called contract health services. That means that when American Indians show up at a clinic or a hospital and, through the Indian Health Service, seek treatment for their problems, the only treatment they will get and the only reimbursement they will get for that medical condition is if it means “life or limb,” threatening “life or limb.” Otherwise, in most cases, under the contract health provisions, there is no health care available.

Let me talk about some other examples, if I might.

A member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in my State was suffering from cancer. He went through chemotherapy, and went through chemotherapy again for a number of years through referral from the Indian Health Service to the University of Minnesota. All of a sudden the Indian Health Service said to him: We don't have any more funding. And they refused to pay for any additional treatment, even after he had a number of relapses.

This is not unusual for American Indians to face this sort of thing.

Another American Indian fell as a result of insulin shock at his home. He hit his hip, and hurt his hip badly in the fall. He was taken to a hospital by ambulance, given a shot for the pain and told he was to be released. His father objected because he said: My son can't walk. You can't release him. And the father said: I can't carry him. He can't walk. He must stay here.

The doctor said he could stay in the hospital for one night's observation. The next day, when the pain did not subside, they gave him an x-ray, found out his hip was broken, and referred him to another facility. And because so much time had elapsed since the accident, he had to have a full hip replacement.

Another tribal member was a Vietnam veteran and should have had the services of both the Indian Health Service and the VA available to him. He died after the Indian Health Service denied his request for a referral for him to be seen by a lung specialist at the Mayo Clinic. The IHS told him they had no money to send him to a specialist, and this Vietnam veteran died as a result.

In Montana, an Indian man went to the Indian Health Service clinic seeking assistance for gallstones. He was told it was not a “life or limb” situation, which would get him referred to a health provider off the reservation under the contract health provisions I have just described. Subsequent to that, his duct ruptured and he became infected. He had to have part of his pancreas removed, and now he is on dialysis.

Several months ago, a 24-year-old man at the Spirit Lake Nation went to the IHS clinic complaining he had abdominal pain. He was given some medicine and was sent home because he was not considered a “priority” patient. He ended up in the emergency room in a nearby hospital, off the reservation, and then transported to a larger medical center 125 miles away. His appendix had ruptured. That was 3 months ago, and he is still in the hospital 3 months later, as they attempt to try to control his body temperature and other related matters.

He was determined not to have a “life or limb” emergency medical need, and so his actual condition was overlooked, with the results of several months now of acute care in a hospital.

Mr. President, I have spoken a number of times on the floor of the Senate about a young girl named Avis Little Wind. I brought her picture to the floor of the Senate. I did that with the permission of her relatives. She was 14 years old, and she hung herself. She killed herself 2 years after her sister had killed herself.

I went to the reservation because we have had a cluster of suicides of young teenagers on Indian reservations. I talked to this young girl's teachers, school administrators, people in the mental health area, tribal council folks, to try to understand what is wrong here.

What I discovered is this little 14-year-old girl, named Avis Little Wind, laid in a bed for 90 days in a fetal position. Clearly, something was seriously wrong with this young woman. Yet, it did not send a signal to anybody. Her father killed himself. Her mother was dysfunctional, a substance abuser. This young girl somehow just slipped through the system, and she got up one day out of that bed and took her own life.

Avis Little Wind is one person, but a person whose future was stolen from her because she felt hopeless or helpless. And the fact is, on that Indian reservation—as is the case for most Indian reservations—there is no mental health treatment available. There are not enough people available just for the diagnosis of serious problems. You would think someone who misses 90 days of school at age 14 would send alarm bells all over, but it did not. There is not enough money in the Indian Health System to deal with it.

Senator McCAIN and I have passed some legislation recently dealing with the issue of Indian teen suicide and trying to begin to address that issue. But there is a serious lack of attention to the health care needs of Native Americans and, yes, teenagers like Avis Little Wind and the tragedy that resulted in her death.

It is not uncommon to see 75 people stand in line waiting to have a prescription filled. It is not uncommon for them to stand in line only to find out they can't get the prescription filled because the medicine is not available there.

I have been to a health care facility where one dentist is working in a small trailer house serving 5,000 people. Is that fair? Is that the right thing to do? We can do better than that as a country. Yet, somehow, this issue of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act is not a priority. The administration has dragged its feet, and dragged its feet for months and months. Senator McCAIN and I have just written the administration a letter saying: How about some help here? How about some cooperation? Let's find a way to solve this and fix it.

While we talk and while we dither and while the administration decides to delay, we have people losing their lives, and we have people going to

health care facilities with very serious problems being told: We don't have the money to refer you.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute.

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

Mr. DORGAN. The tribal chairman for the Three Affiliated Tribes in North Dakota says: Everybody up there on the reservation understands, don't get sick after June. Just don't get sick after June because the money has run out on contract health services. If you get sick after June, there is no money. They are not going to send you to a hospital. Or if you go to the hospital, the hospital will charge back to you because they won't get the money from the Indian Health Service. It will ruin your credit, and you will have to file for bankruptcy. But don't get sick after June because the money won't be there.

What kind of message is that to the American people, especially the most vulnerable in our society? These reservations are where there is substantial poverty, great difficulty.

I have not mentioned methamphetamine. We have had hearings about that. It is unbelievable what is happening with respect to these reservations and health care, and yet somehow there is no urgency here.

Senator MCCAIN and I are asking for a little cooperation from the administration and some cooperation here in the Senate to move this bill.

We had a witness just the other day at a hearing about methamphetamine on reservations. Methamphetamine is a scourge all across this country.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

Mr. DORGAN. One of the witnesses at that hearing on methamphetamine on reservations, who is the chairperson of an Indian tribe, lives on a rural reservation with 13,000 Native Americans who live on that reservation. She told us that one-half of the babies who have been born to tribal members on that reservation—one-half of the babies—have tested positive for alcohol or drugs, including methamphetamine. Think of that.

I was in a hospital one day when they showed me a young baby that was born with a .12 blood alcohol content lying in the nursery. This baby was born with a .12 blood alcohol content, and the mother was down the hall and refused to see the baby because she did not want the baby. She checked into the hospital dead drunk.

The fact is, we have serious problems with methamphetamine and substance abuse and teenage suicide, and all of these issues, and we have a health care system on Indian reservations that is a rationing system. When the chairman of the tribe in my State says, "All the Indians know: don't get sick after June because the money is not there under contract health to help you," that is a serious problem.

All I am asking for and all Senator MCCAIN is asking for is a little help and a little cooperation from the administration and, yes, from our colleagues to move this legislation called the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. It is the right thing for this country to do. Mr. President, I see the chairman of the committee is here, and I will, at this point, yield the floor.

I do have an amendment I wish to offer on the Defense authorization bill today, and I am available to do that when it is convenient. But the chairman and ranking Member are here, so at this point I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I was much taken by the remarks of the Senator from North Dakota. I have great respect for the Senator from North Dakota. I tell you, you do a lot of homework. You do a lot of independent work. And while I do not have the expertise with regard to the reservations that you have, any of us listening to your comments would immediately come to the conclusion that we better step in to help. And I say to the Senator, you can count on me when the time comes. I think that matter should be addressed as quickly as we can by the Senate.

I thank the Senator.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2766, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2766) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McCain amendment No. 4241, to name the Act after John Warner, a Senator from Virginia.

Nelson (FL)/Menendez amendment No. 4265, to express the sense of Congress that the Government of Iraq should not grant amnesty to persons known to have attacked, killed, or wounded members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

McConnell amendment No. 4272, to commend the Iraqi Government for affirming its positions of no amnesty for terrorists who have attacked U.S. forces.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I say to my distinguished ranking member, I think at this time it would be appropriate if the Senator wishes to bring up his amendment.

We are in business, I say to my colleagues wherever they are, for purposes of amendments. The Senator from Michigan and I will be here for some period of time in hopes of processing amendments.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from North Dakota. He covered such a wide range of issues with such depth and integrity that is really quite extraordinary. We are ready for his amendment. I think he is prepared to proceed with the amendment. We look forward to hearing from him on that matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 4292

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendments are set aside.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. DORGAN], for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. HARKIN, proposes an amendment numbered 4292.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, first of all, I thank the Senator from Virginia for his kind comments. He did not say he welcomed my amendment because he probably knows that this amendment is one which we have dealt with before. But I feel so strongly the need to continue to offer the amendment, if only by voice vote, which says what is going on I think is dreadfully wrong and needs to be corrected. I know the Senator from Virginia and the Senator from Michigan are legislators with goodwill and good skills. I hope they will join with me as I once again describe the issues of contracting that exist because we are spending so much money in such a hurry that there is waste, fraud, and abuse which simply cannot be addressed in the regular order.

I believe this amendment is once again a proposal whereby there was a Truman-type committee, the type that existed when Harry Truman served in the Senate, a Democratic Senate then, with a Democrat in the White House. Harry Truman, I am sure, caused some real angst at the White House by saying: I think there needs to be a special bipartisan committee established to take a look at waste, fraud, and abuse in military contracting. He traveled all across this country to military installations to meet with contractors. His committee unearthed a substantial amount of waste.

I offer it again, as I have offered it on previous occasions. I understand I have not been successful, but I offer it again only because I don't think the problem has abated. I think the problem still exists.