

As a girl, she enjoyed singing and had the talent to attend Boston's New England Conservatory of Music to train as a classical singer. She would later lend her gift to the civil rights cause, singing at over 30 Freedom Concerts to raise money for the movement.

It was while in Boston, in February, 1952, that Coretta first met a 23-year-old Martin Luther King, who was pursuing his doctorate in theology at Boston University. As a lonely southerner in a northern town, he asked a mutual friend if she knew any nice young ladies he could meet. She mentioned the name Coretta Scott, and described her as "pretty and intelligent."

The young King persuaded the friend to give him Ms. Scott's number and asked if she'd put in a good word for him. Soon, he called for a date. Displaying a bit of verbal flair, he said, "You know, every Napoleon has his Waterloo. I'm like Napoleon at Waterloo before your charms."

"Why, that's absurd. You haven't seen me yet," Coretta replied.

Undeterred, he finally convinced her to let me take her out for lunch between classes. "I have a green Chevy that usually takes 10 minutes to make the trip from Boston University," he told her. "But tomorrow, I'll do it in 7."

That was 1952. They were married in 1953.

Ms. King once said, "I was married to the man whom I loved, but I was also married to the movement." Her entire life was intertwined with the fight to stamp out the injustices of racism and inequality.

After her husband's life was tragically cut short, Ms. King persevered, raising four young children on her own. It must have been a lonely struggle . . . but her dignity and grace inspired a nation.

A few days ago, Ms. King became the first African-American to lie in honor in the Georgia State Capitol rotunda. Today she will be laid to rest alongside her husband, at the King Center in Atlanta, and for all time they will be reunited.

Martin Luther King once said of his wife, "I think on many points, she educated me." Now, at the end of her celebrated life, many of us feel the same way. Dr. and Mrs. King helped educate America by forcing it to look itself in the mirror, face up to its failings, and recommit itself to its founding ideals.

So today, Coretta Scott King will be laid to rest in her beloved Georgia, next to the husband she lost 38 years ago. As the whole Nation reflects today on her incalculable contributions to human progress, I am reminded of Dr. King's own simple wish:

I don't know how long I'll live, and I'm not concerned about that—but I hope I can live so well that the preacher can get up and say, "He was faithful." That's all, that's enough. That's the sermon I'd like to hear: "Well done my good and faithful servant."

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to salute the life and legacy of Coretta

Scott King. She earned a place not just in our history but in our hearts. She was a true trailblazer for women, for the African-American community. She was an inspiration for all Americans. I feel privileged to have known Mrs. King throughout much of my political career. Her family is in my thoughts and prayers.

Mrs. King's courage and faith were remarkable. She insisted that she had her own voice in the civil rights movement at a time when women were often not recognized for their own talents and merit. Not only was she resolute, but she was feisty—someone after my own heart.

Mrs. King's life story was remarkable—even before she met Dr. King. She was born into rural poverty in Alabama and grew up in a two-room house that her father built. She came from a hard-working family. Her father hauled timber, owned a country store, and worked as a barber. Her mother drove a schoolbus. Growing up in the segregated South, Coretta Scott King saw the injustices of racial discrimination. Yet she saw the value in working hard and fighting for her dreams. She attended college and the New England Conservatory, where she trained as a classical musician.

It was while studying music in Boston that she met Martin Luther King, Jr. From the beginning of their marriage, Coretta Scott King maintained her own identity and voice. She was Dr. King's true partner marching by his side and speaking out on her own. At the same time, she was a mother, raising four children. The entire family lived with threats and intimidation.

We all remember those tragic days after the assassination of Martin Luther King. She comforted a nation that was torn apart. She is the reason we have a national holiday that honors Dr. King.

She fought for equality before the law, for economic justice, and for lifting people out of poverty. Her vision was put to action when she founded the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change and saw to it that the center became deeply involved with the issues that she believed breed violence—hunger, unemployment, voting right, and racism.

Coretta Scott King took her message of nonviolence to every corner of this country and to almost every corner of the world. She led missions to Africa, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. She was the first woman to give a class-day address at Harvard and the first woman to preach at the statutory service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England.

Coretta Scott King will be remembered throughout American history for her grace, strength, and belief that all people should be treated with dignity and equality. We must honor her legacy not just with words but with actions. We must recommit ourselves to the principles she stood for—opportunity, equality, and empowerment.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the life and contributions of an American civil rights icon, Mrs. Coretta Scott King.

Many people know Mrs. King as the wife of one of America's greatest citizens, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King's enduring legacy of nonviolence and his quest for racial equality permanently altered the social fabric of America. Mrs. King will always be remembered as a part of Dr. King's life and legacy that are rightfully celebrated across our great land and throughout the world. However, Dr. King's towering accomplishments should not obscure the fact that Mrs. King held her own historic place in our Nation's struggle for equal opportunity.

I am reminded of the time some 20 years ago when Mrs. King came to see me when I was Governor of Tennessee. We were working to establish a holiday in honor of her late husband. It was harder work than it should have been, and I am reminded of how far we have come even since that time.

Mrs. King was the founding president of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change which continued to promote the noble philosophies of Dr. King. In addition to promoting the memory of her husband and his great work, Mrs. King created her own legacy as she traveled throughout America and across the globe to champion racial equality, women's rights, religious freedom, health care, and education.

We all know that Mrs. King was born in a time when America was very different than it is today. Little Black boys and girls could not go to school with little White boys and girls. *Plessy v. Ferguson* had not yet been overruled, so "separate but equal" was the law of the land. Lynchings were common and in many places the Ku Klux Klan terrorized Black communities, often operating with near impunity. As we look back on the amazing progress we have made since then, we remember those who were responsible for helping America turn away from the sins of injustice and inequality.

As a wife, a mother, and a leader of the civil rights movement, Mrs. King showed strength and dignity. With quiet determination, she preserved her husband's legacy and created her own place in the history of our Nation's struggle for equal opportunity.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

FAIRNESS IN ASBESTOS INJURY RESOLUTION ACT OF 2005—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 852, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 852, a bill to create a fair and efficient system to resolve claims of victims for bodily injury caused by asbestos exposure, and for other purposes.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, in addressing the motion to proceed where we are scheduled to have a vote at 6 o'clock this evening, the question is whether the problem of asbestos, causing thousands of people to have deadly diseases and forcing many companies into bankruptcy and resulting in a situation where people with the deadly diseases have no one to claim against, the issue is whether we have a problem which is worthy of the attention of the Senate. That is an easy question to answer; it is yes. That has been authenticated by the Supreme Court of the United States on several occasions where the Court has said the matter should be addressed by the Congress. That came up in a context where there were class action suits attempting to find the modality for dealing with the issue, and the Federal courts—ultimately, the Supreme Court—said class actions were not appropriate and it was a matter for the Congress of the United States.

This problem has been intractable. It has been studied. There have been proposals for more than three decades. I first saw this issue soon after I came to the Senate after the 1980 election when Senator Gary Hart came to see me as a junior member of the Judiciary Committee on behalf of his constituent, Johns Manville. We have wrestled with this problem for decades.

Finally, on an idea conceived by Senator HATCH to have a trust fund, the bill was reported out of the Judiciary Committee in July of 2003. But the bill had many problems. I then solicited the assistance of Federal Judge Edward Becker, a senior judge who had been the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and in August of 2003, Judge Becker convened a meeting in his chambers in Philadelphia attended by stakeholders. That is the name we gave to the various groups which had key interests in the asbestos bill. One stakeholder was the AFL-CIO, representing labor; another stakeholder was the manufacturers; another, the insurers; another, the trial lawyers. Even though the trial lawyers have been opposed to the bill because it has a major impact on their financial status—and I understand that—we included the trial lawyers in every step of the proceeding, trying to accommodate as many interests as we could. Even though someone was going to be opposed to the bill, we wanted to consider what they had to say. We wanted to produce a bill which was as good as we could possibly produce.

Following those initial meetings in August of 2003 in Judge Becker's chambers, there have been meetings in my conference room—totaling 36—attended by varying groups, from 20 to as many as 60, pouring out into the boundaries

of the office from the conference room. What we have done has been to seek to accommodate every issue which has come up. We are still talking to Senators and still talking to companies and interested parties to find answers to their problems.

One of the major issues has been the impact on small companies. That has been addressed by a number of Senators. Senator KYL has taken the lead, and a proposal has been worked out to cap the contribution by smaller companies which have gross revenues below a certain figure. In addition, there is a fund of some \$300 million annually for the administrator to take care of hardship cases so that no one, for example, should be driven into bankruptcy by what they have to pay. We have taken that into account.

The figure of \$140 billion was worked out by Senator FRIST and Senator Daschle about a year and a half ago. It is a figure that grows from that originally put into the trust fund to that figure where CBO has given us the assurance that the range of cost will be somewhere between \$120 billion and \$135 billion. Under one contingency, it could go to \$150 billion, but that is unlikely.

We have within the structure of the bill a provision that the administrator can make a reevaluation, going through certain preconditions, so that if it looks as if we are going to exceed \$140 billion, we can make modifications in the medical standards and criteria to stay within the \$140 billion.

One factor is emphatically plain, and that is that there is no obligation by the Federal Government to spend a dime. There were three amendments directed during the committee process to make sure of that.

There are possible technical points of order which may be raised, and we are in the process of trying to restructure the bill to eliminate them. At this point, I am not sure whether we can, but we are trying to do that, and we may be successful.

But if a point of order is raised on the merits, it ought to be examined by Senators because there is no impact on the Federal budget. Technically, the expenditures are made by the Federal Government because the funds go through the Department of Labor, but they are only a conduit. There is no Federal money. So if you want to use 60 votes to defeat the bill, the point of order may be available, as I say, or may not be. But substantively there is nothing to the point of order because this bill does not have any impact on the Federal budget because there is no Federal money. The Department of Labor is just, plain and simple, a conduit.

Similarly, if you want to defeat the bill on an obstructionist tactic, which is what is being undertaken now on a filibuster on the motion to proceed, the 60 votes can be used. Senator REID was on the floor yesterday, and we had a disagreement. You might call it a dis-

agreement. But the one thing that he did talk about involved the problems of people suffering from mesothelioma and other asbestos problems. So there is no doubt that the leader of the opposition, obstructionist No. 1, the Senator from Nevada, concedes the problem, concedes that we have a major problem. Now, that ought to be sufficient to proceed to see if we can solve the problem. Occasionally around here we ought to deal with a pending matter, whether it is a point of order or a motion to proceed, on the merits. What is involved in a motion to proceed is a decision by the Senate that we ought to consider legislation on this issue. If somebody has amendments, we are open. We have accepted more than 70 amendments in the committee. If somebody has a problem with constituents, I invite them to come to see me, my staff, or Senator LEAHY.

We have bipartisan support for this bill. Senator LEAHY, Senator KOHL, and Senator FEINSTEIN voted the bill out of committee. We have other support among Democrats. And I am talking to Senators on an individual basis and have visited with many of them in their offices and am available to do more.

But the issue on a motion to proceed is whether you have problem, which we certainly do, and whether legislation ought to be considered. And if somebody has amendments, if somebody has a constituent who thinks the constituent company is being asked to pay more than a fair share which is jeopardizing the company, come to us. We have been considering individual cases, and we have been solving them in many instances. We are open for business.

The distinguished Senator from Montana is going to address a problem in Libby, MT, where they have had environmental problems. Asbestos was used in a reckless, disgraceful, criminal manner by W.R. Grace & Company, and we are working to accommodate Libby, MT. There may be more that we can do for that issue. There are other so-called hot spots around the country, and we are taking them up.

There have been issues raised about our medical criteria. We have studies by the Institute of Medicine. If you have a problem, we want to solve it. We want this bill to go forward.

But on the narrow issue we are voting on at 6 o'clock this evening, any Senator who votes not to proceed is saying to his constituents, is saying to people suffering from mesothelioma, people suffering from asbestos exposure—anybody who votes no on the motion to proceed is saying there is no problem. Well, I think that is a pretty tough vote to explain, a pretty tough vote to explain that there is no problem, and it ought not to be considered by the Senate.

Yesterday, in the discussions—you might call them that—with Senator REID, I said this was certainly the most complex bill I have seen in the time I

have been in the Senate. And I think it is fair and accurate to say it is the most complex piece of legislation ever considered by a legislative body. I know that is a pretty grandiose statement, and I do not know all the legislation considered by legislative bodies, but I think it is accurate.

I challenge anybody to bring to my attention, to the attention of the Senate, any legislative proposal which has ever been undertaken and analyzed that is more complicated than this one, that has received more attention than we had in 36 meetings in my conference room, in dozens—dozens—literally hundreds of meetings involving Judge Becker and myself and Senators.

Enormous work has been done by Senator LEAHY. I owe him a debt of gratitude for his cooperation and his leadership. Senator FEINSTEIN has had innovative proposals on startup. As I say, Senator LEAHY, Senator FEINSTEIN, and Senator KOHL are cosponsors.

So if anybody has an issue, I invite them to come forward. But I think it is an unconscionable vote to vote no on the motion to proceed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). Who yields time?

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, today I rise on this subject and first of all I want to congratulate—maybe that is not the word—the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for tackling this important problem. I can't think of a time or a piece of legislation that has been so complicated and so important to my State of Montana. So I want to tell the chairman of the Judiciary Committee that the statement he made is right on target. Some of us that have been impacted by asbestos and asbestos-related diseases take this very seriously. We need to vote to proceed.

I want to tell you why I am involved in this and there are a couple of other issues that are also burning in our office right now that need my personal attention. When you go to Libby, MT, it is a little town in northwest Montana on the Kootenai River, and the W.R. Grace Company had a mine up there. And if you are not torn on this issue, both sides of it, the statement of Eva Thomson from up there I will just read her statement. That is why I am giving my statement with regard to Libby, because it is an isolated case.

Eva Thomson said:

I have two sons, both them and I have asbestos-related disease. But they are not eligible by the standards in the existing bill as it is today. If the bill cannot be done right to protect us victims, please don't pass it at all. We place 225 crosses in the cemetery this Memorial Day in remembrance of asbestos victims. There are more than 20 new crosses this year. We need help, real help, and she thanks me.

Yet I have another one from Charlotte Wade, who says:

Please don't forget us. I watched my Dad Jack die in 2002 and my mother Margaret die and suffocate from asbestos in 2004. I'm next.

I've been on oxygen since the year 2000. My three grown children, no doubt, will follow.

Jim Davidson, long time resident of Libby, MT. He has been diagnosed with mesothelioma:

Because of the short time I have left, I'm vitally interested in seeing that a compromise is reached to allow passage of some type of relief to me and all others affected by asbestos and worse. As you know, there's no other avenue left to those of us in Libby, Montana, because of the bankruptcy of W.R. Grace. So I urge to you work for some type of help for us.

Those are just three of hundreds in Libby, MT, that makes it a special place and harbors a special place in this piece of legislation. So I rise today to ask the Members of the Senate to remember the plight of the residents of this small town as this debate over the asbestos bill continues. I know a lot of folks have taken issue with the assertion that the Libby residents deserve special consideration. Well, I am here today to reiterate why this consideration is needed.

The asbestos contamination in Libby is as widespread as any area in the country. Though a sparsely populated town, the residents of that city have been profoundly affected by this spread of asbestos-related diseases. The asbestos exposure in Libby is unlike any other place in the United States. While I know my colleagues lament that they have similar situations in their own States, I ask them to simply listen.

The scope of asbestos exposure in Libby, MT, may never be known, but let me assure, you, Mr. President, that it is significant.

When Governor Martz of Montana executed the so-called silver bullet under CERCLA, she triggered a fast track listing of Libby on the National Priorities List. There has only been one other time when the silver bullet has been triggered due to asbestos. But that case in Arizona was limited to 17 square acres, not the contamination of an entire town. And unlike the case in Globe, AZ, the asbestos in Libby, MT, can't simply be covered in a filter fabric and soil and rock, fenced to keep everyone out. Unfortunately we can't control the exposure in that way. And the people in Montana—in Libby—don't want that.

So I challenge anyone—anyone—from any State to identify a town anywhere else in the country that has these kind of situations. I just want to show you right behind me is the vermiculite mine that was opened in 1924. By the 1950, cases of previously diagnosed as tuberculosis were instead cases of asbestos exposure. The town of Libby is located in a valley where the W.R. Grace processed ore from the contaminated mine, more than a half million pounds of asbestos a day was processed.

The Libby case is not an isolated case to the exposure within the confines of a factory. Instead, asbestos was everywhere. Community exposure was rampant. Contaminated properties including everything from the Libby community boat dock to the high

school—the high school track. I want to put up this next picture. This is important. This is more than just a family hugging a mine worker after coming home and complaining of exposure. This is about asbestos exposure so significant that asbestos fibers fell like snow from the sky.

This is not very far from the mine. It is not very far from their loading and processing areas. This is the baseball field in Libby, MT. Children played on piles of vermiculite and all around town finding humor in taking a match to a fiber which would ignite.

Houses all over town were insulated with asbestos-contaminated in insulation. So my point is this morning, I invite anybody to visit this small town in northwest Montana, though I doubt my colleagues will take me up on the offer. In the summer, maybe when fishing is pretty good I could probably lure some of you out there but this is extremely important that other Senators understand the vast difference between this town of Montana and various processing plants that were located around the country. They were in isolated and enclosed areas.

This was free to the wind, to the winds of the vermiculite and one cannot just sit here and try to draw a mental picture of the impact that it had.

It is extremely important that Senators during this debate understand this is a special place, a special circumstance, and special people who still live there. I want to thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Senator SPECTER has done marvelous work on this. And to tackle this issue, as big as it is, and though we may have some disagreements on the size of the trust fund, who pays into the trust fund, how much they pay, the formulas, all of this, but I am sort of on the other side of this. Mine is the protection of people who have seriously been impacted by this thing we call asbestos since 1924.

Walk through the cemeteries and see those families, and to have people come to your town hall meeting short of breath, being suffocated by this disease, or any disease related to asbestos.

I only hope we can continue to work together not only to safeguard these Libby provisions, but to improve them as well.

And again I want to thank the chairman. He is a man of great bravery to take this issue on. And it is troubling. It is complex. But I will tell you, it is important.

And I thank the chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Montana for those important comments. I commend him for his diligence in looking after his constituents with special reference to what has gone on in Libby, MT. He has outlined the problem, walking through the cemeteries, seeing the people who have been smitten since the 1920s. He underscores and

emphasizes, in graphic and forceful terms, the problem. I hear him when he talks about Libby, MT. We have been addressing it with a special provision. We will do more if we possibly can. I have talked to Senator BURNS off the floor on many occasions and heard the serious problems the people of Montana face in Libby. And I have heard the problem that these hotspots create around the country. We will do everything we can. I compliment the Senator from Montana for his thoughtful statement and thank him for his support on the motion to proceed.

Again, anybody who has listened to Senator BURNS, who doesn't think we ought to proceed and take up this problem, simply has his or her head in the sand. It would be unconscionable to vote against the motion to proceed.

Senator SANTORUM was in the Chamber a few moments ago. He proposes to speak on the Steelers' great victory. I am due at the swearing in of the Ambassador to Finland so I will have to leave the floor in a few moments.

(The remarks of Mr. SPECTER and Mr. SANTORUM are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. SPECTER. In the absence of any other Senator in the Chamber, let me say I again invite any Senator or any constituent who has a problem with this bill to come see me. I know Senator LEAHY feels the same way. With all the outstanding work he has done, and our staffs, we want to do what we can to answer all of the problems. As we get ready for the vote on the motion to proceed this afternoon, we have certainly outlined the seriousness of the issue.

Since I spoke earlier, I have been reviewing the testimony or the argument yesterday of Senator DURBIN who spoke about the problem. No doubt there is a problem that has to be addressed. That is the issue on the motion to proceed. Senator DURBIN made a comment that he didn't know how the \$140 billion was arrived at. It was arrived at by his leader, then-Senator Daschle, in collaboration with Senator FRIST. He said he hadn't been able to find out where the money is coming from. He could if he would make an inquiry. We had to subpoena the records, but there is transparency. We know where the money is coming from. I haven't had a chance to read his statement in full, but I will no doubt have more to say about it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have been asked by representatives of leadership to ask unanimous consent that the time be charged equally to both sides. I am reluctant to make that re-

quest in the absence of any Senators representing the Democrats so I will not make it, but I would ask—I have heard from the leader of the Democrats saying it is OK. So I ask unanimous consent that the time under the quorum call be charged equally to both sides.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WAR ON TERROR: PROGRESS AND OUTLOOK

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, as the U.S. Senate gets started for the second legislative session of the 109th Congress, I would like to take this opportunity and concentrate our attention on the milestones achieved in the global war on terror and take a look at the road ahead.

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, we and many others in the international community have been united in our effort to defeat terrorism wherever it has taken hold in the world. September 11 proved without a doubt that a network of extremists preaching hate and oppression were determined to cause our Nation great harm. It is clear these extremists were and continue to be committed to nothing less than the total destruction of our Nation and our way of life. This network of terrorism is embedded in many countries. It has penetrated hard working communities, valued institutions of education, and sacred places of worship.

As in any previous world conflicts, the global war on terror cannot be successfully prosecuted without extensive cooperation of the members of the international community. Given the potential catastrophic consequences of terrorist attacks, President Bush worked with our international partners and allies to identify terrorist networks, reduce their ability to communicate and coordinate their plans, and disrupt attacks before they occur.

With America in the lead, a full scale international campaign began in 2001. A total of 136 countries, including members of the European Union, Russia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Australia, countries of Asia and Africa provided and, in many instances, still continue to provide a range of intelligence and/or military assistance. As a result of this unprecedented multilateral cooperation, we have been able to kill or capture more than one half of the known al Qaida leaders and prevent possible terrorist attacks both in the U.S. and abroad.

Despite the many difficulties in this war, our Nation has not retreated nor walked away in the face of adversity. We sought out terrorists, cut off their funding, and disrupted their plans. Under the steadfast leadership of President Bush our country has taken the battle to the enemy and achieved significant successes.

In October 2001, the coalition forces launched a military campaign against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The regime was successfully removed from power and all known al Qaida training camps were destroyed.

With the help from the international community, the people of Afghanistan, many for the first time in the history of their nation, tasted the initial seeds of freedom. Let me pause here for a second. For the first time in history millions of people in Afghanistan are now able to express their opinions without a fear of retribution or punishment.

After several national elections, the people of Afghanistan adopted a new constitution, elected a president and held successful parliamentary elections. Efforts to revitalize Afghanistan's economy and education system have already produced significant results. Agricultural production, which is a way of life for 70 percent of Afghanistan's people, has nearly doubled. New roads are being built. Teachers are being trained and an increasing number of people, including women, have access to education.

Afghanistan was devastated by decades of war and neglect and is now being turned into a young democracy that will be an example to others in the troubled region.

A year after September 11, the President challenged the United Nations to confront another protector of terror: Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein failed to comply with more than a dozen of United Nations Security Council resolutions and he gave every appearance of continuing to hide large stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction.

Based on Saddam's reported weapons of mass destruction and support for terrorism, Iraq represented a dangerous nexus that the international community could no longer ignore. President Bush bravely made the decision to liberate Iraq from the most brutal regime in the country's history and plant the seeds of freedom in the land that had only known decades of tyranny and oppression.

It is clear today that the terrorists view Iraq as the major battleground against the coalition forces, against the rule of law, and against peace and prosperity. During the last 2 years they have tried to derail the democratic process and threatened to kill those participating in it. Undeterred, the majority of the Iraqi people have bravely ignored this threat and joined the emerging Iraqi political process.

By the millions, Iraqis lined up to choose a transitional government that