

place in our Nation's history on the civil rights struggle that has gone on in this country.

Also, I wish to say that Congressman VIC SNYDER was able to get a commemorative coin for Little Rock Central and the Little Rock Nine. I certainly helped him do that, along with Senator LINCOLN. We all worked hard on that, but Congressman SNYDER took the lead role.

This Friday night at Little Rock Central High School in Quigley Stadium, the Little Rock Central High Tigers will play the Pine Bluff Zebras. Once again, we find Little Rock Central is ranked in the top 10 in the Arkansas top 10 football rankings. But that stadium played a role in the Central High crisis. It is a role that is often forgotten because we focus on the Little Rock Nine, and certainly we should.

We focus on the turbulence in trying to integrate the school, and certainly we should. But also there were many other happenings at Little Rock Central that year. One of them was Little Rock Central High School just so happened to have what Sports Illustrated and other sports magazines and publications have called one of the alltime greatest high school football teams. That week Central High won its 23rd game in a row, against a team from Louisiana. The week before they beat a team from Texas. That same week, when the 101st Airborne showed up to restore order and keep the peace around the campus of Little Rock High School, the 101st Airborne set up their equipment on the Tigers' practice field.

Well, that was a huge no-no in the mind of Coach Wilson Matthews. He went out there and he barked orders to the 101st Airborne like they were his own football team. They hopped to and they got off the practice field. That Friday night, when the stands were full and the Tigers took the field, they looked up and there was the 101st Airborne cheering for the Central High School Tigers.

That story is captured in a great story in Sports Illustrated from this past year's April 9 publication. It captures the humanity and the impact that crisis had on people, not just that day or that year but for a lifetime.

The Little Rock Central High School story is complicated in some ways. It is about the best and the worst in American history. In some ways, it is about a city that is struggling to try, in postwar America, to work through many racial issues. It is a story that is not always successful. It is not always easy. But it is a story that in the end is a great story and is one that needs to be told.

Let me talk for a couple more minutes about the events of that day and why Little Rock Central is so important to the history of this country. First, we focus on the Little Rock Nine, and understandably these nine young black children had to pay a huge price; it took a lot of courage to do

what they did. But it is more than them.

We had a Southern city that, by most standards, was considered to be a moderate Southern city when it came to race. The Little Rock School Board took the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision literally, and they believed they needed to integrate the Little Rock School System with all deliberate speed, as the Supreme Court said.

The quickest they could figure out to do it was in the fall of 1957. Of course, when that happened, they entered into this vortex of emotions, this vortex where you see a nation being torn apart by race and by many policies, not just in the South. We talk about the South, but certainly there is racism all over this country, and this country was in a struggle for civil rights.

In fact, it goes back to the founding documents of our democracy and our Declaration of Independence. It says all men are created equal. That is what the desegregation, the integration movement was about in this country: Are all men created equal or are there going to be two sets of everything for people in this country?

The Supreme Court did what it did. The local school board did what it did. The Governor in our State, to his everlasting shame, did not support what the school board did and actually energized people to oppose what the school board had done. The President had to call in the 101st Airborne to try to stop what was going on at Little Rock Central. Here is a photo of the famous Little Rock Nine. They are going to be honored all week in Little Rock. Again, they showed tremendous courage as they went through this process. Here we see a photo of Little Rock Central High with the 101st Airborne escorting students into the building. It is hard to imagine today; we have made such progress. I will be the first to say we are not there yet when it comes to race, but we have made so much progress.

Little Rock Central High School was a turning point. It didn't mean the struggle was over. In a lot of ways, it meant the struggle was beginning. But we have made a lot of progress. We have a lot to be proud of. Not everything that happened in 1957 is something Arkansas is proud of. But nonetheless, it was a huge turning point in making this country better.

I close talking about Little Rock Central High School today. Here is a photo of it today. The school looks identical to the way it looked in 1957. The architects of this country have called it one of the most beautiful high schools in America. It is now also one of the most successful high schools in America.

I pulled something off a history Web site. It says:

Central offers students an international studies magnet program and an extensive curriculum including more than 30 Advanced Placement . . . courses. Central consistently has more National Merit Semifinalists than

any other school in the state (19 in 2006-07 alone), claims a large percentage of the state's National Achievement Semifinalists (approximately 20% of Arkansas' total between 1994 and 2004) and has produced 15 Presidential Scholars since the program's inception in 1964.

Part of the story of Little Rock Central must include what has happened since September 25, 1957. Part of the story of Little Rock Central is a story about rebuilding, about integrating, about coming back, and about success.

I was very honored to have an opportunity to go to Little Rock Central High School, as did the husband of the senior Senator from the State of Arkansas. It has produced many strong leaders in the State. One of those was a dear friend of mine, Roosevelt Thompson, who passed away tragically when he was in college. But the story of Little Rock Central is a story that touches all of us. It is a very important part of our State's history and our national history.

We are honored that all nine of the Little Rock Nine are still living today and will be in Little Rock this week to commemorate some very difficult but very important events for this country.

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. COBURN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEBT LIMIT

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I want to spend a few minutes talking about something that will come up in the next week or 10 days. That is an extension and expansion of the debt limit. An attempt will be made to do this by unanimous consent. That is wrong. Every Member of the Senate ought to be on record on whether we ought to expand again the amount of borrowing we are going to place on the backs of our children and grandchildren. The current statutory debt limit is \$8.965 trillion. It was last raised March 20, 2006. This Senator voted against that. We have been on notice since that time that we needed to make the effort to rein in wasteful Washington spending so that we do not have to, in fact, borrow more money against our children's future. Only 10 years ago it was \$5.95 billion. We have increased the debt in the last 10 years by 50 percent.

What does that mean? Individually, that means \$30,000 for every man, woman, and child. But the important aspect is not just what we owe now but what the unfunded liabilities are for the future which are in excess of \$70 trillion. What does that mean if you are born today? That means if you are born today, you will be inheriting at the moment of your birth liabilities of

over \$400,000. How in the world can our children have an education, a great job, own a home, and give their children the things we have benefited from by being born owing \$400,000?

It is time for things to come to a stop or to markedly change. This last week the Senate once again failed to make tough decisions about priorities. We chose to fund pork projects instead of repairing bridges. We said peace gardens, bike paths, and baseball stadiums are more important than critical infrastructure. Yesterday a new poll was released. Rightly so, it reflected less than 11 percent of Americans have confidence in this body. It is no wonder. Our priorities are wrong.

Congress for years has raided the Social Security and Medicare trust funds to hide the true size of the annual budget deficit. This practice has undermined the solvency of the programs and threatens both the retirement security of today's workers and the economic opportunities and future of our children and grandchildren. It is irresponsible to simply raise the debt limit while at the same time creating or expanding Federal programs that will result in additional borrowing from Social Security trust funds and not accepting the responsibility to make hard choices about what are our priorities. Congress has repeatedly demonstrated that it is unwilling to prioritize spending. This year multiple times the Senate has rejected amendments to cut spending while authorizing billions and billions of dollars in new spending. The Senate this year twice has rejected amendments stating that Congress has a moral obligation to offset the cost of new Government spending by getting rid of the waste, fraud, abuse, and duplication in current Federal programs.

American families don't have the luxury Congress has. They can't get a new loan or new credit cards after they have maxed out their capability to borrow. Yet instead, every day in this body we do essentially that.

The moral question is, why should we be proud of stealing from our children? There isn't a greater moral question before this country today than whether we are going to steal opportunity and freedom from the next generation.

I am putting the Senate on notice that I will not agree to a UC on the debt limit extension without a debate and full vote by each Member of this body on that debt limit and a recommitment to do what is right for the future.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I will speak in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is recognized.

DREAM ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise today to strongly oppose the Durbin amendment to the Defense appropriations bill. That amendment would pass the so-called DREAM Act into law.

In standing up in opposition, let me suggest this should not be called the DREAM Act. It should be called the "Amnesty Reality Act" because this is yet another attempt, another version of amnesty for a significant number of illegal aliens.

Let me say at the outset I am not standing here to criticize or to lambaste the individuals involved, undoubtedly, who came to this country with their parents to try to find a better life because of very difficult conditions in Mexico or otherwise.

The point of my opposition is not directed at them. It is directed at what is very bad and destructive policy in terms of U.S. immigration policy, repeating the mistakes of the past, making a very real problem worse and not better through a significant amnesty program.

Why is this an amnesty? Well, purely and simply, this so-called DREAM Act, which I think should be called the "Amnesty Reality Act," embodied in this Durbin amendment to the Defense appropriations bill would provide a pathway to citizenship to who knows how many folks who entered this country, and remain in this country, illegally. Specifically, it targets folks who came into this country illegally as minors, presumably with their families, with their parents. It also gives them benefits in this country that most U.S. citizens do not enjoy, specifically, instate college tuition that U.S. citizens outside that State do not enjoy.

This is very frustrating to me. Just a few months ago, we had a major debate on the floor of this body about immigration policy. A large so-called comprehensive immigration bill was on the floor of the Senate. It received a lot of attention and a lot of focus. That was a good thing because the American people got engaged; they focused on what was going on. They understood what was being proposed, and they wrote and e-mailed and called us in record numbers.

I do not think anyone can deny the message came through loudly and clearly. The message was: We do not support an amnesty program because that will make the problem far worse and not better. The second part of the message was: Let's start with real enforcement. Let's finally get serious with border security, workplace security, to begin to address this very real illegal immigration problem in this country.

That message came through in such volume that it literally shut down the

Senate phone system on the morning of that pivotal vote which defeated that so-called comprehensive immigration bill proposed by Senator KENNEDY and Senator DURBIN, the author of this DREAM Act amendment, and others.

What is so frustrating to me is that very loud, very clear message seems to have fallen on deaf ears in terms of some Members of this body. Unfortunately, this DREAM Act amendment is proof of that. Again, it is, clearly beyond argument, another version of amnesty. It would provide a pathway to citizenship for a significant class of people, folks who came into this country illegally as minors. We do not know how many people that would be, and we have very little way of enforcing even the provisions of this amendment to keep it to the folks to whom it is supposed to be targeted.

What do I mean by that? Well, the folks are supposed to have come into this country in the last 5 years. Yet at the same time the amendment says it can apply to people up to age 30. What sort of proof do these folks have to offer with regard to when they came into this country? There is no proof requirement. It could simply be an affirmative statement by themselves, no other required proof. So this is open ended, this is unenforceable, and it is a significant amnesty.

In addition, as I mentioned a few minutes ago, it provides substantial benefits to these folks illegally in our country, benefits that the huge majority of American citizens do not enjoy. What is that? Well, the biggest is instate college tuition that would come to folks who sign up for the DREAM Act. As soon as they sign up, they would be treated as instate residents of that State. They would get instate tuition, and—guess what—all other U.S. citizens, the children of all other U.S. citizens outside that particular State who would love the benefit of instate tuition would not enjoy that same benefit.

That does not match the common-sense test that the American people want us to use. It certainly has nothing to do with the message the American people sent to us loudly and clearly during the debate on the so-called comprehensive immigration bill with its massive amnesty program. Again, that message came through loudly and clearly: No amnesty; real enforcement.

The American people are saying that not because they are mean-spirited, not because they hold anything against these individuals who are seeking a better life in this country, but because they know, because common sense tells them, this is going to make the problem worse and not better. Inadequate enforcement, with amnesty, acts as a magnet to magnify the problem, to encourage more illegals to cross the border into our country. If that does not ring true just because of common sense, history proves it.

The last time the Congress acted in this area of the law was in 1986, again