

hit Riyadh in mid-2003. Since then, there seems to be broad agreement throughout the U.S. Government that the Saudi Government's counterterrorism efforts have improved.

It is not at all clear that the Saudi Government is going far enough to help in this fight against terrorism. Following the Riyadh bombings, the Saudi Government instituted a number of new antiterrorism laws and policies, but all the evidence indicates they have fallen short with respect to implementation of those laws. Here is an example: The Saudi Government announced that all charitable donations distributed internationally must flow through a new national commission that purportedly would ensure the money did not end up in the hands of terrorists. It has now been nearly 3 years since this announcement was made, and the commission is still not yet up and running. Even worse, our Treasury officials reported last year that the Saudi Government's brandnew, highly touted finance intelligence unit was not "fully functioning." Similarly, while the Saudi Government has worked with the United States to designate particular charities as terrorist financiers, it is not always possible for our Treasury officials to independently verify that particular problem charities—the ones we are most concerned about—have actually been shut down.

Certainly, there have been some individuals in the Saudi Government who have attempted to address the terrorism question. At least since 2003, Saudi leaders have made a number of public statements indicating they wish to address the problem. But these examples make clear that the reality of what is needed to win this war against terrorism still is not in line with some of the rhetoric.

With respect to implementing and enforcing antiterrorism policies, the actions of the Saudi Arabian Government are questionable at best. There are two problems. The first is, as I have indicated, not all of the proposed new laws and policies have been implemented, and the second is that we have to get the Saudis to make a more aggressive commitment to enforcement. So you have to get them implemented, and then you have to get them enforced.

John Negroponte, of course, the Director of National Intelligence, has been following this. At one of our open meetings of the Intelligence Committee, I asked him his assessment of the situation. Director Negroponte indicated that, in his view, the situation had improved a bit since 2003, but he made it clear, stating specifically that more work needs to be done, especially in the area of private Saudi donors, and that more is needed to crack down on their activities.

This sentiment was echoed by the Congressional Research Service, which reported that no high-profile donors—none—had been subject to criminal

punishment by the Saudi Government. The State Department has said publicly:

Saudi Arabia should demonstrate its willingness to hold elites accountable.

But, unfortunately, in Saudi Arabia, the elites hold all the cards, and the Saudi Arabian Government, as indicated by the Congressional Research Service, is not willing to go after those who are most influential—the elites—in their country.

Now, some have gone even further and suggested that the Saudi Government might actually be involved in the propagation and financing of terrorism. The evidence on this point is inconclusive, but this does not rule out the possibility that lower level officials in the Saudi Government may, in fact, be involved in funding or facilitating terrorism. Given the high levels of corruption reported in Saudi Arabia, this is certainly a possibility.

Moreover, as the General Accounting Office points out, the distinction between the Government's support and funding versus that provided by entities and individuals, especially in the case of Saudi charities' alleged activities, is not always clear. The Saudi Royal Family is an excellent example. The Royal Family contains several thousand family members who collect Government allowances of varying amounts. If one of these royalties took a portion of their allowance money and funneled it to al-Qaida or Hamas, Saudi officials might claim that this did not even constitute Government support for terrorism. Certainly, I and others would say that the Government still bears significant responsibility.

I would also argue that just because Saudi leaders are not personally involved in financing terrorism, this should not absolve them from accountability. Most of my constituents would contend that if terrorist activities are being planned or financed inside Saudi Arabia, then the Saudi Arabian Government has a responsibility to get off the dime and stop it. As we say in our State, you are either part of the problem or you are part of the solution.

The Congress has a responsibility now to investigate this issue, and there are a number of key questions that ought to be answered.

First, how much money is flowing from Saudi Arabia to terrorist groups? Which groups are the major beneficiaries and to what extent is official corruption a major factor?

Second, there needs to be an examination of how far the Saudi Arabian Government has gone in implementing its new antiterrorist laws. Implementation and enforcement have clearly fallen short, but where can we see concrete examples of actual followup? What major gaps still remain?

Finally, there needs to be an examination of the internal situation in Saudi Arabia. Currently, the Saudi Government is run by a small group of men in their seventies and eighties. What is likely to happen when they are

gone? How secure is the regime now? What sort of government would be likely to emerge if the Royal Family lost their power?

It would be premature to try to offer answers to these and the other key questions. What is clear is that our Government will need to put more pressure on Saudi leaders than the current administration has applied thus far.

It also seems very likely the answers will have a dramatic effect for U.S. energy policy which currently perpetuates our dependence on foreign oil. My guess is that people in Pennsylvania, like Oregonians, think that just about the most red, white, and blue thing we can do for our country is to get a new energy policy. Certainly, as we go forward to look into the activities of the Saudis, a bipartisan effort to get a new energy policy is a key factor in ensuring our ability to protect our citizens at a dangerous time.

In the coming weeks and months, I plan to examine this issue as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. I have asked our chairman, our very able chairman, Senator ROCKEFELLER, to hold a closed hearing specifically dedicated to this topic, and one has been scheduled for this afternoon. It is time to bring to light the way in which Saudi oil money is fueling the fires of terrorism so people can actually see who is getting burned and what is necessary to protect the security and the well-being of Americans in a perilous world.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I note 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. NELSON of Florida. 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.

IRAQ

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I will speak on the President's decision to escalate by 21,000 troops into Iraq and whether it will be effective. If we determine the likelihood of success is not going to be effective, and we put 21,000 more troops in harm's way in the middle of sectarian violence, then it doesn't seem to me to be a wise policy if it is not going to be effective. It is naturally legitimate to debate whether it is effective.

The President's plan specifically is among the 21,500 to take about 17,500 to put into Baghdad and another 4,000 into the western part of Iraq, Anbar Province. I happen to agree with the latter part because I was convinced by the Marine generals that an increase of our forces would help them augment the success they have had, since all of that area is almost entirely Sunni and the problem there has been al-Qaida and

the al-Qaida insurgents. I agree with that part of the President's strategy.

However, most of the troops—some 17,500—are scheduled to go into Baghdad, in the midst of the sectarian violence, and that is where I disagree. I point out to the Senate, the President's strategy is predicated on the fact of the Iraqi Army being reliable. Now, will it be reliable? If the President's strategy is predicated on that fact of the Iraqi Army being reliable, one would think the administration has come to the conclusion the Iraqi Army will be reliable. The fact is, they haven't.

In testimony after testimony by administration witnesses, not one witness in any of the hearings that have been held in the committees upon which I have the privilege of serving—the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Senate Committee on Armed Services, the Senate Intelligence Committee—not one witness has been able to state that the Iraqi Army will be reliable. To the contrary.

The Secretary of Defense, the new commander of American forces in Iraq, the new combatant commander for the United States Central Command—every one of them has been unable to answer in the affirmative that the Iraqi forces are going to be reliable. As a matter of fact, a few days ago the Secretary of Defense said to the Senate Committee on Armed Services that we will have to wait and see if they are reliable. The very underpinning of the President's strategy for success is an unknown.

I bring to the Senate's attention what has been released 2 days ago. This is the unclassified version of the National Intelligence Estimate. This is the best estimate by our intelligence community. Listen to what they have to say on exactly this subject. I am reading from the unclassified version.

Despite real improvements, the Iraqi security forces, particularly the Iraqi police, will be hard pressed in the next 12 to 18 months to execute significantly increased security responsibilities, and particularly to operate independently against the Shia militias with success. Sectarian divisions erode the dependability of many units. Many are hampered by personnel and equipment shortfalls and a number of Iraqi units have refused to serve outside of areas where they have been recruited.

That is word for word the National Intelligence Estimate, unclassified version, that says the same thing as Secretary Gates, General Petraeus, Admiral Fallon, and the soon-to-be new Army Chief of Staff, General Casey, who served for the last 2½ years in Iraq.

I come back to the question I continue to ask. If the President's plan for success by an escalation of troops in Baghdad is predicated on the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi security forces being reliable—since they are to take the burden of the clearing and then the holding of an area—and if no one can state they are reliable, why are we pursuing this plan of an escalation of forces into Baghdad?

We hope they are going to be reliable. We hope for the success of our forces. The stakes are high, unquestionably, of stabilizing Iraq. But is this the wisest course, putting 17,500 more American forces in Baghdad at high risk? In this Senator's opinion, the very underpinning, the foundation of the President's plan, is undermined by virtue of the fact that none of the administration principals can answer the question that they are reliable. They can't answer that question. Therefore, I do not think it is in the best interests of our country or of our troops to escalate these forces into Baghdad.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OBAMA). The Senator from Oklahoma.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I spend a few minutes talking about the supposed continuing resolution we are going to have that is really an omnibus. Every time we have an omnibus, the American people get hurt. The reason is we play games.

We came off an election in November of 2006 where we had the claim made that the party in power had used earmarks irresponsibly, had played the budget gimmicks, had done all these things. We had a claim we would work toward bipartisanship, be honest and open in what we do. I come to challenge that in terms of what I would call an "omni terrible" bill.

First, under the rules of the Senate, although we are going to be shut out on amendments, it is harmful for the American public that there are no amendments to this. It is harmful because, first, it destroys comity in this Senate. It creates hard feelings. I would be the first to admit that the procedure that is being used on this was first used by a Republican. It is wrong.

The second thing that is important is there are all sorts of budget gimmicks with it. The quote is we stay within the budget. That is a lie because what they do is they steal money from our grandchildren which they will get back on the next supplemental, but that won't have to be within the budget limitations. So we are playing games. Nothing has changed about the Senate and the wink and the nod to the American public about what is happening to our future financial conditions. Mr. President, \$3.1 billion out of this will be transferred to the next supplemental to pay for things that absolutely have to happen with our troops in terms of transferring them from Germany and the BRAC relocation process. That has all been stolen so we can do other things. They may be a priority, but maybe something else should be eliminated rather than to break the budget and charge more to our grandkids. So that is not true.

The third thing that is extremely wrong with this is the claim that this has no earmarks. In 2006 appropriations

bills, 96 percent of all earmarks were in report language. That means there is a bill that is a law and then there is language that accompanies the bill that is not law. That is where we find most of the shenanigans going on in Congress. And it is equal among Democrats and Republicans as far as the earmarks.

To make the claim that there are no earmarks in this bill is an outright falsehood that the American people should not accept. The reason it is false is there is a little statement in this bill that these earmarks don't carry the force of law. It doesn't say they eliminated them. But you know what. They don't carry the force of law now. They haven't for the last 10 or 12 years. They haven't ever carried the force of law, but they carry the force of coercion because the agencies know if this is written into the report language and they don't do it, there is retribution they will face when it comes to the Congress and the appropriations process.

Ninety-four percent of all the earmarks that were in 2006 in these bills are in this bill. To claim otherwise is inaccurate and it should make the people of America reject with disdain how this Senate operates.

I remind this Senate that it wasn't but 2 or 3 weeks ago that Senator DEMINT put in transparency of earmarks, much like Congresswoman PELOSI had asked. That was voted against by the majority of the Democrats until they found out they were going to lose. Then we modified it so they could vote "yes" after they had voted "no." That is okay if you don't want them, but be honest about it. The fact is, there is no transparency with these earmarks. Most Americans will never know how they got there. The lobbyists will know; the Members will know; the campaign checks that come from them will know. But the regular "American Joe" won't know.

So the claim that we are operating under a new standard, the claim that we are going to have bipartisanship, the claim that we are not going to use budget gimmicks is all a farce. It is a farce. Let's change that. Let's give the American people something to be proud of. Let's have the hard debates on the questionable areas on this bill.

I will spend a minute and talk about one area of this bill. The one area where we have been very successful in eliminating HIV infections has been women who are pregnant and are having babies who are HIV infected. In 1996, New York passed a law saying all babies whose mothers' status with HIV wasn't known would be tested, and if they carried the antibodies for the mother, they would be treated. New York, since that time, has gone from at least 500 babies a year getting infected with HIV to less than 7.

Connecticut passed a law in 1998. They have gone from whatever their level was to zero since 2001. It is an area of hope where we have made tremendous progress in terms of preventing transmission to young babies,