

under the horrendous brutality of the Saddam Hussein dictatorship are suffering even more today. We are looking at a nation in the process of disintegration. That is Iraq today. There are estimates that hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed—some estimates go as high as 500,000—and almost 2 million Iraqis have fled their own country. In fact, anyone in Iraq who has any money at all, anyone who is part of the middle class, is trying to get out of that country as quickly as possible, and about 8 percent of Iraqis have had to flee their own country.

As I speak, President Bush is returning from a trip to Latin America. Wherever he spoke, he encountered massive protests. In country after country he discovered that people in Latin America hold our Nation in extremely low esteem, largely because of his ill-advised decision to invade Iraq and the disastrous way in which the Iraq occupation has been managed. That is certainly true not just in Latin America, it is true all over the world. How are we, as the most powerful military force in the world, going to be able to lead the world in the very important fight against international terrorism and Islamic extremism when in country after country leaders do not want to identify with us because of the policies of the President of the United States.

In the days immediately following 9/11, the world rallied around the United States when we were grievously attacked; not just leaders but the huge majority of people in nations all over the world expressed their support and expressed their concern for the United States. They were on our side, not just for reasons of compassion but understanding that we had to work together as a planet, as a civilized world in addressing the attacks of extremists and fundamentalists and terrorists. We had to work together and the United States was prepared to play a leadership role.

Tragically, that reality is no longer the case. We are now held in lower esteem internationally than ever before in the modern history of America. That is not just a bad thing in the sense of our young people going to Europe and finding out they are not respected or that our country is not respected, it is a bad thing if we are serious about trying to develop an international consensus to fight the very serious problem of international terrorism.

Tragically, the Bush administration has refused to listen to the American people who, in the national election this past November, made it very clear they want a new direction in Iraq and they want this war wound down. They did not vote for an escalation in this war, they voted to wind down the war. This administration has not only not listened to the American people, they have refused to listen to the thoughtful suggestions of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group. This administration has refused to listen to the advice of our military leaders in Iraq who have told

us that increasing troops from the United States would make it easier for the Iraqi Government and military to avoid their political and military responsibilities: Why make the hard political decisions? Why make the hard financial decisions? You don't have to do that. Uncle Sam is there to provide you with the troops. The American taxpayer is there to provide you with the money. You don't have to make those choices.

This administration has not only refused to listen to the American people, to our military, to the Iraq Study Group, perhaps most importantly they have refused to listen to the Iraqi people themselves who, according to a number of polls, tell us very strongly they believe that in the midst of all of the chaos, all of the horror that is taking place in their country, they would be more safe, they would be more secure if our troops left their country.

If President Bush will not listen to anybody, including the American people, including former generals, including the Iraq Study Group, including international public opinion, then it is up to Congress to tell him it is time to move in a new direction in Iraq. In the 2006 elections, in my view, the people of Vermont and of this Nation told us they wanted Congress to begin asserting its constitutional authority over this war and that they wanted us to rein in this administration. Most important, they told us they wanted us to begin the process of bringing our troops home as soon as possible. As a Vermont Senator, that is exactly the effort I intend to make. We must bring our troops home instead of leaving them to be embattled referees of a civil war that only the Iraqis—not our brave soldiers—can stop.

Iraq's Government and its military must step up and accept their political and military responsibilities. As the Baker-Hamilton commission said, that will only happen when we insist that the Iraqis and not American troops are responsible for the future of Iraq.

I yield the floor.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT CHARLES "CC" JOHNSON

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Charles Curtis John-

son, or "CC" as he is known to friends, on his retirement from the U.S. Capitol Police after nearly 32 years of dedicated service.

Sergeant Johnson started his career with the Capitol Police in 1974. For more than 14 years, he performed a variety of law enforcement duties as a member of the Capitol Division. In 1992, Mr. Johnson was named administrative sergeant and started working with the First Responder Unit that protects the Capitol grounds. By 1998, Mr. Johnson was promoted to sergeant and supervised the officers that protect the House and Senate Chambers.

In 2004, Sergeant Johnson earned a post as one of the supervisors of the Horse Mounted Unit. This elite unit is well known for its rigorous training requirements, and Sergeant Johnson passed these tests with ease. After his work on the Horse Mounted Unit, Sergeant Johnson was promoted to the Patrol/Mobile Response Division. He served there until his retirement, marking a long career of dedication to the Capitol Police Force.

Sergeant Johnson is also the devoted husband of a fellow Capitol Police officer, Captain Shirley Jo Johnson. Together, they have raised four children, and are the proud grandparents of four grandchildren. There is no doubt that his family can be proud of his example of professionalism and sense of duty to others.

As Senate majority leader, and a former Capitol Police officer, I have the greatest respect for the fine men and women of the Capitol Police Force. Sergeant Johnson embodies all of the qualities that make the Capitol Police one of the best law enforcement divisions in the Nation. I am pleased to recognize Sergeant Johnson today before the Senate, and I wish him the best as he embarks on this new chapter of his life.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

U.S. ARMY SPECIALIST JUSTIN ALLAN ROLLINS

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay special tribute to U.S. Army SPC Justin Allan Rollins, of Newport, NH. Tragically, on March 5, 2007, this courageous 22-year-old soldier, along with five of his soldier comrades, gave their last full measure for our Nation when an improvised explosive device detonated near their unit during combat operations in Samarra, Iraq. At the time of this hostile action, Specialist Rollins, the gunner on his HMMWV, was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC, and was serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He had recently reenlisted in the Army for an additional 4 years.

Justin, the son of Mitchel "Skip" and Rhonda Rollins, was born on November 10, 1984, and had resided in Newport, NH, all of his life. He was a 2003 graduate of Newport High School

where he played center on the football team and threw shot put and discuss for the track and field team. Those close to him describe him as a wonderful young man with a nice smile and a hearty laugh, a loyal friend, and a patriot with a strong desire to serve his country. Family and friends say he had a zest for life and loved to hunt and drive fast cars.

Sensing a call to duty, and in response to the September 11 terrorist attack on our Nation, he joined the U.S. Army in 2004. Justin reported to Fort Benning, GA, where he completed basic training, infantry training, and Army Airborne School. Upon completion of his training in August 2004, he was assigned and reported to the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Bragg. In August 2006, he deployed with his unit to Iraq. He said he went to Iraq so that the Iraqi children could have the same opportunities as U.S. children and he was extremely proud of what he was doing. The awards and decorations that Specialist Rollins received over his years of service are a testament to his strong character. They include the Bronze Star with Valor, two Purple Heart medals, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Army Overseas Service Ribbon, Combat Infantry Badge, and Airborne Wings.

Patriots from the State of New Hampshire have served our Nation with honor and distinction from the first conflict at Fort William and Mary, New Castle, NH, to the current conflict in Samarra, Iraq, and U.S. Army SPC Justin Allan Rollins served and fought in that same fine tradition. During our country's difficult Revolutionary War, Thomas Paine wrote, "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman." In these turbulent times Justin stood with the country he loved, served it with distinction and honor, and earned and deserves our love and thanks.

My sympathy, condolences, and prayers go out to Justin's parents Skip and Rhonda, older brother Jonathan, grandparents, longtime girlfriend Brittney Murray, and to his other family members and many friends who have suffered this most grievous loss. Family, friends, and fellow soldiers will no longer be able to enjoy his company. Strangers will never have the opportunity to know his friendship. Yet memories of this young patriot will last forever with those who were fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to know him. Justin had said that there is no higher honor than to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery, and now he joins many of our country's heroes in that sacred place. Because of his devotion and sense of

duty, the safety and liberty of each and every American is more secure. In the words of Daniel Webster, may his remembrance be as long lasting as the land he honored. God bless Justin Allan Rollins.

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JASON D. JOHNS

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, today I have a heavy heart and deep sense of gratitude to honor the life of a brave young man from Frankton. Jason Johns, 19 years old, died on February 21 while deployed in Afghanistan. With his entire life before him, Jason risked everything to fight for the values Americans hold close to our hearts, in a land halfway around the world.

Although Jason moved to Florida when he was young, his valor over the course of his service in Afghanistan makes us proud to count him as a Hoosier, too. According to his father, Jason had known that he had wanted to be a soldier for as long as his friends and family could remember. He fulfilled that dream when he joined the Army in 2005, shortly after receiving his GED. Jason enjoyed the military, and he intended to make it his career, hoping to someday reach the rank of general. His father, along with friends of the family, described him as serious about his career and a selfless man who wanted to serve his country.

Jason died while serving his country in Operation Enduring Freedom. He was a member of the 3rd Battalion, 82nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division out of Fort Bragg, NC. This brave young soldier leaves behind his mother and father, Kim and Jeffrey Johns, and two older brothers, Jack and Jeremiah.

Today, I join Jason's family and friends in mourning his death. While we struggle to bear our sorrow over this loss, we can also take pride in the example he set, bravely fighting to make the world a safer place. It is his courage and strength of character that people will remember when they think of Jason, a memory that will burn brightly during these continuing days of conflict and grief.

Jason was known for his dedication to his family and his love of country. Today and always, Jason will be remembered by family members, friends, and fellow Hoosiers as a true American hero, and we honor the sacrifice he made while dutifully serving his country.

As I search for words to do justice in honoring Jason's sacrifice, I am reminded of President Lincoln's remarks as he addressed the families of the fallen soldiers in Gettysburg: "We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." This statement is just as true today as it was nearly 150 years ago, as I am certain that the impact of Jason's actions will

live on far longer than any record of these words.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of Jason D. Johns in the official RECORD of the United States Senate for his service to this country and for his profound commitment to freedom, democracy, and peace. When I think about this just cause in which we are engaged, and the unfortunate pain that comes with the loss of our heroes, I hope that families like Jason's can find comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah who said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

May God grant strength and peace to those who mourn, and may God be with all of you, as I know He is with Jason.

IMPROVING AMERICA'S SECURITY ACT

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, over 5 years ago, on September 11, terrorists murdered nearly 3,000 people in the single deadliest attack on American soil in our history.

What all Americans witnessed and what too many families experienced personally and tragically was the dawn of a new era. We knew it then. National Guard patrolled Federal buildings and airports. The military patrolled the skies over New York and Washington, DC. The United States had been attacked by a new kind of enemy in a new and more dangerous world. We faced tough questions as a nation: How do we defeat this enemy? How do we fight terror abroad and protect America at home?

What was clear that day and remains so today is that the threat posed to us by terrorism requires a great mobilization of American might, muscle, resources, and ingenuity.

Armed with this mandate, many of us fought alongside those who lost loved ones on September 11 to compel an unwilling Bush administration to create the 9/11 Commission. The determination and steadfastness demonstrated by the families hardest hit by the September 11 tragedy made the 9/11 Commission a reality. We applauded when the bipartisan Commission concluded its investigation and released its thorough report detailing recommendations to protect this Nation from another attack, confident that the Congress and the administration would in short order implement their recommendations.

Shamefully, for some in our Federal Government, the sense of urgency and resolve faded in the months and years that followed. Some of the Commission's most commonsense recommendations went ignored. Even in the face of dangerous incompetence in our emergency preparedness and response to Hurricane Katrina, we received tough rhetoric instead of much needed reform. Five years after the 9/11