

I understand negotiations continue as I speak. I hope they reach an agreement that is comprehensive, tough but fair, and one every Member can seriously consider supporting. But these negotiations are no excuse for avoiding public debate.

At some point, you have to move beyond the closed doors of the rooms in the Capitol and into the bright lights of the Senate Chamber and let Members speak to their wishes and their intentions on this important legislation.

I disagree with some of the ideas being proposed by those on the other side of the aisle. I am sure they disagree with some of my approaches. I respect their views, and I hope they will look at this as a constructive opportunity.

Should the Senate tomorrow fail to invoke cloture and to move forward on the immigration bill, it will be a lost opportunity. If the 21 Senators who voted for comprehensive immigration reform will not even allow us to bring the matter to the floor at this moment, it will be difficult to explain. They will have their chance to amend. They will have their chance to make changes they think are important. They will have their chance to act as Senators considering important measures.

There has been a lot of criticism of Congress for good reason. When we look at the list of issues the American people think are important, very seldom do we find those issues being debated on the floor of the Senate. We need to change that situation. One of the issues on which most Americans agree is that our immigration system cannot be sustained. There are too many undocumented workers in this country living in fear, being exploited in the workplace, uncertain of their future. There are too many still streaming across our borders, borders that are too porous. There are ways to deal with those issues and ways this bill will address them.

The Senate can offer, debate, and vote on amendments on all these issues. That is how the Senate is supposed to work. Some of my colleagues have suggested they will block this debate from taking place by filibustering this bipartisan bill which passed over the past year. I hope they don't. It reaches the point where we need to be held accountable. I hope that point will be this week and next, as Senator REID, the majority leader, has set aside a reasonable amount of time to debate it. The American people deserve more than closed-door, backdoor negotiations. The time has come for Congress to fix our broken immigration system.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, time is running out to fund the troops. There are many of us who believe the policy in Iraq is a failed policy. The numbers we are given every week are stark and frightening: Over 3,370 American soldiers have now lost their lives in the

war in Iraq. Another five were killed yesterday. Over the weekend, three American soldiers were kidnapped. There is a manhunt underway to try to find them and rescue them as quickly as possible. And to all those involved, they have our prayers and our wishes for Godspeed.

But we understand the reality of this war, a war where almost 30,000 Americans have been killed or disabled, a war where many soldiers have returned home with injuries that they will have to cope with for a lifetime. This war has cost us over \$500 billion, \$500 billion that could have been spent in America for many issues important to us—improving our schools and education, making certain every American has basic health insurance, making sure our children all across America have the kind of health care and attention they need at an early age to be healthy through the rest of their life, money that could have been spent at the National Institutes of Health looking for new cures for diseases and illnesses from which we suffer in America. There are so many programs in which we could have invested that money.

Instead, we have invested that money in a war with no end, a war that is now in its fifth year. The war in Iraq has lasted longer than the Korean war, has lasted longer than World War II. It is the most expensive war in the history of the United States, save World War II, which was, in fact, a world war where the United States made a total national commitment. But we now find that second in rank in terms of cost is this war in Iraq.

There are many of us who understand that Americans across the board may have supported the initial invasion but had second thoughts. I was one of 23 who voted against this war at the outset in October 2002. There were colleagues on both sides of the aisle who in good faith thought the President should have the authority to deal with Saddam Hussein. They were misled, as the American people were misled by intelligence estimates that were just wrong, intelligence estimates that said Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and threatened the United States, fear of nuclear holocaust, fear of mushroom-shaped clouds. All of these images were paraded before the American people a short time after we had gone through the tragedy of 9/11. It is understandable the American people were concerned and fearful, and they supported the idea of invading Iraq in the hopes of keeping America safe.

We learned that in so many ways the information given to the American people before the invasion of Iraq was wrong. There were no weapons of mass destruction, there were no nuclear weapons, there was no connection between Saddam Hussein and the events of 9/11 that were sponsored by al-Qaida. But the invasion took place.

Many of us felt that once our soldiers were in the field, it was time to close

ranks behind them, stop the debate. They volunteered, they are serving our country, they didn't write this policy. They are risking their lives right now, and we should stand behind them. So many of us, even those who opposed this war and voted against it from the outset, voted year after year for the emergency appropriations President Bush sent to Congress, money for our troops in the field. Now we are in the fifth year, and there is no end in sight.

We have been told by our military leaders that even the best military in the world in the United States cannot save Iraq. Only the Iraqis can save Iraq. It has to be the Iraqi people through their Government who decide to move forward toward stability. We cannot police a civil war. We cannot contain the violence in Iraq even with 20,000, 30,000, 40,000 more American soldiers. That is a reality and one we should face. Regardless, the President concluded a few months ago that he would escalate this war and send even more American soldiers into harm's way. I think that was a mistake. I think the President was moving in the wrong direction. As I said, I don't believe our military, though it be the best in the world, can really contain the violence of the civil war in Iraq. I certainly don't believe our military, as good as it is, can give spine to Iraqi leaders who can't seem to reach conclusions and decisions on timetables about their future.

So the war continues. The President asked for more money, \$80 billion, \$90 billion at a time to continue this war in Iraq. Many of us believe we should do two things: fund the troops, make sure they have all that they need, but change the policy, start bringing American soldiers home. Tell the Iraqis once and for all that we will not be there indefinitely. We are not going to stay until you work up the political courage to make decisions to govern your country. We are going to start coming home. As we come home, these Iraqi soldiers whom we have spent millions of dollars to train and equip need to stand up and defend their country. The Iraqi Parliamentarians and leaders of their Government need to stand up and make the hard political decisions.

That is the reality of Iraq today. It is a reality we are reminded of every morning with the newscasts that tell us of the suffering and death which takes place in that country.

I wish to say a word, too, about the Iraqi people. I was reminded over the weekend when I was home in Illinois—and a good reminder it was—that when we speak about the loss of life in Iraq, don't forget the innocent Iraqis who have lost their lives as well. We don't even know what that number is today. We know that close to 3,500 American soldiers have lost their lives, and we know the coalition forces who have lost their lives. We don't know how many innocent Iraqis have lost their lives as victims in the civil war or even of our invasion.

Mr. President, "60 Minutes" on Sunday night had a gripping story about a youngster, 12-year-old, who, during the bombing of our invasion of Iraq, lost both his arms. This young boy, whose name is Ali, came to the attention of people across the world and was given a chance to go to England, where he goes to school now. He was really inspiring when he talked about how he was going to make something of his life even though he lost both his arms. He is just an innocent victim of this war who lost family and friends in a bombing, a tragic incident we wished never occurred.

Keep in mind that these innocent Iraqis are part of this calculation about the future of Iraq as well. If this civil war is to come to an end, we not only need to start bringing American troops home, we need for the Iraqi Government to start making decisions to protect their people and project their future in a positive way.

I sincerely hope that at the end of next week when we present to the President the money necessary for the troops, we will also make it clear that we are taking a step forward to correct this failed policy in Iraq.

I might also add that if we are not successful in changing the policy with this bill, it is not the end of the debate. We are 4 months into this new Congress, 4 months since the Democratic majority took control of the House and Senate. In a little over 4 months, we have seen a dramatic change in the national debate on the war in Iraq. For the last 4 years, we have been sleepwalking through this policy in this war in Iraq with few challenges from Capitol Hill. The legislative branch of our Federal Government did little or nothing to meet its constitutional responsibility, to challenge the Executive when it came to policy and execution of that policy.

Now things have changed. Now, with a Democratic majority in the House and the Senate, the debate is underway, as it should be, a debate on policy. I think most Americans would agree that over the last 4 months with this new Congress, we have had a more active and vigorous debate on Iraq than any time since this war started. That is the way it should be. The American people believe Iraq is the primary issue on which we should focus, and we have, and we will continue to focus on Iraq. Even beyond the supplemental appropriations bill, we will move to a Defense authorization bill and a Defense appropriations bill, giving ample opportunity for Members on both sides of the aisle to come up with alternatives to deal with this failed policy.

In conclusion, there is one key to changing the failed policy in Iraq. The key to changing the failed policy in Iraq is 11 Republican Senators. When 11 Republican Senators reach the point that they want this policy changed, it will happen. We have 49 Democratic Senators who have voted repeatedly to

change that policy. Two Republican Senators—the Senator from Oregon, Mr. SMITH, and the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. HAGEL—have stepped forward and joined us on the Democratic side. We need nine more. With nine more Republican Senators, the failed policy in Iraq will change. Why does it take so many? It takes 60 votes in the Senate to move forward a significant and controversial measure such as a change of policy in the war in Iraq.

I was heartened to learn last week that some Republican House Members met with the President. There were press reports afterward that they told him point blank that they can no longer continue to support his policies. Change has to take place. The President needed to hear that. I hope Republican Senators who feel the same way will step forward.

It is not enough for them to say we will come up with 11 different ideas and vote one at a time for each of them. That isn't the way this works. We have to put our minds together and try to find compromise and cooperation so that we can serve the best needs of America—not only our national security needs but the needs of our troops in the field and the needs of the Iraqi people. If 11 Republican Senators will join the 49 Democrats, this policy can change. We will give them that opportunity tomorrow with two cloture votes and then beyond that some votes I am sure next week on a conference report when we reach that stage in the proceedings, and then in subsequent legislation.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the spirit of compromise and cooperation to try to find ways that we can end this war in an honorable way, bring our troops home to the heroes' welcome they deserve, and say to the Iraqi people: The Americans have given you more than any nation could ever ask for. We have given you over 3,300 American lives of the best and bravest soldiers in the world. We have given you 25,000 injured soldiers, some with serious injuries they will carry for a lifetime. We have spent \$500 billion. We have stood behind your country as you deposed your dictator, put him on trial, and executed him. We have stood behind your country when you wrote your Constitution and held your elections. We have been there for more than 4 years. Now it is your turn. Now it is the turn of the Iraqis to step forward and guide their nation forward.

We need to understand that we won't have a change in policy unless the President agrees to change—and it is unlikely he will—or this Congress forces a change. The only way that occurs is when 11 Republican Senators join 49 Democrats to make it happen and make it a reality.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of the time for the majority in morning business. I yield the floor.

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

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time on the Republican side be equally divided among myself, Senator CORNYN, and Senator GREGG.

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

BUSH TAX CUTS

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, we celebrate anniversaries around here. We find times to look back. Today happens to be the fourth anniversary of the Senate passage of the last of the Bush tax cuts. We have heard a lot of rhetoric around here about those tax cuts. We heard it in advance, we heard it as they have gone along, we continue to hear it.

I thought on the fourth anniversary of the Senate passage of the tax cuts it might be a wise idea to spend some time with some facts.

Our former colleague, Senator Gramm of Texas, always used to say: I tell my children never argue about the facts. Facts are things you can look up. Argue about what the facts might mean, but don't argue about the facts.

We don't take his advice as much as I think we should. We spend too much time arguing about the facts. Let's look them up.

One of the things we are told constantly is that since the passage of the tax cuts, the rich have gotten richer, the tax burden has shifted from the rich to the poor, and that this is terrible and we need to reverse that trend. Well, let's look at a few facts. Let's go back to the 8 years prior to the time of the Bush administration and see what happened in terms of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

While President Clinton was the President, dividing into five quintiles, which is what economists do, we see what happened to pretax income. During the Clinton years, in the lowest 20 percent, the bottom quintile, pretax income went down. In the second quintile, the pretax income went down. The red bars are prior to Clinton and the blue bars are after. In the middle 20th percentile, the pretax income went down. In the second highest quintile, pretax income went down. In the top quintile, pretax income went up between the time when Clinton was elected and the end of the Clinton administration.

Our source for this is the Congressional Budget Office. These are the facts.

What has happened since President Bush has been in office? Let's take a look at the same areas and look with the new data plugged in. It is very interesting.

Since Bush has been elected, the lowest quintile has seen their pretax income go up. The second lowest quintile has seen their pretax income go up. The middle quintile has seen their pretax income go up. The second highest quintile has seen their pretax income go up, but the top quintile, the