

are filed at the desk. A lot of work has been done over the recess in terms of some of those amendments, and it is my hope that some of them can be disposed of without rollcall votes. It is also my hope that during today's session, the managers will be prepared to set up votes on the pending amendments so we can continue to make progress on the bill tomorrow.

This is a very significant piece of legislation, as we all know. We need to have the maximum opportunity for the largest number of amendments to be considered before we entertain the notion of shutting down debate on this important measure. It is quite possibly the most significant measure we will be dealing with this Congress, and we need to make sure all Senators feel that they have had an opportunity to offer their amendments and that those amendments have had a shot at being considered.

I encourage people on both sides of the aisle to come on over. Let's make sure we have plenty of amendments in the queue and have a full day working on this bill beginning tomorrow.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 2316 and H.R. 2317

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding that there are two bills at the desk and they are both due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bills by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2316) to provide for more rigorous requirements with respect to disclosure and enforcement of lobbying laws and regulations, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 2317) to amend the Lobbying and Disclosure Act of 1995 to require registered lobbyists to file quarterly reports on contributions bundled for certain recipients, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in order to place these bills on the calendar under the provisions of standing rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar under rule XIV.

Mr. REID. I note that these are the two bills the House has considered dealing with ethics reform. I have had a number of meetings with my distinguished Republican colleague, and we are in the process of figuring out a way we can get to conference with the House on these important issues.

MEMORIAL DAY RECESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I attended, as Senator ENSIGN and I do every Memorial Day, a service at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, which is located in Boulder City, NV. I am struck by two conversations I had.

One was with a World War II veteran by the name of Ken Brown. Basically, he has lost his hearing. He was a machine gunner on a destroyer. As you know, Mr. President, the noise on one of those ships was deafening, and he certainly was deafened in the process. But he told me—and this is the first time he has ever expressed anything other than total support for what President Bush has been doing as relates to the military—he told me in no uncertain terms that we Democrats were headed in the right direction; we had to stop what was going on in Iraq.

Then, a wonderful woman came up to visit with me. She visited me a year and a month ago here in my office. Her boy had been killed in Iraq. A year ago, I traveled with her and her husband after the ceremony in Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City out of the auditorium and out to one of the graves. There are 22,000 graves in that new cemetery in Boulder City. It is very new. There are 22,000 graves. One of those graves is her son, John Lukac, who was killed in Iraq. She is as sad today as she was a year ago. She asked me with tears in her eyes if there is some way I can get her to Iraq. She wants to go where her son was killed. We said: No, we don't want you to go to Iraq; you shouldn't go there. She is a wonderful woman, a wonderful mother. This is a wonderful family. Her husband is so gracious and nice.

I am grateful beyond words for the sacrifices of the men and women in uniform from Nevada and around the Nation who have done so much for our country and are serving in the military. We focus on those who have been injured and killed, and those are the people who have given a tremendous sacrifice. But there are other people who serve, and sometimes in not so glamorous positions, but it is as a result of their service that we are able to conduct military warfare as we need to. In this work period, we will continue to do everything we can to honor the sacrifices of these men and women with a responsible end to the Iraq war.

During the work period, I had a chance to visit with many Nevadans. No. 1 on their minds is the war, and No. 2 is the high gas prices. We are better now in Nevada. Gas prices keep going up. We are no longer No. 3 in the Nation. I guess that is some distinction. We have dropped down to 11 or somewhere in that area. And, of course, immigration reform is on everyone's mind. I assured them that these issues—the Iraq war, the situation with the gas prices and, of course, immigration—are on our radar screen. We are going to be working on those issues this work period.

On the first day of the 110th Congress, Democrats, because we won the majority, were able to introduce the first 10 bills, the first 10 priorities as we saw them. Last Friday, we concluded a 7-week work period, and we have taken action on 7 of these 10 priorities.

We passed the toughest ethics and lobbying reform in our Nation's history. We will soon go to conference with the House on that bill.

We passed a 10-year overdue minimum wage that the President has signed.

We attempted to give Medicare the power to negotiate lower drug prices. We were prevented from doing so because of a Republican filibuster.

We passed the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission after almost 3 years of them being set aside. We expect to complete the conference on that legislation within the next couple of weeks and send it to the President.

Stem cell research, giving hope to millions of Americans, was again passed in this body, and we expect to send it to the President after conferring with the House, which we expect to do in the next couple of weeks, and we think in the Senate we are going to send a veto-proof bill to him.

In addition, we were able to pass what was not one of the top 10 priorities but something we have been trying to do for 3 years; that is, disaster relief for the struggling farmers and ranchers in this country.

We were able to send to the President something he signed dealing with giving the victims of Katrina the relief they deserve since the actual hurricane struck. The President has gone there lots of times but refused to cooperate with us in sending the money.

We were able to send a downpayment on SCHIP, which is helping to fund health care for children.

And, of course, we were able to send \$1 billion in homeland security. We fought with the President for years. I have to say, his people fought us to the very end. We were forced to take some of that money off homeland security. But with \$1 billion, we can at least go forward and do a better job of checking cargo containers coming into this country. We can do a better job of checking for nuclear weapons coming into this country, dirty bombs. We will do a better job of taking a look at what is happening with our rail safety.

So we are comfortable that we have done some good things. We passed a balanced budget that restores fiscal discipline and puts the middle class first—cutting their taxes while increasing investment in education, veterans care, and children's health care.

We began debate on the complex, crucial issue of immigration reform, which I spoke about a short time ago. This week, we are going to complete that legislation and hopefully bring to final passage a comprehensive bill that will strengthen our border security and bring 12 million undocumented Americans out of the shadows and help our economy move strongly.

In the days ahead, we will work to improve the bill to protect and strengthen family ties while improving the structure of the temporary worker program.

Following immigration, we will turn our attention to the 3 remaining bills from the original 10: an energy bill that will take crucial steps toward weaning our country of our addiction to foreign oil; we are going to reauthorize the Higher Education Act which will address skyrocketing costs of college; and a Defense authorization bill to make critical investments to address troop readiness problems in the military, and that debate will be led by the Presiding Officer.

Readiness will be led by the distinguished junior Senator from Virginia, someone who has experience in battle and more than just words. We look forward to following the distinguished Senator from Virginia in making sure our troops are ready, their rotations are right, they are trained right, and that they are not going back, as happened in Nevada 2 weeks ago when someone was going back for a fourth tour of duty and acknowledged to his family he was tired and knew he wouldn't come back. He had survived too many explosions to go back for another tour of duty and survive another explosion, and he was right. He is now dead.

We will also reconfigure our national security strategy to better meet the threats and challenges we face today that the President, we believe, is overlooking.

We have made great progress this year, especially when we have put our partisan differences aside to work toward common goals. But for all the good that has come in the shadow of President Bush's catastrophic Iraq war, we need to do so much more. Ending the war will continue to be our No. 1 priority every single day as the year continues.

The month of May 2007 was the third deadliest month in the war. It was close to being the deadliest, but they didn't break that record, thank goodness. But May was the third deadliest month in the entire 51 months of this war. June is off to a horrifying start. Sixteen Americans have been killed in the first 3 days of the month.

The President's troop escalation is now complete. Yet a New York Times article this morning reports that security goals are far, far, far short of the military's hopes, with just about one-third of Baghdad's neighborhoods in some semblance of order.

In the midst of this growing chaos, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a new bipartisan report just before the Memorial Day deadline. My good friend and colleague, Chairman JAY ROCKEFELLER, working with the vice chair of the committee, KIT BOND—and the Intelligence Committee has become a nonpartisan committee, as it was set up to do—they worked on a bipartisan basis, and the information they came up with is long overdue. Previously, there was not cooperation between the majority and the minority. The chairman of the committee basically stonewalled everything the

committee was trying to get done, and that is the reason we shut the Senate down. But that information has now come forward, and my colleague, Senator ROCKEFELLER, deserves enormous credit for putting together this crucially important report.

It further brings to light the administration's decision to go to war in Iraq regardless of the facts and warnings issued by the Intelligence Committee. The Intelligence Committee foretold much of the chaos we now face. They told the President, among other things, the following: that installing democracy would be a long, difficult, and probably turbulent challenge in Iraq, and that was an understatement; No. 2, that al-Qaida would try to take advantage of U.S. attention on postwar Iraq to reestablish its presence in Afghanistan, and they have done that; that Iraq was a deeply divided society that likely would engage in violent conflict unless an occupying power prevented it, and we have not prevented it; that the U.S. occupation of Iraq would result in a surge of political Islam and increased funding for terrorist groups, and that has proven to be true; that Iraq's neighbors would jockey for influence in Iraq, including fomenting strife among Iraq's sectarian groups, and that is true; that some elements in the Iranian Government could decide to try to counter aggressively the U.S. presence in Iraq or challenge U.S. goals, and they have done that; and, finally, that our action in Iraq would not cause other regional states to abandon their WMD programs or their desire to develop such programs, and that also has proven to be true.

Clearly, the intelligence community got it right, and their warnings were not issued in a vacuum. Perhaps the most striking finding of the report is that all the key administration players were made aware of these warnings—Doug Feith, Paul Wolfowitz, Steve Hadley, Scooter Libby, all key Bush officials at the National Security Council, the State Department, the Department of Defense, and the Vice President were all on the distribution list.

The Bush administration cannot hide behind ignorance. Whether out of hubris or incompetence, the President and his men willfully ignored the experts and sent our troops to battle unprepared for the consequences.

Some might say, what is past is past. If the President's prewar failure was a one-time event, we could maybe forget about it, even though that would be hard. But if President Bush's prewar failure was a one-time event, we could leave it to the historians to study and judge the tragedy of his incompetence. But even today, after almost 3,500 American deaths and more than 20,000 wounded, the President continues to cherry-pick facts in order to paint a rosy but very misleading picture of Iraq.

After tens of thousands of injuries to our troops, the President continues to ignore the advice of experts. After

nearly \$500 billion of America's treasure has been spent in Iraq—some say it is approaching \$1 trillion, but a vast amount of our treasury—he is still dreaming his way through this epic tragedy. The country's eyes are wide open, and it is time for the President to wake up.

I understand some Americans are frustrated that we here in Congress have not been able to move more quickly to end the war. Many who voted for change in November anticipated dramatic and immediate results in January. They did get some dramatic changes. This is what we have given them: more than 75 hearings on Iraq, the Walter Reed scandal brought to light and steps taken to make it right, a supplemental bill sent to the President that set a firm policy to responsibly end the war—only a small step but a step, a second supplemental that set benchmarks and voided the President's blank check—the first was vetoed, this was not.

Our resolve has never been stronger. With a razor-thin majority—and, remember, it is a razor-thin majority—an obstinate President, and a Republican minority that continues to bow to his will, we are nonetheless making real progress. However, under the Senate's rules and our Constitution, there is only so far a determined majority can go, especially with our 49–50 disadvantage, which is due to Senator JOHN-SON'S illness. We can only end this war if the President changes course, or more Republicans join with us to force him to do so.

When we take up the Defense authorization bill, we will not just work to correct the President's neglect of troop readiness and protection, we will give our Republican colleagues another opportunity to join us and bring a responsible end to this war. We will fight for that every day this year, as long as the President and a few allies left here in Congress continue to defy the reality the rest of us see clearly.

We owe it to the men and women serving overseas and serving at home, to families who await the return of those overseas, and all Americans who want the Iraq tragedy to finally end.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.