

This Senator is not going to let the U.S. defense preparedness be a sacrificial lamb for the interests of the oil and gas companies in order to satisfy their hollow-ring rhetoric that says “drill, baby, drill.” You have heard me before on this floor say that the mantra ought not be “drill, baby, drill.” As Tom Friedman says, the mantra ought to be “invent, baby, invent.” That is how we are going to break the stranglehold of oil that is around our neck. But until we get to that point—and I hope we are rapidly moving to that point of alternative fuels—this Senator is going to stand up and not let the defense preparedness of this country be sacrificed as a lamb on the altar of the oil and gas companies.

This Senator also wants to clearly say this to the Gang of 10 that proposes to drill up to 50 miles off the Florida coast. That would bring it up to a point about like this on this map. You can see how that would cut out the heart and the lungs of the military mission test and evaluation. The Gang of 10 that wants to vote on their proposal next week says: By the way, we are going to do that drilling all the way up to 50 miles off of the west coast of Florida, but we are not going to do that off of anybody else’s coast. We will let there be drilling at the OK of the States of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, and we are not going to touch anybody else, but we are sure going to touch the west coast of Florida and this military mission line.

This Senator wants to clearly say he is not going to let Florida be the sacrificial lamb. I just hope my colleagues understand that this Senator is not going to let that happen.

We concocted, crafted, and compromised to pass this law 2 years ago to satisfy the Senator from Louisiana, the Senators from Mississippi, and the Senators from Alabama who wanted additional drilling while at the same time this Senator and my colleague, Senator MARTINEZ, brought to the table that we wanted to protect the military and we wanted to protect Florida. We crafted this compromise. Now, 2 years later, they want to blow it out of the water and they want to blow the U.S. military out of the water.

We have a few tools at our disposal called parliamentary rules of the Senate. We are simply not going to let this happen. This Senator is about as bipartisan as anybody on this floor. This Senator is about as reasonable as anybody on this floor. This Senator does believe what the Good Book says, which is “Come, let us reason together.” That is how we ought to forge compromise and make law, recognizing that you have to build consensus. That is what we ought to do, and we ought to do it in a bipartisan fashion. But the Gang of 10 wants to run over the interests of this Senator and the interests of the military. Every now and then, we have the opportunity to stand up and say no.

I want everybody to be clear where this Senator is. Let me tell you, the

Speaker of the House of Representatives came out yesterday with a proposal that this Senator would certainly consider, and I think favorably. What the Speaker of the House has said is honor the 2006 law, and on the rest of the Outer Continental Shelf, all over the United States beyond 100 miles, drill; between 50 and 100 miles, if the State concurs, drill. Those being Federal lands, those revenues would inure to the benefit of the U.S. Treasury, not to the States. This Senator will certainly consider that, but not when they say the interests of Florida and the interests of the Defense Department are the ones that are going to have to completely give, since we worked this and etched it into law for the first time 2 years ago. I want everybody to understand what the position of this Senator is.

What I would like to do is to send this amendment to the desk to file. I will not offer it because, as I said, the chairman of our Armed Services Committee has enough on his plate—I am one of his subcommittee chairmen—in order to get this Defense authorization bill passed. But this issue will certainly be ripe next week when we take up the energy provisions.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The amendment will be printed.

The senior Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, also, before he leaves the floor, I intend to talk about the ethical quagmire at the Minerals Management Service. I commend Senator NELSON, who really, just as he said, always does try to be bipartisan. We work together as part of a large health care group. Senator NELSON was one of the first to spot these flagrant examples of abuse at the Minerals Management Service. I know he is going to be part of our effort to finally drain the swamp at the Minerals Management Service next week. I thank my friend from Florida for his efforts in that regard.

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, 2 days ago I came to the floor of the Senate to describe specifically the horror story of misconduct and mismanagement at the Minerals Management Service. Today, this morning, in coffee shops across the country, in addition to talking about the pain at getting clobbered by these gasoline prices at the pump, a lot of Americans are wondering how can it possibly be that in these Federal energy development programs, the tax money of the American people is being used to prop up sweetheart contracting, flagrant conflict of interest violations, drug abuse, apparently all

kinds of sexual escapades, and lots more.

I have been trying to clean up these royalty programs for more than 5 years. I stood right in this spot 2 years ago and spent almost 5 hours trying to force a vote here in the Senate to clean up these royalty programs.

Some of these royalty problems, of course, began when the price of oil was \$19 a barrel. The day that I spoke at length to try to force a vote, the price of oil was \$70 a barrel. Of course, for quite some time the price of oil has been \$110, \$120, \$130—of course 8, 10, 12 times what it was when this program began.

The Bush administration has repeatedly indicated that they would take care of these problems. We have had Secretary Kempthorne, for example, in the Energy Committee even 19 months ago essentially saying they would get on top of the program.

I came to the floor today because I would like to describe how it looks as though once again the Department of Interior is especially interested in trying to keep the Congress from stepping in and taking bold action to try to drain the swamp. For example, the statement the Secretary of Interior made—I brought it to the floor—came out yesterday. It states, for example:

The conduct of a few has cast a shadow on an entire agency.

That is not what the inspector general said about this program. The inspector general didn’t talk, as Secretary Kempthorne did, about the conduct of a few. What the inspector general said—I will just read it:

We discovered that, between 2002 and 2006, nearly one-third of the entire royalty-in-kind staff socialized with and received a wide array of gifts and gratuities from oil and gas companies with whom the royalty-in-kind program was conducting official business.

Let’s unpack that for a minute. Secretary Kempthorne has said repeatedly that we are only talking about the conduct of a few people and offered up once again, just in the last 24 hours, an argument clearly designed to keep the Congress from stepping in next week and finally draining the swamp at the Royalty-in-Kind Program. The inspector general found that there were gifts and gratuities on at least 135 occasions from major oil and gas companies. The inspector general called it a textbook example of improperly receiving gifts from prohibited sources. And then the inspector general said:

When confronted by our investigators, none of the employees involved displayed remorse.

They found a culture at this program of ethical disregard—substance abuse, promiscuity. They go on and on to talk about an entire program. They certainly do not talk about how these problems took place in the past. They talk about how this is an ongoing problem that certainly is not going to be taken care of, in my view, as Secretary Kempthorne has suggested in the past, with one of his kind of ethics training

programs. There are going to have to be substantial changes. I am very hopeful that finally, after the Congress has gotten report after report about the problems at this agency, the Senate will not accept the argument from Secretary Kempthorne that once again the Congress ought to just trust the agency to take care of things on its own.

Let me outline just a few of the areas that I hope the Senate would consider in changing these flagrant abuses at Minerals Management.

It seems to me, first, that this program, the Royalty-in-Kind Program, should be suspended until the Secretary certifies that each of the inspector general's ethical and business recommendations is implemented.

That strikes me as pretty obvious. You have all of these problems. It has been documented in report after report after report. The Secretary has come to the committee, and said he would take care of it. It has not been done. It would seem to me that you suspend this program until the Secretary certifies that the recommendations from the inspector general are implemented.

Second, I am sure people listening to this say, "hello," when you make this particular recommendation. It is time to get rigorous audits back in the Minerals Management Royalty Program. You think to yourself, how can it be that millions of dollars go in and out the door in these programs? There have been problems documented again and again in these inspector general reports and they still do not have rigorous audits. So that is the second thing the Senate ought to require with respect to this program.

I personally would favor a limited continuation of the Royalty-in-Kind Program to a fixed term, choose 1 year, 2 years, and then it would be sunset unless it would be reauthorized. This would be a process that would make sure the program either gets fixed and the Senate comes away convinced that it works or the program goes away. So I would hope the Senate would look at that.

Finally, I think it is worth noting that the Minerals Management Service is the only major bureau within the Interior that does not have a Senate-confirmed director. It is my view that the head of the Minerals Management Service, particularly at a time such as this, when the very programs in its charge, and the programs the Congress is looking to expand next week, that the head of the Minerals Management Service should be a Senate-confirmed position. This way it would be possible for the Senate Energy Committee—and I know Senator NELSON has a great interest in this as well—would have a say in who the next director of that office is, and the Energy Committee would be in a position to hold that individual accountable.

As I have indicated, the Minerals Management Service is the only major bureau within Interior that does not have a Senate-confirmed director. It is

obvious you cannot wave your wand and legislatively fix every ethical consideration imaginable. But it would seem to me, given the blockbuster nature of this inspector general's report, and the tenacious work that has been done by Earl Devaney there, that Congress would be negligent, that Congress would be more than remiss, that Congress would be negligent to not step in next week when we are working on these very programs—there is discussion of expanding them dramatically—to not step in and make sure the taxpayers' interests are protected.

This is not a question of whether you are for drilling or against drilling here. Senators will have differences of opinion surely on that. But as Senator NELSON has said over a period of years, and I have said over a period of years, this ought to be something every Member of the Senate would agree on.

I think back to 2 years ago, and I got up in the morning and did not expect to be on this floor for 5 hours trying to force a vote to change these programs. It was clear that if we had gotten the votes, we would have won. That was when the price of oil was \$70 a barrel, not \$100 a barrel; \$100 often seems reasonable these days to people given the shellacking they are taking.

But the Congress will have a vigorous debate next week on a host of issues with respect to energy policy. What I would hope is that 100 Members of the Senate would say, given what the inspector general has said, No. 1, given the fact that Secretary Kempthorne has again in his statement yesterday—and I read this specifically—suggested that we are talking about a few individuals:

The conduct of a few has cast a shadow on an entire agency.

That is not what the inspector general said. One-third of the employees in this program, one-third, colleagues, were involved in this. Given what the inspector general has said, given the facts that the agency has repeatedly said it would clean up these programs, and it has not done it, that under the leadership of Chairman BINGAMAN of the Energy Committee, he always works closely with the ranking minority member, our colleague from New Mexico, Senator DOMENICI, that finally next week the Congress, on a bipartisan basis, end these disgraceful practices that have been documented repeatedly in these independent reports.

If the Congress does not step in and finally adopt specific measures to hold this agency accountable, I believe when the headlines are no longer the topic of kitchen table conversation, I believe what will happen, certainly regrettably in this administration, we will not see the changes needed to protect the American people.

I do not see how you can make a case for playing down this set of problems that has been so well documented. I hope all Members of the Senate, all 100 Senators, will back our efforts next week to clean up this program.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The senior Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I want to say a word of appreciation to the Senator from Oregon for his leadership on this, and his courage. He had the courage of his convictions 2 years ago to stand up and to not relinquish the floor in the midst of all kinds of pressure to get on with the legislation in order to get his point across.

From time to time, each of us, when we feel passionately and very strongly about an issue that we do not think is right, has a right here to do that. I thank him for that. I thank him for his courage. I second what he has said about the skullduggery that is going on.

Is it not interesting that there is no consequence as a result of what the inspector general has found, all of this skullduggery—it is his words, not ours—all kinds of sexual liaisons going on, all kinds of drugs, all kinds of gifts, some of this supplied by the oil companies over which this administrative executive department agency is a watchdog, and it is going to be in an inspector general's report. The Department of Justice, the Attorney General's Office, has said they are not going to prosecute the two main people in the office who carried on all of this scandalous activity; they have resigned. So where is the accountability?

When I served in the military a long time ago, I was taught clearly that the commanding officer was accountable for what happened to that commanding officer's troops or ship.

Where is the accountability? What about the head of the Minerals Management Service? The head of the Minerals Management Service is there. Where is the accountability? Why should not the head of the Minerals Management Service, on something that went on for one-third of the employees of this office for some period of time, say: I am responsible, I am accountable, and face the music, and face the consequences?

But, no, it is always dodge, weave, deflect. It is always somebody else's fault. How much of a pattern have we seen of that over the last 8 years? The American people are getting tired of it. And they are getting tired of it especially when those same kinds of interests, in this case the oil companies influencing an executive branch department to get what they want by using illegal gifts, the offer of sexual favors and drug use.

This is the same group that wants to come in, as I was pointing out on that map, and drill all the way up through and cut out the heart and the lungs of the U.S. military testing and training area.

No, there is too much that is not in sync here. I thank the Senator for his very prescient and courageous and consistent stance he has had.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

JOURNALISTS M. CHARLES BAKST, SCOTT MACKAY, AND MARK ARSENAULT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, today the largest daily newspaper in my home State of Rhode Island, the Providence Journal, is losing three extraordinary journalists. Columnists M. Charles Bakst, better known as Charlie; reporter Scott MacKay; and Mark Arsenault have covered politics in Rhode Island and around the country for a combined total of about 70 years, and they are retiring from the paper as of today. There is a larger story about what is happening to America's newspapers, but my purpose is not to talk about that but about them.

All of them are gifted writers, and all have brought to the Journal sharp eyes for detail, long memories, and distinctive voices. They will be sorely missed.

Scott is a particular friend, and I am sorry I will no longer have the pleasure of reading Scott's colorful political takes on the State we both love. I hope he will return to the Providence Newspaper Guild "Follies" to continue his traditional role emceeing that evening of alleged music, wit, and humor.

I wish well to Mark Arsenault, whose talent supports a bright future in whatever new endeavors he chooses to pursue.

But the remainder of my remarks will be about Charlie Bakst. If you are from Rhode Island and involved in politics, you know Charlie Bakst. You see him in the statehouse, at city hall. You see him at fundraisers and roasts and meatball dinners and clambakes, and you see him at lunch at Angelo's on Federal hill.

Everywhere there is politics—and in Rhode Island, that is everywhere—Charlie is there, soaking in the scene, talking to people, and commenting on the food.

Everything is grist for what Charlie is pleased to call his "excellent columns." Charlie's memory for history and for detail is legendary, as is his miraculous success at landing interviews that are either totally forbidden or extraordinarily difficult to get. He has jumped into limousines and lain in wait by backdoors. He has talked with United States Presidents, past and future. He has questioned Senators, Governors, party leaders, political operatives, even world leaders. If you have ever been involved in politics in Rhode Island, chances are you have been confronted by Charlie Bakst's red suspenders, unkempt hair, and ever-present tape recorder, and chances are that afterwards, you found something

in what he wrote to be annoyed about. But in the end, that is the way we in politics are supposed to feel.

As the saying goes: If a politician doesn't feel a little twinge of anxiety when he hears that newspaper thump on the front porch in the morning, the paper is not doing its job.

Charlie always did his job. Journalism is in Charlie's blood. At summer camp in Hampstead, NH, in the 1950s, he announced baseball scores at the camp's daily flags ceremonies. "In retrospect," he wrote, "an early dangerous sign of Journalist Ahead."

At Brown, he became editor in chief of the Brown Daily Herald. He went on to earn his masters from the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and later returned to Rhode Island to join the Providence Journal, eventually becoming statehouse bureau chief and political columnist. Politics, too, was a lifelong passion.

In another formative summer camp experience, he listened to radio broadcasts of the 1956 Democratic Convention. I will confess that I was probably not 1 year old then and not listening very closely. At the time, then-Senator John F. Kennedy narrowly missed winning his party's Vice Presidential nomination.

"Believe it or not, that helped hook me on politics," Charlie wrote decades later.

Well, it is not that difficult to believe. Charlie's writing betrays a sense of wonder at the pageantry of politics and a fierce belief in government's obligation to the people that it serves. Charlie told it like he saw it, and when he saw a public servant abusing the public trust, he said so.

"I must say I've never lacked for copy," Charlie told the New York Times in 2001. His columns have ripped into public figures for corruption, dishonesty, and for incompetence.

In a column written as New Orleans staggered in the violent wake of Hurricane Katrina, his outrage is visceral:

America has become a laughingstock. To think that people could suffer here for days on rooftops or terraces or in a sports arena or convention center without rudimentary help like food or water, amid lawlessness and stench, surrounded by death.

He ended with an invocation of Jimmy Carter:

Wouldn't it be nice to have a government as good and decent as the American people?

This is Charlie Bakst's dream for America and his dream for our Ocean State, and his columns have always prodded us toward that dream.

He is particularly outspoken when he sees injustice and oppression. He sought out leaders in the civil rights movement, interviewing Representative JOHN LEWIS and Cesar Chavez, among others.

He found unsung Rhode Island heroes, who worked on behalf of the homeless or the poor or the disadvantaged, and told their stories. He showed special courage in his unwavering advocacy for the rights of gays and les-

bians, particularly the long struggle for equal marriage, even when some readers took vocal offense.

Charlie is also obsessed with baseball and with his beloved Red Sox in particular. The team was a family affair in the Bakst household. Charlie writes of many trips to Fenway Park with his late father Lester and his brother Arthur.

His first game at Fenway—at age 8—happened to be on April 30, 1952, the last game Ted Williams played before he shipped out to Korea.

Ted Williams was a particular hero, and years after that first game, Charlie's colleagues at the Journal gave him, as a 50th birthday gift, a lifetime membership to the Ted Williams Museum in St. Petersburg, FL. Charlie visited the museum and immediately collared his tour guide to suggest corrections to the exhibit.

Charlie followed baseball all over the country, and maintained a love affair with food, from buffet table fare at local fundraisers to historic restaurants such as Angelo's, where his personal bottle of olive oil, stashed in the kitchen, has "BAKST" written across the top in black ink.

These interests—baseball and food—came together in columns disclosing that at Safeco Field, home of the Seattle Mariners, you can eat everything from sushi and pad thai to chowder and deep-fried mushrooms, not to mention a half-pound Home Run Dog just outside the ballpark.

At Petco Park, home of the San Diego Padres, Charlie reported on shrimp avocado salad, barbecued ribs, fish tacos, garlic fries, veggie dogs, Oreo cookie cheesecake, and cappuccino.

I was glad when Charlie was able to stop by one of my regular community dinners in East Providence last year. Our M&M cookies made it into his Sunday column.

Finally, we have seen Charlie's deep and abiding love for his family: his wife Elizabeth, and his daughters Maggie, Diane, and their families. I hope in his retirement he will get to see more of them, and to spend more time with Diane and her family in Italy, as he once wrote he would like to do.

But no matter what he chooses to do next, I hope Rhode Island will find a way not to lose Charlie's unique voice, his rich memory, after, I believe, 36 years of journalism in Rhode Island, and the impassioned commitment that he brought to his profession.

Of his friend, WJAR investigative reporter Jim Taricani, Charlie once wrote this:

[B]Being a journalist is more than a job. It is a burden, a pleasure, and an honor.

Well, Charlie, working with you for the past 20 years has been a burden, a pleasure, and an honor. I look forward to talking with you for many years to come, and I wish you and Mark and Scott well in your retirement.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. DORGAN, be given time to speak.

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

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. President.

FIGHTING FOR MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILIES

Mr. President, last week, our Nation celebrated Labor Day for the 114th year. We have come a long way since 1894.

On my lapel, I wear a pendant that is a depiction of a canary in a bird cage. Some 100 years ago, around the time Labor Day began, mine workers used to take a canary down into the mines. If the canary died from toxic gas or a lack of oxygen, the mine worker knew he had to immediately get out of the mine. He had no union in those days strong enough to protect him and no government in those days that cared enough to protect him.

In those days, a child born around that time in our country—100 or so years ago—had a life expectancy of 46, 47, 48 years. A child born today in our great country has a life expectancy about three decades longer than that. Much of that is not just high-tech medicine and chemotherapy and heart transplants, that kind of thing; most of the increased life expectancy in this country is about Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security and workers' compensation, protections for workers, a prohibition on child labor, safe drinking laws, clean air and pure food and drug laws—that kind of progress that has been made in this country that helps people live longer, happier, healthier lives.

Thanks to the workers' rights movement, employees today, especially, enjoy better wages, better working conditions, better protections against discrimination.

But as I travel around my State—I have held almost 120 community roundtables, inviting a cross section of 15, 20, 25 people, to listen to their concerns and to tell me of their dreams, and what we can do in my office, and to help them locally in their communities—it is clear our Nation's recent economic policies have not adequately benefited workers.

The American dream—the promise that if you work hard and play by the rules, your economic future will be bright—should be the rule, but too often it is the exception.

As I travel the State, I hear about widespread economic anxiety and a betrayed middle class. I hear from Ohio-

ans worried about record high gas prices and food prices. I hear from people from Galion to Gallipolis worried about good-paying jobs continuing to move overseas. I hear people from Ashland to Lima worried about health insurance that costs more and covers less.

I hear from food bank administrators from Hocking County and from Lucas County struggling to keep up with demand, like Mike from the Warren County United Way, who estimates that some 90 percent of local food bank patrons are working people, many holding more than one job.

I hear from Ohioans who have, without complaint, dedicated their lives to hard work, only to see their financial security pulled out from under them, like Richard Wyers of Lorain in northern Ohio, a steelworker whose pension was slashed because his now-bankrupt employer had simply not set enough money aside for payouts to that pension.

The Government agency administering the defunct firm's assets has told Richard he cannot even keep the money he has already received. In all, he owes more than \$50,000. It is not a mistake he made but a mistake they made. Unfortunately, Richard is not alone. Nearly 2,500 former employees of the same bankrupt steel company have been notified by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation that they have received overpayments this year.

In other parts of the State, workers are facing more bad news. Bruce of Wilmington has worked for ABX—the air cargo provider for DHL—for 24 years. He is married with five children, two of whom are in college. So you can imagine Bruce's anger when, earlier this year, DHL announced it will pull its business from ABX and that more than 8,000 workers at Bruce's Wilmington Air Park will lose their jobs. Bruce is not looking for a Government handout. He wants to work so he can support his family and send his kids to college.

In Norwalk last week, 20 miles from where I grew up, in Mansfield, 500 employees were sent home from their jobs at Norwalk Furniture when executives had to halt operations. That is 500 more people who want to work but can't.

In Tiffin, more than 100 workers are looking for jobs after the American Standard plant there—a local institution for almost 125 years—closed its doors in December.

In Van Wert, auto workers such as Sarah Sargent have seen their lives turned upside down since management locked them out of their plant earlier this year. The reason for the lockout: Sarah and her 330 coworkers simply would not accept a substantial wage cut and a benefits freeze, so the company is contemplating a move to Mexico.

General Motors is closing its plant in Moraine, a decision that will cost 1,200 Ohioans their livelihoods.

This string of bad news in Ohio can be blamed in part on our current recess-

sion. But that misses the larger point. For the last 7 years, the labor force has worked harder than ever, leading to huge gains in productivity. Yet CEO salaries and bonuses, as we know, went through the roof, middle-class Americans' wages stagnated, and more families slipped below the poverty line.

While China manipulated its currency and ignored labor and environmental standards, corporations took the bait and abandoned American communities. And while hedge fund managers irresponsibly leveraged real estate holdings, millions of Americans lost their homes to foreclosure. In other words, while Wall Street enjoyed an inflated stock market and a so-called economic expansion, most Americans actually became worse off.

Despite these struggles wrought by 7 years of wrongheaded economic policies, American workers are standing strong and fighting for a better future. At my roundtables in Ohio, I still hear the hope and the determination that defines my State and defines this great Nation. I hear from community leaders and entrepreneurs with exciting plans for the future, such as George Ward of Kirtland, in northeast Ohio, the president of his local firefighters' union and a small business owner. George's grandfather was a coal miner and his father was a United Auto worker. It is this working class background that has motivated him to fight for expanded health care access—not just for his fellow firefighters but for his employees and their families.

He is, in his own words, "trying to live the American Dream," "trying to make a difference" in his community.

I hear from loyal workers who take pride in their work and are valued by their employers, such as Richard Ade, a security guard in Cleveland, who, after more than 5 years of stagnant wages, worked with his employer and outside groups to ensure that he and his coworkers got the raises they deserved—which, ultimately, they did. Or there is the story I heard about four long-serving employees of Miba Bearings in McConnelsville. These four employees have been with the company for 55 years. They have worked everywhere in the plant: from the production line, to final inspection, to shipping. When I asked if they were still productive, the company's human capital manager answered with obvious pride: "All of our employees are productive."

We need a government that similarly values loyalty and work ethic. For too long, those in power have ignored hard-working Americans, have ignored the needs and dreams of the middle class, and have instead catered to the wealthiest Americans, and this is in a country where always in the past we rewarded work.

But it does not have to be that way. In Ohio, Governor Ted Strickland—elected 2 short years ago—already is doing great work to attract new business, to improve educational opportunities, and to revitalize the economy.

Here in Washington we can adopt measures right now—in honor of Labor Day—that would make a difference in working people's lives, like extending unemployment insurance. If Congress does not act before early October, 800,000 unemployed Americans will stop getting their much-needed checks, including 330,000 from high unemployment States such as Ohio. We must expand insurance for those vulnerable citizens.

We should make sick leave a right of employment, not a privilege. Employees should not have to choose between attending to their health and losing their job. We should pass the Employee Free Choice Act, which would allow more workers to bargain collectively. We know that means higher wages, better benefits, a stronger middle class, a more prosperous America.

We should provide tax credits for alternative energy investment, which would help wean us off foreign oil and create new green collar jobs. In my State, the Governor and I talk about making Ohio the "Silicon Valley" of alternative energy. We can do that with some help from the Federal Government. We can do what we need to do in our State.

Simply put, we need to celebrate Labor Day by turning our attention to revamping our economic policies and changing the direction of this country. The best way we can honor our Nation's workers is to set our Nation on that new path—a path that fights for middle-class families everywhere and strengthens our country.

Mr. President, I yield back.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we are on the Defense authorization bill, so I wanted to make a couple of comments, not about an amendment, but about two issues that I hope those at the Pentagon will take note of. Sometimes things don't change very quickly and sometimes they don't change at all with respect to the way things are done at the Pentagon.

When I came to Congress, I joined a military reform caucus to try to reform the way things are done at the Pentagon, but some folks there still believe there is an inexhaustible amount of money in pursuit of their desires. An example of that is the unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs—airplanes without pilots. It is a growing part of a number of services. But what is happening in both the Army and the Air Force is that both services are building and buying unmanned aerial vehicles in what I think are duplicative programs. One calls their airplane the Predator. The other calls it the Warrior. The folks over at the Pentagon can't determine who should be the executive agency that oversees the unmanned aerial vehicles. So you have two services doing essentially the same thing.

Who wants to fly at 12,000 or 20,000 feet above the battlefield with an unmanned aerial vehicle? Well, the Air Force does, but the Army would like to as well. So one builds a plane called the

Predator and one builds a plane called the Warrior. They both have missions that appear to me to be duplicative. You have duplicate spending on research and development, duplicate spending on the airplanes themselves, duplicate spending on the missions inside the Pentagon. Who pays the cost? The American taxpayer. This is not new, but the competition inside the Pentagon shouldn't cause the American taxpayer to have to pay for inefficiency and duplication.

We have had discussions about this at hearings. It appears nothing is happening to describe what ought to happen. In this case it ought to be the Air Force who has the executive agency for UAVs. Former chief of the Air Force, Buzz Moseley, who I think was an extraordinary Air Force chief of staff, tried to resolve this and could not because he ran into the competition inside the Pentagon on this issue. My hope is the American taxpayer will not have to continue to pay for duplication of effort inside the Pentagon.

We all support this mission because it greatly helps our soldiers, but I don't support the kind of spending that unnecessarily duplicates efforts between the services. That certainly has been the case with respect to unmanned aerial vehicles.

I understand the Army wants to have—and should have—unmanned aerial vehicles above the battlefield at 1,000 feet to 2,000 feet. But if they are flying unmanned aerial vehicles at 12,000 and 20,000 feet with sensors, it seems to me that this is an Air Force mission. Yet we now have two branches of the service duplicating the effort and the American taxpayer pays the bill. I hope they will get this straight at the Pentagon so that we begin to avoid some of these duplicative costs.

One other issue I might mention is the issue of privatizing housing on our military bases. This started in the Clinton administration and continues through the Bush administration. The proposition is to take housing inside a military base that already exists and turn it over to a private contractor and say to the private contractor: We will give you this free of charge. You can own all of this housing. You sign a contract with us saying that you will maintain these houses for 50 years. Then we will pay soldiers a monthly housing allowance, they in turn will pay that to the private contractor, and everybody is happy.

The question is: What does this cost the American taxpayer? The military says: Well, it gets housing built more quickly because they will not only turn over existing housing stock free of charge to a contractor, but they will have the contractor build new housing and then fund it through the monthly housing allowances that soldiers hand over to the independent contractor.

It is interesting to me that we now have some foreign companies that own military housing on American military bases, and they get it by signing a con-

tract saying we promise to maintain this housing for 50 years. Two of North Dakota's bases are now in a contract that presumably may get done next year.

I have raised a lot of questions about it because the way the Pentagon has calculated this, they say it is better for the Pentagon. What about the taxpayer? Is it better for the American taxpayer? How is it that we decide to turn over housing stock—much of which is almost brand-new—free of charge with a contract to a private company in exchange for a signature that they will maintain it for the next 50 years? It seems to me as though there are a lot of questions that have been unanswered, going back to the Clinton administration and through the Bush administration, that the American taxpayers ought to have answered. There ought to be a fundamental review of what is the total cost here, including depreciation taken by the private contractor and others. What is the total cost of this privatization of housing on our military bases? What is the total cost to the taxpayer?

I wanted to mention that in the context of the Defense authorization bill, because I think these are a couple of things that ought to be considered.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. President, the presentation the Presiding Officer just gave on the floor of the Senate reminded me that—I believe it was yesterday, or perhaps the day before—when it was announced that our trade deficit for the month was, I think, \$62 billion, and nearly \$25 billion of that was with the country of China. My colleague who just spoke is from Ohio. I was thinking about the continued growth of exports from China into our country, building up a very large trade deficit that we have with the rest of the world and especially with China. The State of Ohio has been especially hard hit. That is where they used to make Huffy bicycles and don't anymore because all of those Huffy bicycles are now made in China. All the Ohio workers were fired because they made \$11 an hour plus benefits and that is way too much money, the company thought, to pay people working in a factory to make bicycles. So they all got fired. These bicycles are now made in China by people who work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, for 30 cents, 40 cents an hour. By the way, I have described many times for my colleagues the last day of work with those Ohio workers after they were fired. On their last day of work they put a pair of shoes in the parking space where their car used to sit. So as they drove away, all that was left was a pair of shoes, and it was their plaintive way to say to that company: You can move our jobs to China, but you are not going to fill our shoes.

Many workers across this country are discovering the same fate. I have described—I won't today—but Fig Newton cookies. Apparently it costs too much to have people shovel fig paste in

New Jersey, so now when you buy them, you are buying Mexican food because it is made in Monterey, Mexico. Why? You can hire people for a whole lot less money in Mexico than you have to pay for workers in New Jersey. The list goes on and on and on. The unbelievable part of this is we actually, as a country—and this Congress, yes, provided a tax break to a company that says: I am going to fire my American workers and move the jobs overseas.

I have tried, I believe, four times on the floor of the Senate to offer amendments and get votes on amendments that would shut down the tax break for shipping jobs overseas. On each occasion, we have lost that vote. It is unbelievable to me. I mean, it is not as if I have colleagues who will stand up and say: Count me in for wanting to ship American jobs overseas, but that is exactly their position when they vote to continue tax incentives for companies who fire their American workers and go in search of 10-cent-an-hour labor. And yes, that exists. Yes, it exists, that workers in Ohio and elsewhere are told: If you can't compete with 12-year-olds who work 12 hours a day and get 12 cents an hour, tough luck, you are out of a job.

This country has not yet come to grips with the question of whether that is what we spent 100 years creating a competitive, international environment to compete with. Does that make sense, that we should ask American workers to compete with that standard? I don't think so. But I was reminded of it by my colleague from Ohio discussing what is happening.

Just this week, again, we see the unbelievable trade deficit for one single month, over \$60 billion again, and that is money that has to be repaid. That is money that has to be repaid from our country and our taxpayers to a foreign government. It is one part of a whole series of things that reflect a very urgent situation for this economy.

You wake up this morning and you see another major investment bank is going to be sold. The prices for its stock have collapsed. You wake up last weekend and you hear the Treasury Secretary is preparing to take over, effectively, Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. A couple of weeks ago, Bear Stearns goes belly up. The largest mortgage banks go belly up. We see the largest trade deficits in history, the largest budget deficits in history, and a fiscal policy that is completely off the rail. We have a Presidential campaign, and we wake up every single day and we see these unbelievable attacks: Lipstick on a pig. Who are you offending? It is unbelievable to me.

Ours is a country that I think is being threatened to lose its dominance in the world on critical issues, including trade, fiscal policy, energy, and a whole series of issues. Yet, somehow, if you want to speak seriously about policy, you get interrupted by a bunch of shysters who have decided that they want to hijack the political system to

talk about irrelevancies. It is unbelievable to me.

I came from a forum that we are holding on energy. Energy is a very important issue, and it appears to me the tipping point was finally \$4 a gallon for a gallon of gasoline. It ran up double in a year, from July to July. The price of oil and gas doubled in a year. There is no visible way for anyone to take a look at the numbers on supply and demand and say: Oh, that was justified. We understand why the price doubled in a year. That evidence doesn't exist, by the way. There is no one who can come to the floor of the Senate and say: Well, I know why the price of oil doubled in a year and the price of gasoline doubled in a year; because nothing happened in that year with respect to supply and demand that justified it.

What I think happened is what has happened in so many years of our Government. Regulators who are brain dead, flat out asleep like Rip Van Winkle, while everything is happening around them, decided we are not going to watch, so speculators took over the oil market and drove it straight up. Recently it has come back down because some of that same speculative money, just like a hurricane, came right back out of it.

It is not only in this area. It is in the subprime mortgage area. Regulators—again, completely brain dead—and I am sure they watched television in the morning, perhaps while they ate some Grape Nuts at the kitchen table, and they saw some advertisements by the mortgage bankers and others that said: Hey, have you been bankrupt? Do you have bad credit? You can't pay your bills? Come to us, we have a mortgage for you. We have all seen those ads over and over and over again. Guess what. Those ads were a reflection of what was going on in an industry, right under the noses of regulators who didn't seem to care, in which they built an unbelievable system of bad mortgages and paired them with some decent mortgages, slicing them up into securities. It is like when they used to pack sawdust into sausage and then sliced and diced them, and then, by the way, because they had this carnival going on, they securitize all of these mortgages, move them up the line into hedge funds all over the world, and then somebody decided one day: You know what? These are bad mortgages. We don't even know who has them. We don't know where they are in these securities.

Why were they bad mortgages? Well, because regulators didn't seem to care and there were advertised mortgages that said: If you have bad credit, come to us. By the way, here is the mortgage we will give you. We will give you a mortgage where you don't have to pay any principal for a long time; just pay interest only. You may not want that. We will give you a better mortgage than that. We will give you a mortgage where you don't have to pay any principal and you don't have to pay all of

the interest. You can put the principal and some of the interest on the back side of your loan. In fact, if that doesn't satisfy you, to get a mortgage from us at a teaser rate where you don't have to pay any principal and you don't have to pay all of the interest, we have even a better deal for you. You can get what we call a no documentation loan. We won't require that you document income. Or, you can get a partial doc—no doc, partial doc—no interest, no principal. In fact, one company said: You know what? You don't have to pay any principal or any interest. We will make the first 12 payments for you.

Now, is it surprising that an industry that was built on a foundation of greed, by brokers making big fees, putting mortgages in the hands of people with teaser rates who could not possibly afford to make the payments 3 years later when the interest rates were reset—is it surprising that the tent collapsed when mortgages began to reset and people couldn't possibly afford to make the payments? We have people walking around here scratching their head in this town wondering what on Earth happened. Where were the smartest guys in the room on Wall Street? Where were the smartest guys in the room who were securitizing these securities and sending them up the road so everybody could make money on the way, understanding that even as they locked in these mortgages with no documentation, no principal payments, perhaps no interest payments, or at least only partial interest payments, the little key on the bottom of the contract was: Prepayment penalties. Sign this line and you can't get out of it. Then, when the interest rates reset to triple or quadruple what they were and you can't make the payment, we are sorry, you can't get out of it.

That is what allowed the big shots to price these mortgages with respect to their expectation of future income in the way they did. But is it a surprise that this whole thing collapsed? That is just one more example, and it has happened in energy with speculation and in virtually every area with regulators who decided they have no interest in regulating. Now we bear the cost of an economy that almost seems, to some, in free fall.

We have massive problems with a trade policy that doesn't work. It continues to ship jobs overseas and to load the American people with massive quantities of debt that must be repaid. We have a fiscal policy that the President says is only about \$400 billion, \$450 billion offtrack. But, of course, that is not true. He knows that.

The question is, How much do you have to borrow in the coming fiscal year? That is closer to \$700 billion. So you have a total of over 10 percent of the country's GDP that represents red ink for this year alone, trade and fiscal policy debt. We can add to that the massive problem in energy. I will talk about that for a moment.

I have talked about speculation and the role of the speculators and of the regulators who didn't want to watch. Now we are having summit meetings and substantial angst about what we do to put this back on track. My interest is in doing a lot of everything. In my judgment, we should drill, and drill more. I have had a bill introduced for a year and a half that opens the eastern gulf to drilling. In fact, all the gangs and the folks who are talking about these things on the Senate floor don't want to open that. As you can see on this chart, this is water off of Cuba that will be leased. There are 500,000 barrels of oil a day in this water off Cuba that is being leased. The Canadians are leasing, Spain is leasing, and we cannot lease because our oil companies cannot do anything in this area because of the embargo against Cuba.

That is absolutely absurd. We ought to drill. We ought to conserve. We ought to take everything we use every day—appliances and lights—and we ought to make them all efficient. We are moving quickly in that area.

Finally, we have to move dramatically in the area of renewable energy. Every 15 years, it ought not be a surprise that we huff and puff and thumb our suspenders and bloat about what we are going to do next, about where we are going to drill next. How about something that is game changing? How about we change it so in 15 years from now we are not saying the same things and that we are moving toward hydrogen fuel cell vehicles? Seventy percent of the oil we use is in our vehicles. It is a huge part of our consumption of oil.

To back up just a moment, we suck 85 million barrels a day out of this planet, and one-fourth of it is used in the United States. We have an appetite for one-fourth of the oil produced every day. Sixty-five percent of the oil comes from off of our shores, from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Venezuela, Iraq, and elsewhere. The fact is, we have to find a way to be less dependent upon foreign oil. We are always going to use oil and coal. We have to use it differently, in my judgment.

But the question for us is, what do we do that is truly game changing? How about hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, and before that perhaps electric drive vehicles. Hydrogen is everywhere. You can take energy from the wind and produce electricity and use electricity in the process of electrolysis and generate hydrogen from water and use hydrogen for vehicle fuel. You will get twice the effective power to wheel and put water vapor out of the tailpipe. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

We are not going to have game-changing strategies if every 15 years the next effort on energy is to figure out where we drill next. Let's drill next, but let's do something that makes us less dependent on the need for this oil, particularly oil coming from outside of our country.

It is, I expect, pretty depressing for the American people who have the mir-

acle in our Constitution of every second year, every even-numbered year, being able to grab the American steering wheel and decide which way to nudge America.

All the power in this country is in the power of one—one person casting one vote on one day. It must be pretty disappointing to them to take a look at the quality of the debate in our political system at a time when the economy of this country is at risk, when there is so much to do and an urgent need to make strong, good decisions, and see the irrelevancy come out every single morning, particularly from one campaign. This country deserves much better.

I hope between now and this election we will begin to see the attack dogs that we saw at work in 2000 and 2004, which defined a new low in American politics. In 2004, one of our colleagues who earned three Purple Hearts in Vietnam, went to Vietnam and served his country, was defined by the attack dogs as someone who was less than patriotic. That was unbelievable. But that same effort is at work in this campaign. This country deserves a political system and campaigns that give them answers. Where would you take America? Where would you want to lead this country?

I must say we only have less than 2 months remaining, and the long-term future of this country depends on us making good, right decisions about energy, fiscal policy, health care, and education, and about so many different issues, including trade policy, which is the discussion I started with.

Mr. President, I started by speaking of Ohio and trade policy because my colleague, Senator BROWN from Ohio, has written a book about trade, and we talked a great bit about it. It is but one of a series of very serious challenges that he, I, and others should expect will be discussed in some detail in this campaign. So I hope in the next 60 days we will begin to see some of that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WEBB. 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. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask the Chair what is the business of the Senate?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate is considering S. 3001.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I introduced an amendment earlier today to S. 3001. I would like to take some time to explain this amendment to the Senate. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes.

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

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, we are in an odd situation in the business of Gov-

ernment at the moment in that the international authority for the United States to be operating in Iraq will expire at the end of this year. The U.N. mandate, through the U.N. Security Council, expires at that time.

Since last November, the administration has been negotiating what they call the Strategic Framework Agreement that is intended to replace the international authority of the U.N. mandate. There have been two questions that have come up with respect to what the administration is doing. The first is the timeline.

There are indications from Iraq that the Iraqi Government negotiators have serious questions that weren't anticipated before. But the larger question is, what entity of the Federal Government has the authority to enter the United States into a long-term relationship with another government?

These are serious issues. I submit the conditions under which we will continue to operate in Iraq militarily, diplomatically, economically, and even culturally are not the sole business of any administration. We have questions about the legal justification under domestic and international law for the United States to operate militarily—and quasi-militarily, by the way—given the hundreds of thousands of independent contractors that are now essentially performing military functions in that country. There are questions about the process by which the U.S. Government decides upon and enters into long-term relations with another nation—any nation. In that regard, we have serious questions here about the very workings of our constitutional system of Government.

This administration has claimed repeatedly, since last November, that it has the right to negotiate and enter into an agreement that will set the future course of our relations with Iraq without the agreement or even the ratification of the U.S. Congress. The administration claims that the justification for this authority is the 2002 congressional authorization for the use of force in Iraq and, as a fallback position, the President's inherent authority, from the perspective of this administration, as Commander in Chief.

Both of these justifications are patently wrong. The 2002 congressional authorization to use force in Iraq has nothing to do with negotiation with a government, which replaced the Saddam Hussein government, as to the future relations culturally, economically, diplomatically, and militarily between our two countries. On the other hand, we are now faced with the reality that the U.N. mandate will expire at the end of this year, and that expiration will terminate the authority under international law for the United States to be operating in Iraq at a time when we have hundreds of thousands of Americans on the ground in that country.

I and other colleagues have been warning of this serious disconnect for

10 months. Many of us were trying to say last November that the intention of this administration was to proceed purely with an executive agreement to drag this out until the Congress was going to go out of session, as we are about to do, and then to present essentially a fait accompli in the sense that with the expiration of the international mandate from the United Nations at the end of the year, something would have to be done, and that something would be an executive agreement that, to this point, Congress has not even been allowed to examine.

We have not been able to see one word of this agreement. We tried to energize the Congress. We have met with all of the appropriate administration officials. There have been hearings. There have been assurances from the administration that they will consult at the appropriate time. We have not seen anything. So we are faced with this situation that is something of a constitutional coup d'état by this administration. At risk is a further expansion of the powers of the Presidency, the result of which will be to affirm, in many minds, that the President—any President—no longer needs the approval of Congress to enter into long-term relations with another country, in effect, committing us to obligations that involve our national security, our economic well-being, our diplomatic posture around the world, without the direct involvement of the U.S. Congress.

That is not what the Constitution intended. It is not in the best interest of our country. This amendment, which I filed today, is designed to prevent this sort of imbalance from occurring and, at the same time, it recognizes the realities of the timelines that are now involved with respect to the loss of international authority for our presence in Iraq at the end of this year.

This amendment is a sense of the Congress. On the one hand, it is a sense of the Congress that we work with the United Nations to extend the U.N. mandate up to an additional year, giving us some additional international authority for being in Iraq, taking away the pressure of this timeline that could be used to justify an agreement that the Congress hasn't had the ability to examine, but also saying that an extension of the U.N. mandate would end at such time as a Strategic Framework Agreement and a Status of Forces Agreement between the United States and Iraq are mutually agreed upon.

The amendment also makes the point that the Strategic Framework Agreement now being negotiated between the United States and Iraq poses significant, long-term national security implications for this country. That would be the sense of the Congress. We need to be saying that; the Iraqis need to hear it.

The amendment also puts Congress and the administration on record to the reality that the Bush administra-

tion has fully agreed to consult with the Congress regarding all the details of the Strategic Framework Agreement and the Status of Forces Agreement and that there would be copies of the full text of these agreements provided to the chairman and ranking minority members of the appropriate committees in the House and the Senate prior to the entry into either of those agreements.

Importantly, it also says any Strategic Framework Agreement that has been mutually agreed upon by the negotiators from our executive branch and Iraqi Government officials will cease to have effect unless it is approved by the Congress within 180 days of the entry into force of that agreement.

On the one hand, this agreement recognizes the realities of where we are in terms of timelines, but on the other, it protects the constitutional processes by which we are entering into long-term relationships with other countries, whether it is Iraq or Cameroon or Burundi or pick a country. We need to preserve this process. It does it in a way which will not disrupt our operations in Iraq.

I urge my colleagues to join me on this amendment and protect the prerogatives of the Congress under the Constitution of the United States.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. 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. REID. Mr. President, it is good that we are debating the Defense authorization bill. It is appropriate we are debating this bill at a time when certainly America's security is at risk.

As I indicated, we are debating the Defense authorization bill, which ensures America's military capabilities are strong and focused on the major threats to our great country.

We live in a dangerous and unpredictable world. It is a world where North Korea's leader has fallen ill. This illness could put a nuclear-armed regime at risk of implosion because there is no successor named or thought of, to our knowledge, in North Korea.

We live in a world where Latin American regimes throw out U.S. Ambassadors without notice, where an unchecked Russia can undermine young democracies from West to East.

I was recently in Bolivia. I had not too long ago been in Georgia. I met with part of their Government today a few feet from this Chamber. So we have to be concerned about an unchecked Russia.

Our dangerous world calls for leaders with sound judgment, not those with temperament prone to recklessness.

As we debate the Defense bill this week, we must consider the most important national security question facing the Nation today: Will we stick with the same failed, out-of-touch foreign policy of George Bush, DICK CHENEY, and JOHN McCAIN, which military experts and historians call the worst foreign policy in our Nation's history or will we change course to a more tough, responsible foreign policy that will make us more secure?

The choice could not be more important, but the answer could not be clearer. Senator OBAMA and Senate Democrats stand for responsible change. We believe we must end the war in Iraq and bring the war on terror to where the terrorists actually live and where they plot. We know our focus must return to Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida network in Afghanistan and Pakistan and wherever they might be.

This approach stands on the right side of the American people and the right side of history. According to recent press reports, even the Bush administration has begun to align its actions with this policy.

Take Pakistan, for example. For years, Senator OBAMA and Senate Democrats have been calling on the Bush administration to hunt down Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaida network, wherever they may be located. As it became clear that al-Qaida had made Pakistan the central focus of its operation, Democrats called on the President to make Pakistan a central focus of our war to defeat al-Qaida.

Here is what Senator OBAMA said last year:

... Let me be clear. There are terrorists holed up in those mountains who murdered 3,000 Americans. They are plotting to strike again. ... If we have actionable intelligence about high-value terrorist targets and [the Pakistani leadership] won't act, we will. I will not hesitate to use military force to take out terrorists who pose a direct threat to America.

While Senator OBAMA sounded the alarm about the al-Qaida threat in Pakistan and called for a forceful and comprehensive strategy to fight this threat, George Bush and JOHN McCAIN chose, stunningly, to ignore it. The President kept the bulk of our ground troops and our special operations forces and our intelligence assets tied down in Iraq in a war that had nothing to do with Osama bin Laden and the terrorists who attacked.

Republicans, led by JOHN McCAIN, attacked OBAMA's approach to forcefully go after al-Qaida in Pakistan. Senator McCAIN even had the bad judgment on the campaign trail this past February to call the Obama approach naive.

Here we stand a year later. The al-Qaida threat in Pakistan has grown far more dangerous. The need for tough action, as Senator OBAMA called for last year, is even more urgent. BARACK OBAMA was right; George Bush, DICK CHENEY, and JOHN McCAIN were wrong.

Then, yesterday, the newspapers reported that senior Bush administration officials had begun doing what OBAMA

called for a long time ago: go after al-Qaida safe havens in Pakistan, reportedly including military operations against terrorist camps. That is precisely the Obama approach MCCAIN called naive. But news reports indicate we are already starting to see results.

Given the known history of Bush-McCain foreign policy mistakes that we have all suffered through for the past 8 years, I have concerns and questions about the Bush administration's actions. It is one thing to take OBAMA's playbook, but it is another thing to call the right plays.

I think we should all ask tough questions and demand the White House explain their Pakistan strategy in greater detail to give us confidence that they will get the job done right.

The Bush administration's adoption of the Obama plan came months too late but, nevertheless, better late than never. The shift is not just limited to Pakistan. Across the globe, the Bush administration is quietly acknowledging that Senator OBAMA's vision has been right all along.

On Afghanistan, where for years Senator OBAMA and Senate Democrats have been demanding more resources and a new strategy, things are changing. Senator MCCAIN, on the other hand, said: "Afghanistan is not in trouble because of our diversion to Iraq."

Listen to that again. MCCAIN said: "Afghanistan is not in trouble because of our diversions to Iraq."

That is a direct quote.

After years of resisting, Republicans in recent weeks have been inching toward the Obama plan for reinforcing Afghanistan. On Iran, where Bush and MCCAIN criticized OBAMA's vision for tough and effective face-to-face diplomacy, even as they quietly agreed to face-to-face diplomacy and started sending State Department officials to negotiations with the Iranians. And on Iraq, where Bush has finally begun to slowly inch toward the Obama plan for holding the Iraqis more accountable by putting in place a timeline for change in the military mission and the redeployment of our troops. But, of course, not JOHN MCCAIN.

Our country deserves more than token shifts and lipservice to change. It will take decisive leadership to reverse 8 long years of tragic foreign policy mistakes. That is exactly what Senator OBAMA and Senate Democrats offer: real responsible change.

Senator MCCAIN and his supporters are dead set against changing the Bush administration's failed policies. They have no plan for ending conflict, no plan for securing our country, no plan for bringing our troops home.

Republicans talk a lot about experience. But when you are the author, architect, and enabler of 8 years of devastating foreign policy mistakes, that is not experience; it is very bad judgment.

In the coming days, as we wrap up debate on the Defense authorization bill, Senators on both sides of the aisle

will have ample opportunity to make their positions known on these critical national security issues that will chart our course in the world for years to come.

It will also give the American people the opportunity to see who stands with failed policies of the past and who is ready to lead us to the change we need.

Senator LEVIN and Senator WARNER announced yesterday that today they would be happy to listen to what anyone had to say about amendments they wish to offer on this bill. The same applies to Monday. We need to move beyond where we are. There are some who want us to get virtually nothing done on this Defense authorization bill.

There are so many reasons why it is important we get this bill done. It would be the first time in five decades that this body has not passed a Defense authorization bill. This bill is loaded with provisions that are good for the security of our Nation, good for the maintenance of a military that is strong and vibrant, and make our troops happier—a 3.9-percent pay raise, among other items, they deserve and they need.

I have informed the two managers of the bill I think it is appropriate at this time that we file a cloture motion in an effort to bring this matter to a conclusion. We are going to have a vote on cloture on this most important bill sometime on Tuesday. I am going to work with the managers of the bill and Senator McCONNELL to find out what their wishes are. But we must move on. It would be a shame if we do not pass this legislation.

Having said all that—and I could say a lot more—one of the reasons we should pass this bill is because of Senator WARNER. I am sure the State of Virginia has had great legislators over the years. I don't know them all. I have served with a number of them. But I have to say that in my experience in Government, you don't run very often into somebody of the caliber of JOHN WARNER. The Commonwealth of Virginia has been so well served by this great American patriot, and he has devoted so much time—I was trying to come up in my mind on a percentage basis how much of his time has been spent on the defense duties he has.

Mr. WARNER. Thirty years.

Mr. REID. But the vast majority of his 30 years in the Senate, Mr. President, has been spent legislatively on securing the security of our Nation.

There will be other opportunities, I am confident, to express my admiration and respect and affection for JOHN WARNER, but I hope people on his side of the aisle appreciate him as much as we do. He is truly a wonderful legislator and human being. We need to get this bill done for him. Every Democrat will vote for cloture on this piece of legislation—there are 51 of us—and we need 9 Republicans to join with us so that we can finish this piece of legislation. I hope we can do that. It is the right thing to do, and I think it would

be a real slap in the face to one of America's great legislators not to complete this legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I am deeply humbled by the comments of the distinguished leader and many other colleagues, but I am optimistic. Senator LEVIN and I—who have spent a good deal of time with Leader McCONNELL this morning—believe there is a momentum on both sides to move to a conclusion. Senator LEVIN and I are going to talk to some particulars pretty soon, but I am pleased to say that I think our staffs are going to finish an agreement over this weekend on 60 amendments, just to give some idea of the magnitude of progress we have made thus far.

But I thank the distinguished leader for his personal remarks. We have had a long working relationship. We started together on a subcommittee in the Environment Committee years and years ago—20-some-odd years ago. That was the beginning of our long, marvelous friendship.

I thank the leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send to the desk a cloture motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 3001, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009.

Carl Levin, Patrick J. Leahy, Bernard Sanders, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Sheldon Whitehouse, Benjamin L. Cardin, Robert Menendez, Bill Nelson, Charles E. Schumer, Richard Durbin, Thomas R. Carper, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester, Jeff Bingaman, Harry Reid.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, first, let me thank the leader for his great support of this bill. I think the leadership on both sides really wants this bill to be adopted. We are going to have to move early next week to get it adopted if we are going to make it. We not only have other business to do in the Senate which is critical, but we have to get it to conference and get it back from conference and get a conference report voted on before we recess or adjourn. So we have a lot of work ahead of us.

But we are here. Senator WARNER and I and our staffs are here. We have met with a lot of Senators relative to their amendments. Our goal is the following: that on Monday, we enter into a unanimous consent agreement setting out what votes on what amendments would be held on Tuesday, both morning and afternoon. That is our goal.

We have spoken with many Senators about their amendments. As Senator WARNER just indicated, we hope to be able to clear perhaps 50 or 60 amendments, 15 or 20 of which are already cleared. That is our goal, to get our cleared amendments passed and to set up, in a unanimous consent proposal for Monday, the way in which we would vote on various amendments, with time agreements and whether there are 50 votes or 60 votes, and so forth, on Tuesday. That is our goal.

I would hope, for the reasons the majority leader just gave, that because this bill is so critically important to the men and women in the Army and to the security of this Nation—not just the Army but the men and women of our Armed Forces and to the security of this Nation—that we will get this bill passed. The only way we can get it passed is if sometime early next week we are able to pass it; otherwise, we cannot get the work done in conference and back here to the Senate and to the White House.

So I thank my good friend from Virginia. I think the comments of the majority leader are comments which should be shared by every single Member of this body relative to the capability and the leadership and the patriotism of Senator WARNER. It is always a pleasure to work with him. This may be one of our greatest challenges, but we have a long history of being able to work together on a bipartisan basis to address these kinds of challenges. He has led this committee. We have had many great members of the committee.

Staff is working very hard, and I am optimistic going into the weekend that we will be able to get that unanimous consent agreement worked out on Monday.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague.

We are working on a draft UC for Monday, and I wish to point out that those amendments which have been brought to our attention requiring votes, we are going to try to achieve that prior to the invoking of cloture; am I not correct?

Mr. LEVIN. The Senator is correct.

Mr. WARNER. And we are trying to protect, on both sides, an equal number of Senators who have come to us and sought that protection.

Mr. LEVIN. The Senator is correct.

Mr. WARNER. I thank Senators DEMINT and COBURN for working with us last night on an important issue not only to the underlying question of how this body is going to handle certain desires of individual Senators to get funds to their States, but it is the preservation of the jurisdiction of the authorizing committee, of our authorizing committee as well as other authorizing committees in the Senate. So that is fundamental to the resolution of that problem, and I think we have made progress there.

Mr. LEVIN. We have. There is no more fundamental question to this institution than the role of our commit-

tees and this institution vis-a-vis the executive branch and whether we are going to have a robust power of the purse or whether that is going to be diminished in any way. I think we are making great progress in showing to our colleagues the implications of some of the proposals, and we are going to continue to make progress in that regard.

Mr. WARNER. Now, Mr. President, I would suggest the Senator should now move to morning business and get off this bill. We are cleared on this side.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we move to morning business and that the first person recognized be Senator SANDERS, who is always very patient.

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

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I would just concur, if I might, with the fine words of Senator REID. I have not known Senator WARNER all that long, but clearly he is what a Senator should be. He is thoughtful, intelligent, and respectful of other points of view. While he and I may not agree on every issue, I have appreciated working with him, and I applaud him for his service to this country.

Mr. WARNER. I thank my colleague for his remarks.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I did want to say a word or two on the Defense authorization bill and to indicate that my staff has been working with the staff of Senators LEVIN and WARNER. I hope we can work out an agreement on an important amendment I have authored along with Senators FEINGOLD and WHITEHOUSE.

DEFENSE SPENDING

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this country has a \$9.7 trillion national debt. In addition, we obviously have enormous unmet infrastructure needs and social needs. Every American who drives on the road or goes over a bridge understands that we need to spend billions of dollars rebuilding our infrastructure. Forty-six million Americans have no health insurance. We have the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world. In other words, we as a nation have enormous needs, and it is incumbent upon the Congress to do everything we can to take a hard look at fraud, waste, and abuse in every agency of the U.S. Government, including the Defense Department.

I know many of my colleagues come down here and take a hard look at this issue. They take a hard look at that issue, but for some reason or another, looking at the Defense Department seems to be off their radar screen, and I think that is wrong. I think that is especially wrong given the fact that the budget we are looking at right now

for the Defense Department is over \$500 billion, excluding the money we spent in Iraq and Afghanistan, which is more than half of the discretionary budget of our country. So it seems to me that with regard to any of the agencies out there, we should be very active in taking a hard look at the waste, fraud, and abuse that takes place within the Defense authorization bill.

The amendment I am offering with Senators FEINGOLD and WHITEHOUSE is pretty simple and straightforward. Today, more than half of the spare parts in the Air Force warehouses—over \$18 billion—are not needed. That is \$18 billion in spare parts which are not needed. In fact, if you can believe it, the Air Force has on order \$235 million in inventory already identified as ready for disposal. They are spending \$235 million to bring inventory in which is going to go out because they do not need it. That may make sense to somebody, but it certainly does not make sense to me.

The truth is that this type of wasteful practice has gone on year after year, resulting in an enormous waste of taxpayer money, and it must be ended. Our amendment does three things: No. 1, it requires the Secretary of Defense to develop a comprehensive plan for improving the inventory system. No. 2, it requires the certification to Congress that the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Defense Logistics Agency have reduced their secondary inventory. No. 3, it fences off \$100 million in inventory purchases until the Secretary of Defense makes required certifications.

Mr. President, I would remind the Members of the Senate of one of the most significant speeches ever given by a President of the United States, and that President was Dwight David Eisenhower, who, as all Americans should know, was a five-star general and the military commander of Europe during World War II. He was, in fact, one of the great heroes in the defeat of nazism. Eisenhower, who became President in 1952—though it is not widely known—was extremely vocal in taking on not only Democrats—he was a Republican—but Republicans as well in saying that every nickel we spent on excess and wasteful military spending—something which he knew something about as a former five-star general—was simply taking money away from the needs of the American people.

A few days before he left office in 1961, President Eisenhower gave one of the most prophetic speeches ever made from the White House, and here is what Eisenhower said:

In the councils of Government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

This is what Eisenhower said before he left office in 1961. He was talking then about the military industrial