

Yet now, 8 years later and with a new administration trying to determine America's best way forward, many Americans are understandably concerned and frustrated. Afghanistan is not where any of us want it to be, and our ultimate goal has not yet been met. Al-Qaida is still there and in Pakistan as well. Afghanistan's Government has not been able to take centralized control of the country. Elections there have not added to the legitimacy of the Karzai government. We have been left to reassess our position, and we must do this reassessment together.

Policymakers are asking the important and right question: What are the proper goals for our military effort in Afghanistan? How best can we accomplish them? Are these goals purely military goals? Can they be better solved with more troops or fewer? Do we need a more complex new mission in our future, which the military aspect is only one small part?

Unless we are sure, unless all of us are sure that more troops can help us meet our goals, we should not send them. Our soldiers already have sacrificed much. This time, in particular, is a difficult one for servicemembers and their families, and it is also proving to be a difficult one for those of us making policy.

As we decide what our direction will be in Afghanistan, the fallen brave soldiers we lost from Fort Carson this week are solemn reminders of how consequential our decisions have been and will be. Those of us who opposed going to war in Iraq, including President Obama, believed then it was the wrong war at the wrong time. We believed that Washington's focus on Iraq was diverting precious resources from our efforts in Afghanistan. We are still dealing with the consequences of the decision to focus on Iraq, both in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

Recalling recent history is so important because now we have to find new wisdom on Afghanistan. At the same time, all 100 Members of this body know we must take great care as we make decisions that will affect the lives of our men and women in uniform and their families. For every soldier who answers our Nation's call to serve in combat, a new deployment is akin to a new decision to go to war. That is why our national purpose and their mission must be absolutely clear.

That is also why, as Members of this body, we must be willing to ask hard questions. The country will be counting on the Senate to scrutinize and understand the purpose of any decision to deploy additional troops. As we, together, debate a new approach to Afghanistan, I will be motivated by the memory of the Fort Carson soldiers who died this past week, as well as all those who have fallen in rank and Afghanistan. I know all of us feel the same way. They served honorably. So must we.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with the Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

FORT CARSON SOLDIERS

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to eight young men from Fort Carson in Colorado who perished last weekend in Afghanistan. This was the heaviest U.S. loss of life in a single battle since July 2008, when nine American soldiers were killed in Afghanistan.

In highlighting the lives of these young soldiers, I do not want to diminish the loss of other brave servicemen and women who have given their lives for our country. Before last weekend, Fort Carson alone had lost 270 soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, and we must continue to honor the courage of our fallen, our wounded, and those who continue the fight.

But I hope the stories of these eight young men today speak to the loved ones of all the brave men and women who have lost their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq in recent years. I honor their service, their courage, their dedication, their love of country and family. I thank their wives, husbands, children, parents, and other family members and friends for their support of these brave servicemen and women. And I want to express my deepest sympathy to them as they mourn their loss.

These eight soldiers were all from the same platoon—Bravo Troop of the 3rd Squadron, 61st Cav, 4th Infantry Division, based at Fort Carson. The 4th BCT has worked since May to secure territory throughout a four-province region near Jalalabad in some of Afghanistan's most rugged terrain, training in the nearby hills to prepare for high-altitude battle. A major achievement included providing security for Afghanistan's presidential election in August, enabling local Afghans to go to the polls.

I met with the 4th BCT commander, COL Randy George, back in April in Colorado, before Colonel George and his soldiers departed for Afghanistan. I know how hard Colonel George worked to get these soldiers ready for the

fight, and they were ready. These eight young men and their fellow soldiers fought valiantly, taking on about 200 insurgents in their remote outpost in Afghanistan's Nuristan province.

As MAJ Daniel Chandler, the rear detachment commander for the 4th

BCT, said: "They were attacked, the unit fought bravely, and in the end, they won the day."

I would like to say a few words about each of these men.

SPC Michael Scusa of Villas, NJ, was 22 years old. He joined the Army after graduating from high school and was on his second tour in Afghanistan. A former teacher said: He was a boy any mom would be proud to have. He leaves behind his wife and 1-year-old son in Colorado, as well as immediate family in New Jersey and Nebraska. SPC Christopher Griffin was 24 years old. He grew up in the small town of Kincheloe, MI. A high school classmate said that the "whole town" knew that Christopher would enlist someday. The Army was his calling—and he was very proud of it. He leaves behind his family in Michigan.

PFC Kevin Thomson of Reno, NV, was 22, and joined the Army in April 2008. Friends said that he could make anyone smile, that he valued friendship, and that he had a strong relationship with his mother. His photo hangs in Scolari's grocery store in southeast Reno, where he used to work. He leaves behind his family in Nevada and California.

SGT Vernon Martin of Savannah, GA, was 25 years old, and leaves behind a wife and three children and family in Georgia and New York. He joined the Army 6 years ago and had served in Iraq before being shipped to Afghanistan. His wife said that he hoped to work with kids someday—and that Vernon was the best thing that ever happened to her and their children.

SPC Stephan Mace of Lovettsville, VA, was 21 years old, and is survived by his family in West Virginia and Virginia. His mother said that he loved sports, wildlife, and the outdoors, and that he always had a smile on his face. He learned about patriotism from his grandfather, who served in the CIA during the Vietnam war, and had a strong love of his country and the military. Stephan's youngest brother just graduated from boot camp at Fort Sill—he wants to join the Army like his brother.

SGT Joshua Kirk—originally of Bonners Ferry, ID—was 30 years old. He leaves behind his wife and 2-year-old daughter in Colorado and mother in Idaho.

SGT Joshua Hardt of Applegate, California, was 24 years old, and was an outgoing and athletic young man—so talented at high school football that his helmet was retired. When Joshua was stationed at Fort Carson, he and his wife moved to Colorado together. Joshua leaves behind his wife and immediate family in California.

SGT Justin Gallegos of Tucson, AZ, was 27 years old. His friends called him "a man of excitement, courage, leadership, and kindness," and a strong man, a go-getter. He leaves behind family and friends in Tucson.

There is so much more to say about each one of these soldiers—and about each of the men and women who have given their lives in the service of our country. Now is a time to honor their memories and pay tribute to them for their tremendous sacrifice and dedication to our Nation. We will not forget you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the words of the senior Senator from Colorado and his words about soldiers in his State and around the country. We all share that sentiment today in the Veterans' Committee. We heard from soldiers and family members about people who died in the line of service, not in battle but for other reasons—contaminated drinking water in some cases, in other cases open-pit burning. It is important we honor our men and women, as Senator UDALL did, but also that we, frankly, treat them better when they are in the service. Their commanding officers sometimes need to pay more attention to that and how we treat the families of our men and women, our soldiers, and our veterans. But I thank the senior Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to recognize the tragic loss of nine soldiers stationed at Fort Carson, CO, who were killed this past weekend in Afghanistan.

Last Saturday, eight soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team at Fort Carson were killed in a firefight by insurgents in a remote area of Afghanistan. From what we know, as many as 200 insurgents attacked two of our mountain outposts, and U.S. and Afghan soldiers responded together. The fighting lasted most of the day. When it was over, Fort Carson had seen our most costly day since Vietnam.

These eight young men made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. All Coloradans and all Americans honor their bravery and their service. We owe them and their families a great debt.

I wish to read the names of these courageous soldiers into the RECORD, and recognize that a ninth tragedy has also apparently now occurred, and say a few words about each:

SGT Vernon Martin was 25 years old. He leaves behind a wife and three children. After joining the Army 5 years ago, Vernon had already served bravely in Iraq. His wife has told people that he hoped to work with kids in the future. She also said he was the best thing that ever happened to her and their children.

SGT Justin Gallegos was 27 years old. A native of Tucson, AZ, his friends described him as a man of excitement,

courage, leadership, and kindness. He is remembered for his constant smile and his generosity. Justin leaves behind a 5-year-old son. His family and friends will miss him dearly.

SGT Michael Scusa was 22 years old. After graduating from high school in New Jersey, he joined the Army to serve his country. Michael was serving his second tour in the region. Before he died, he had told his wife that if he was killed, he wanted to be buried in Colorado Springs to be close to his son. This son had been named after a friend of Michael's who was lost in Iraq.

SGT Joshua Kirk was 30 years old. He grew up in Idaho where his family still lives. He had followed his childhood dream of entering the Army and was serving his second tour in Afghanistan. He is survived by his wife and 2-year-old daughter.

SPC Stephan Mace was 21 years old. Born in Virginia, he grew up loving sports, wildlife, and the outdoors. His mother said that he always had a smile on his face. His grandfather, who had served in the CIA, taught Stephan what it means to serve your country. Stephan recently returned home for a 15-day leave trip, and his mother said that he returned to his post without fear.

PFC Kevin C. Thomson was 22 years old. He joined the Army just last year. Originally from Reno, his friends described him as the type of person who could make anyone laugh. He cared little for material things and put more emphasis on the people around him. His photograph hangs in the Reno grocery store where he worked after high school. He will be missed by his family and friends in Nevada and California.

SGT Joshua Hardt was 24 years old. He was described by family and friends as an extrovert and athlete. He was so talented on the field, actually, that his high school football helmet was retired. Seeing the successes of his older brother in the military, he followed his brother into the Army. He is survived by his wife, his hometown sweetheart, who moved with him to Colorado after he was stationed at Fort Carson.

SPC Christopher Griffin was 24 years old. Coming from a small town in Michigan, friends say they knew he would end up serving his country. Serving in the Army was his longtime goal. He played football and wrestled in high school, and made his friends laugh. Christopher's family in Michigan is proud of his service, and his hometown has made plans to name a street after him.

In addition, we recently have learned that a ninth Fort Carson soldier was killed in Afghanistan this weekend in a separate attack. SPC Kevin O. Hill, of New York, died on Sunday. He was 23 years old.

At great personal risk, these nine men braved a war in a faraway land. They pushed forward into great danger to protect us here at home. When asked, they answered the call of duty and performed their missions with distinction.

Coloradans are immensely grateful for their selfless dedication, and our thoughts and prayers are with their families and loved ones today. I hope their pain is eased by the knowledge that these soldiers will always be remembered and honored.

Let us all remember the incredible sacrifices made by nine young people for America's freedom and our safety here at home. I know I speak for all 100 Members of the Senate in offering America's condolences and gratitude to all nine of these mourning families on this day.

PENNSYLVANIA'S 56TH STRYKER BRIGADE

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the contributions of the 56th Stryker Brigade which recently returned to homes and families across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. For 9 months the 56th Stryker Brigade has been deployed in Iraq. Here these civilian soldiers, known as the Independence Brigade, worked side by side with Iraqi counterparts to continue to bring stability and security to the Iraqi people. On the front lines they patrolled neighborhoods, targeted insurgents, and swept for improvised explosive devices. They performed more than 800 combined operations, captured 7 brigade-level, high-value targets, and discovered more than 80 enemy weapons caches. Any success we have had in Iraq is not only the result of military achievements. In this regard, it is equally important to recognize the \$22 million in reconstruction efforts the 56th Stryker Brigade assisted with in coordination with an embedded U.S. provincial reconstruction team.

While these young men and women are now home, we must also remember those who fell in battle. Two members of the 56th gave, as Lincoln said so long ago, "the last full measure of devotion" to their country. SPC Chad Edmundson of Williamsburg was killed by an IED, and SSGT Mark Baum of Quakertown was killed by enemy small arms fire. To these soldiers' families and friends, I express our condolences and gratitude on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania for their sacrifice. Please know that our prayers are with you and that we will never take for granted their personal courage and sacrifice. We pray for Chad and Mark, and we also pray for ourselves, that we may be worthy of their valor.

While deployed, many things have changed for these members of the Pennsylvania National Guard. Some members met their sons and daughters for the first time. For all our troops, a time of readjustment and reintegration back into their communities and daily lives lies ahead. I want the National Guard to know I will always be committed to helping them during this battle. I know there are other guard members who bear scars from battle, whether visible or not. The Senate must ensure our citizen soldiers' jobs are maintained while they are deployed, and we must provide opportunities for them to find employment upon their return.

For this reason, I will continue to urge colleagues to take up and adopt the Service Members Access to Justice Act and the FORCE Act which will make National Guard assistance programs more effective and responsive and ensure that National Guard troops keep their jobs and employment benefits as required under law.

Again, I express my appreciation to the 56th Stryker Brigade and all of the men and women in service.

SATURN'S DEMISE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD remarks I made this weekend on the Saturn car company, which has lived and apparently passed away in the State of Tennessee but has contributed a lot to our State over the last 20 years.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

I spent almost all the state's \$450,000 advertising budget to buy a full page ad in the Wall Street Journal saying, "Well, Saturn finally found its home . . . in Spring Hill, Tennessee."

The ad answered a question that was on the mind of millions of Americans for a few days in August, 1985: "Why Spring Hill, Tennessee?"

General Motors had looked everywhere for the best place to put its \$5 billion Saturn plant. The biggest corporation in the world was making the largest one-time investment in U.S. history.

Three banks of GM computers analyzed 1000 sites in 38 States. Then (so the ad went) the top brass answered the question: "Where is the best place in America to build the highest quality car at the lowest cost, a small car that will compete with the Japanese imports?"

General Motors hadn't spent a penny yet advertising Saturn, but the intense competitions for the Saturn plant made the front pages for months during 1985. As a result, twice as many Americans were able to identify a Saturn as could identify a Pontiac even though Pontiac had been building cars since 1926 and Saturns wouldn't be produced until 1990.

Governors had made fools of themselves making pilgrimages to Detroit and sitting on stools on Phil Donahue's television show arguing the merits of their States. I hadn't done that but had met GM President Roger Smith in a hotel room in Memphis after he made a United Way Speech. I knew that the big Nissan plant, which had just located in Smyrna, would be either the hook or the kiss of death. So I said to Mr. Smith, "Why don't you put your plant right next to your competitor's plant, and tell your union and tell your management, if the Japanese can do it, you can do it, too."

That's is exactly what GM decided to do. The Nissan and Saturn decisions put Tennessee on the map for companies looking for plant sites. (Nissan was the largest Japanese investment ever in the U.S.) Then, Tennesseans had almost no auto jobs and one of the country's lowest average family incomes. Today, thanks to the good work of Governors McWhorter, Sundquist and Bredeisen and Tennesseans' work ethic one-third of our jobs are auto jobs and our family incomes are a good deal higher.

The Nissan plant became the most efficient auto plant in North America and will begin

making electric cars next year. Its future seems secure—and so does that of hundreds of suppliers—who have migrated to Tennessee because it is now central to the American auto industry's most efficient assembly plants as well as its market and because it is a right-to-work State with one of the "best 4" lane highway systems.

Saturn started off with a bang, created almost a cult following of owners but never made a profit. Its apparent death this week when Roger Penske couldn't find anyone to make Saturns so he could sell them is like any death, sad but full of memories.

Most of the memories are good. Saturn's life was a good life, for Tennesseans. It helped put us on the map, job wise. It helped raise our incomes. There is still that \$5 billion plant there, with another billion or so spent to improve it, waiting for GM or someone else to start making cars again. We Tennesseans will miss Saturn but are grateful for its short but good life that truly made our lives better.

TRIBUTE TO MARLA AND TOM LETIZIA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Marla and Tom Letizia on their being named "Menschen" of the Year by Congregation Ner Tamid. The award is intended to reflect the ultimate values of their congregation, which is to give selflessly of oneself to benefit the community. Marla and Tom have helped make Las Vegas and Nevada a better place with their business and community involvement.

Mr. Letizia started out as an account executive for many Las Vegas television stations including KLAS TV-8. He founded Letizia Ad Team in 1974. The firm specializes in television, radio, newspaper, direct mail, internet and outdoor advertising. Mr. and Mrs. Letizia owned radio and television outlets in Reno, Las Vegas, Laughlin and Tonopah NV. They cofounded Tonopah's first radio station, KPAH-FM, which was sold in 1992, and the first radio station dual signal property in Laughlin/Las Vegas, KROL-AM, which was later sold in 1993. The Letizias were part owners of the first independent television station in Reno, KAME-TV, which later became a FOX affiliate before being sold in 1994.

In 2001, Mrs. Letizia founded Big Traffic Mobile Billboards Worldwide, which implements trucks that provide four-sided advertising space and environmentally friendly WOBI® walking billboards. She has over 35 years of marketing and journalism experience, beginning her career with KLAS-TV 8 as an assistant production manager and organizer and was subsequently promoted to director of the live television news broadcasts at 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. She gained distinction as the first female director in the history of Las Vegas, as well as the first female hired in production in Las Vegas, running the audio department during production and during live news broadcasts.

The Letizias help their community by acting as founding members of the Board of Trustees for the Meadows School. They are also on the advisory

board of the Make-A-Wish foundation of southern Nevada. Marla and Tom also compassionately care about our planet Earth. One of their innovations was a green friendly walking billboard.

With their innovative business approach and compassionate approach to their fellow Nevadans, Marla and Tom represent this country at its best. They have achieved great things and I know their future, both as a family and a business remains, as bright as the neon lights from the Las Vegas Strip. I congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Letizia on their tremendous accomplishment.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise to submit to the Senate the third budget scorekeeping report for the 2010 budget resolution. The report, which covers fiscal year 2009, was prepared by the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 308(b) and in aid of Section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended. This is the final report for 2009.

The report shows the effects of congressional action through September 30, 2009, and includes the effects of legislation since I filed my last report on August 4, 2009. The new legislation is Public Law 111-68, an act making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes. The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con. Res. 13, the 2010 budget resolution.

The estimates show that for fiscal year 2009 current level spending was \$3 billion above the level provided for in the budget resolution for budget authority and \$7.8 billion above it for outlays while current level revenues match the budget resolution level.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter and accompanying tables from CBO be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,

Washington, DC, October 8, 2009.

Hon. KENT CONRAD,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2009 budget and is current through September 30, 2009. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con. Res. 13, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2010, as approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Pursuant to section 403 of S. Con. Res. 13, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. As a result, the enclosed current level report excludes these amounts (see footnote 2 of Table 2 of the report).