

amended. But at the end of the day I think we have to be sensitive and conscious of the fact that a lot of people will start to suffer in ways that most of us cannot imagine. When they lose their unemployment benefits and their savings are exhausted, they are about to lose their homes. I have seen that happen, and it is going to continue to happen.

Let's do the right thing. Let's find a way through this difficulty. Let's try to find a reasonable way to resolve it. Let's not leave here and go to the comfort and happiness of our families with these people disadvantaged.

IRANIAN INFLUENCE IN IRAQ

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, last week, Clifford May, the president of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, wrote in the *National Review* that the U.S. should renew its focus on the Iranian regime's influence in Iraq. He warned that the success of the surge in Iraq, which both the President and Vice President opposed when they served in this body, could be transformed into a "bipartisan failure" if we don't increase pressure on the Iranian regime.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the *RECORD* the article to which I just referred.

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

[From the *National Review*]

WHO'S LOSING IRAQ?

AND COULD IRAN BE WINNING?

(By Clifford D. May)

"I am very optimistic about—about Iraq. I mean, this could be one of the great achievements of this administration."

Vice President Joseph Biden's comments to CNN's Larry King sparked a brouhaha for an obvious reason: When they were senators, Biden and Barack Obama opposed the "surge" that averted America's defeat in Iraq. It takeschutzpah for them to now claim credit for the fruits of that strategy.

But a less obvious and more significant point is being missed: Iraq may, in the end, turn out to be nobody's achievement. It may turn out to be a military success transformed by politicians and diplomats into a bipartisan failure. Recent developments in Iraq are ominous. The Obama administration is not addressing them effectively. And conservative critics of the Obama administration are strangely silent.

Robert Dreyfus is a journalist of the left with whom I seldom agree; he writes for *The Nation*, a publication of the far left that usually makes my eyes roll. But in his *Nation* blog, Dreyfus correctly notes that as the campaign gets underway for Iraq's March 7 elections, close to 500 candidates have been banned for alleged ties to the Baath Party by the Justice and Accountability Council, "an unelected panel headed by an Iran-linked terrorist, Ali al-Lami."

Among those barred are "the No. 2 and No. 3 candidates in the main opposition bloc, the Iraqi Nationalist Movement, which is led by former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi [a secular Shia]. Already, two members of Allawi's party have been assassinated while campaigning. . . . Allawi, who many observers say had a credible chance of winning enough

votes to lead a governing coalition after the election, has suspended his campaign. . . . Many Sunni leaders are talking about a boycott."

The most serious concern here is not that Iraqi democracy is fledgling and flawed—we knew that. What's troubling is the fact that Iran's militant jihadi rulers are apparently manipulating the process—with impunity.

Most Iraqis do not want their country to be controlled by Iran. Most do not want it to become an Iranian satrapy like Syria, Iraq's neighbor to the west. Most Iraqis do not want to live as Iranians have been living—under the thumb of oppressive theocrats and thuggish Revolutionary Guards.

But Iraqis know that American troops—the "strongest tribe"—are leaving. The bullies in Tehran, by contrast, may be staying right where they are. Iran's rulers can give you money and weapons. Or they and their treacherous agents in Iraq can have you eliminated.

The fact that Ali al-Lami is playing a central role in determining who can and who cannot run for election is—or should be—alarms. In 2008, he was detained by American forces in connection with an Iranian-backed "Special Groups" militia believed to have bombed a municipal building, killing two State Department employees along with six Iraqis. A "senior U.S. military intelligence official" told the Associated Press there were "multiple and corroborating reports" pointing to al-Lami's involvement.

Abdul Rahman al-Rashed, the general manager of al-Arabiya television, writing in the international Arabic daily *Asharq Alawsat*, recently called al-Lami "the man to fear in Iraq. . . . He shows his claws at anyone who dares oppose him and he accuses his opponents of Baathism," including even Gen. David Petraeus "who has fought the Baathists the most and if it weren't for him, al-Lami would not be able to reach his home in one piece. Al-Lami accused Petraeus of Baathism (nobody has ever spoken such nonsense) and said that if General Petraeus was Iraqi he would have been charged under the Debaathification law."

In an interview with the *Times* (U.K.), Petraeus pointedly noted that al-Lami's panel has been linked with Iran's Revolutionary Guard. And on Tuesday, Gen. Ray Odierno, the senior U.S. commander in Iraq, identified al-Lami as one of two Iraqi politicians "clearly . . . influenced by Iran."

The "surge" implemented by Petraeus, Odierno, and their troops was largely responsible for the defeat of al-Qaeda in Iraq—the battlefield Osama bin Laden considered more consequential than any other. But Iran's proxy militias fought U.S. troops, too. And many Americans were killed by explosive devices manufactured in Iran and sent to Iraq for that purpose.

Yet Iran's contribution to the bloodshed in Iraq was consistently downplayed. To highlight it would have led to the question: "So what are you going to do about it?" And the Bush administration did not want to do anything about it—just as the Clinton administration did not want to do anything about Iran's role in the slaughter of American servicemen at Khobar Towers in 1996, just as the Reagan administration did not want to do anything about Iran's dispatching of Hezbollah suicide-bombers to kill Americans in Beirut in 1983, and just as the Carter administration did not want to do anything about the seizure of the American Embassy in Tehran in 1979.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the father of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution, concluded: "America cannot do a damn thing!" The phrase has been repeated by Iranian rulers ever since.

President Obama ought to break with this pattern of fecklessness. He should show Iran

that there are consequences for facilitating the deaths of Americans, for sponsoring terrorism, for building nuclear weapons, for ruthlessly oppressing Iranians at home, and for undermining the election process in Iraq. At the very least, Obama should slow down the pace of American troop withdrawals in Iraq and impose serious sanctions—the kind envisioned by the legislation recently passed by both the House and the Senate.

But Biden said nothing about sanctions to Larry King. Instead he told him (and any Iranians who might be listening): "You're going to see 90,000 American troops come marching home by the end of the summer." The vice president added: "You're going to see a stable government in Iraq that is actually moving toward a representative government. I spent—I've been there 17 times now. I go about every two months—three months. I know every one of the major players in all the segments of that society. It's impressed me. I've been impressed how they have been deciding to use the political process rather than guns to settle their differences."

True: Biden has been a frequent flier to Iraq, where he has argued against the banning of candidates who displease Tehran. Also true: He might as well have been talking to a wall.

Iraq remains what it has been: a pivotal nation in the heart of the Middle East. Biden may think he and his administration have achieved something there. Obama may see Iraq as a distraction from the war against "the real enemy" in Afghanistan. Conservatives may view Iraq as a success Obama inherited from the Bush administration—and therefore no longer their problem.

All these views are wrong. It would be a cruel irony—not to mention a terrible defeat—if the sacrifices Americans have made were, in the end, to produce an Iraq dominated by Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, enemies of Iraq, freedom, and democracy—enemies sworn to bringing about a "world without America."

Why don't Biden and Obama recognize that? And why are their critics not more vocal about the fact that they do not?

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I missed rollcall vote No. 24, the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2847, with the Reid amendment No. 3310. I was regrettably detained due to the fact that I was serving as the ranking member at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing. If I had been present, I would have voted to sustain the point of order.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING BULL MOOSE MUSIC

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, each day we read too many stories of small businesses unable to weather the current economic storm. Countless small firms both in Maine and across the Nation have been unable to compete with large chain stores and have been literally priced out of the market. Thankfully, today I wish to tell an inspirational success story and recognize a local retailer in my home State of Maine that

has met the challenges of this difficult economic climate head on and continues to grow and thrive.

Bull Moose is a small retail chain originally founded in Brunswick, ME. The company initially focused on providing its customers solely with music but has now branched out into many forms of entertainment and media, including movies, games, and books. Its founder and president, Brett Wickard, characterizes Bull Moose as selling "inexpensive fun stuff." Twenty years ago, when Mr. Wickard was a college student at Brunswick's Bowdoin College, the local record store closed down. Now many of us would have just found another place to buy cassettes or records, but this young Bowdoin entrepreneur had a different idea. With just \$7,000 of his own money and a small loan, Brett Wickard launched Bull Moose Music in the summer of 1989, and a truly homegrown business success story began. Mr. Wickard arranged his course schedule around his new store hours and had friends work in the store while he was in class.

The Bull Moose business plan began by looking up record distributors in the Yellow Pages and ordering one album by every artist and band that had released at least two albums. The thought process was if you made a second album, you must be a good band. In the first summer, Bull Moose Music had sales of barely \$100 a day, and Brett was forced to use his credit card as a tool to survive. But with dedication and perseverance, Bull Moose has grown from these humble beginnings in Brunswick to include 10 stores in both Maine and New Hampshire with over 100 employees. To keep up with the added demand, the company has now produced its own software to analyze which albums and artists it should carry based on the purchasing history of each of the store's customers. Mr. Wickard actually designed the Bull Moose purchasing software as his senior project while still a Bowdoin student—quite an upgrade from scouring the Yellow Pages!

Bull Moose recently celebrated its 20th anniversary and is on track to have its best year ever despite the current recession. Nevertheless, it continues to face the challenges confronting many small businesses. Beyond the severity of the economic downturn, large chain stores make it increasingly difficult to compete, and digital downloads of music have reduced the number of customers buying music in stores. As a result of these overwhelming roadblocks, many small businesses have been forced to cut staff and eliminate bonuses. In contrast, Bull Moose has tripled Christmas bonuses and continues to hire more staff, including a location in Bangor, ME, that has tripled in size. Mr. Wickard credits Bull Moose's commitment to customer service and convenience to their unprecedented success and growth.

It is indeed refreshing to see a superb small business overcome the many ob-

stacles it faces in today's market. Stories such as this should renew our focus to help small entrepreneurs succeed because as small businesses like Bull Moose continue to grow, they provide a substantial positive impact on the health of the local community and our overall economy. My home State of Maine has benefited greatly from Bull Moose's success, and I wish Mr. Wickard and everyone at Bull Moose continued success for years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:37 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3695. An act to authorize funding for, and increase accessibility to, the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System, to facilitate data sharing between such system and the National Crime Information Center database of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to provide incentive grants to help facilitate reporting to such systems, and for other purposes.

At 12:51 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2314. An act to express the policy of the United States regarding the United States relationship with Native Hawaiians and to provide a process for the recognition by the United States of the Native Hawaiian governing entity.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 2:35 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

4532. An act to provide for permanent extension of the attorney fee withholding procedures under title II of the Social Security Act to title XVI of such Act, and to provide for permanent extension of such procedures under titles II and XVI of such Act to qualified non-attorney representatives.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3695. An act to authorize funding for, and increase accessibility to, the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System, to facilitate data sharing between such system and the National Crime Information Center database of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to provide incentive grants to help facilitate reporting to such systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4796. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Laminarin; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 8812-1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2010; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4797. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Trichoderma gamsii strain ICC 080; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 8799-4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2010; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4798. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Nicosulfuron; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions" (FRL No. 8812-5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2010; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4799. A communication from the Administrator of the National Organic Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Organic Program; Access to Pasture (Livestock)" ((Docket No. AMS-TM-06-0198)(RIN0581-AC57)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2010; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4800. A communication from the Administrator of the Research and Promotion Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Processed Raspberry Promotion, Research, and Information Order; Referendum Procedures" ((Docket Nos. AMS-FV-07-0077; FV-07-705-FR)(RIN0581-AC79)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2010; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4801. A communication from the Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Grapes Grown in a Designated Area of