

General Walsh is in charge of the Army Corps of Engineers' operations in this area. I talked to him several times over the weekend. He has a very, very difficult decision to make. I have seen it made in the past. It is never easy. The decision he has to make is, if a city is threatened, like Cairo, IL, he has to determine whether it is the right thing to do to open a levee to relieve the water pressure of the rivers by flooding adjoining farmland. So people who are now perhaps only minor victims of flooding would see their farmlands inundated. That is in Missouri, and they do not like the idea. Who would? They resisted it in court, and at two levels now the court has said it is an Army Corps of Engineers' decision.

I spoke to General Walsh all through the weekend, and he walked me through this decision. What I said to him I will repeat on the floor. I said: This is a difficult, hard decision you have to make. You will get no pressure from me. I believe that Cairo, IL, is right now teetering on the edge and could be inundated with floodwater and 2,800 people could lose their homes. That is my side of the equation, along with these other communities. But I know you have to make the calculation on rainfall, the level of the rivers, and trying to make some calculation about critical infrastructure in both instances. And I said: Just use your best engineering and scientific judgment. I will back you up, whatever you decide.

Well, he has put in place the explosives to blow the levee downriver on the Missouri side to relieve the pressure not only in Illinois but in Kentucky and I think parts of Tennessee as well. I think that may be a decision to be made within the next few minutes. Whatever his decision, whatever the Army Corps decides, I will stand by it because I know it is a good-faith effort to do the right thing. And this I will say: If they end up flooding some farmland in Missouri, I will stand by my colleagues in that State, as well as all others in the Midwest, to make sure that those people are made whole, that they have some recovery through our government for losses in farm profits and the like. It is the least we can do. If they end up saving a city, then the cost to the government will be dramatically less than it might otherwise have been. It is a hard, hard decision. Having seen it firsthand, my sympathy goes to the Army Corps of Engineers and all the professionals who are fighting this battle every single day.

DEATH OF OSAMA BIN LADEN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last night at about 9 o'clock, I received a call at my home in Springfield, IL, from Vice President BIDEN. It was kind of a surprising call on a Sunday night, and I was even more surprised when he said Osama bin Laden had been captured and killed and President Obama would be making a statement very

shortly. I waited up to hear that statement. I was catching a plane early this morning, but I wanted to hear it firsthand.

I guess every single one of us can remember where we were on 9/11. I know where I was. I was just a few feet away from here. We were in an office, a room just off the Capitol floor here—the Senate floor—in a meeting with Senator Daschle when we heard about a plane crashing into the Trade Center in New York and then another one. And then we realized this was not an accident. We watched, as America watched, and we wondered would we be next, this building, this big target of a building, the U.S. Capitol. Thank goodness the courage of passengers on a plane that was brought down in Pennsylvania probably saved many lives, maybe my own.

But we came to know that behind it all was a man named Osama bin Laden who declared war on the United States of America and was prepared to kill thousands of innocent people to push his terrible extremist agenda. For 10 years, we have been engaged in the largest global manhunt in history to find this man. President Bush, I am sure, used every resource of the government to do that job, and I commend him for that effort even though he was not successful. But last night, because of the courage of Navy SEALs and our military, who stepped up, Osama bin Laden was captured and killed.

I know, having spoken to people in the White House, that the President stuck his neck out on this because there was a question as to whether he was actually there. They believed there was enough evidence, and the President said: Go forward. We did it without any loss of life on the American side or any loss of innocent life of civilians.

But it appears now that we have taken away the leader of al-Qaida. That is a good development for all of us. I do not know if it means there will be a more peaceful world. We probably should assume the opposite for at least the time being, that these terrorist organizations will now strike at the United States to establish they are still credible. Well, we have to be vigilant. We have to stop them before it happens. And we have to pursue every single one of them for whatever it takes to bring them to justice.

Perhaps, though, it will go in another direction. Perhaps we will find that once al-Qaida, the head of the snake, has been chopped off, perhaps al-Qaida will start to wither, and I hope it does. If it does, maybe some other organizations will have second thoughts about the terrorism business. That would be the best outcome, even better if we could start bringing our troops home from Afghanistan.

I commend the men and women in uniform, those yesterday who showed such courage, those in the intelligence community who have worked night and day for almost 10 years trying to find this man. I commend the President for

showing the kind of leadership we needed to bring to justice the most dangerous terrorist criminal on the face of the Earth. It is something that I think speaks well for our government and for our people.

There is one other point I would like to make, and the President made it last night in his statement. He repeated what had been said by President George W. Bush after 9/11. I had my differences with President Bush, but there were moments when I could not have agreed with him more and particularly the moment when he made it clear that our war against terrorism was not a war against Islam. It was not a war against Muslims or Muslim Americans. I was so glad he did it because we have seen ample evidence of discrimination against people of that religion who have had nothing to do with terrorism but, unfortunately, have been discriminated against. Last night, the President repeated what we all believe: Islam is not the enemy. Extremism and terrorism are the enemies. We will work with Muslim Americans and Muslims around the world to protect their religion, their honored religion, and will work with them to reduce terrorism.

The President also reminded everyone listening last night that when it came to the victims of Osama bin Laden's terrorism, Muslim people were the victims time and time again. He was no friend of the Muslim community himself. His life, unfortunately, of killing and violence took its toll in many communities, including Muslim communities around the world.

I commend those who continue to work night and day, at every single level—Federal, State, and local—to deal with the threat of terrorism. This eradication of Osama bin Laden is an important step, but there is still much more to be done in terms of fighting this battle. I take pride in the work that has been done, a pride that is shared, I am certain, by every resident of Illinois and people all across the United States.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed in morning business.

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

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, every one of us knows where we were at the moment we heard the tragic news of the attacks on this Nation on September 11. And I trust that all of us will long treasure the moment we first heard the great news last night that Osama bin Laden, after a decade of determined

and diligent work by our Armed Forces and by the men and women of the American intelligence community, had at long last been captured and killed. The successful operation by the Navy SEALs team yesterday was the capstone of 10 years of distinguished and honorable service by our brave men and women in uniform.

In Afghanistan, in Iraq, and around the world, literally tens of thousands of Americans over this past decade have faced battle resolutely, carried out their mission with valor, and made all of us proud. When I visited our troops in Afghanistan in February, I saw firsthand their determination, their level of professionalism, and their commitment to this important and long task.

I hope, as we face the days ahead and the uncertainty of what will be the path forward in our continuing conflict with al-Qaida and all who would do us harm, there is no doubt about the determination of the American people about our resolve to pursue, capture, and kill all who would plan attacks on the United States and on innocent civilians around the world.

I wanted to pause today and simply reflect on all who have sacrificed so much. There are hundreds of Delawareans currently serving in Afghanistan, some on active duty, some with the Reserves, some with the National Guard. My wife and I and our family pray every night, as so many do in our Nation, for those who serve us overseas, including personal friends of ours, Brooke James, Troy Baucus, and Jeff Steinberg, who are folks who are on repeat deployment, whose families we know, along with hundreds of others. They have made the sacrifice of deployment. There are many others—17 in the case of Delaware—who have made the ultimate sacrifice in this decade of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, including SGT Sean Moudy, who grew up next door to me, and SrA Liz Loncki, the first Delaware woman lost in combat, and many others who are mourned by their families and communities.

Tomorrow, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee begins a series of six hearings on our path forward in Afghanistan and a review of our relationship with Pakistan, our alliances in the region, and the incredible investments that we need to continue to make to sustain our effort to take the fight to those around the world who would do us harm.

I wanted to come to the floor today and, for a brief moment, pause and think about what this historic moment means to the American people.

It was just a decade ago in the attacks of 9/11 that a group of determined and hardened terrorists, led by Osama bin Laden, believed they had struck a blow, believed they had hit their target when four aircraft that had been commandeered were turned into missiles and aimed at principal targets that they thought were the centerpieces of

America. Two of them succeeded in striking the Twin Towers—knocking down columns of steel and glass. One of them succeeded in striking the Pentagon and setting ablaze the center of our military might. One more, were it not for the intervention of incredibly brave American citizens, might well have struck this very building we meet in today or the White House.

They did succeed in tragically taking thousands of innocent lives. They did succeed in striking a tough blow to our economy. They did succeed in surprising us with an unexpectedly vicious attack on thousands of innocent civilians. But they utterly failed to strike at our spirit. They failed to knock down our resolve. I know that around the world many marveled while thousands of folks flooded out of the Pentagon and the Twin Towers, as hundreds of determined volunteers and public servants flooded in, risking their lives and, in many cases, sacrificing their own lives to try to save some of their fellow countrymen. Most important, in the months afterward, millions of Americans took up the cause of volunteering to rebuild and restore our communities, and thousands volunteered to serve in our Armed Forces.

It is their resolve, their commitment, their professionalism, the great leadership of our Armed Forces, and the decisions made by President Obama and Vice President BIDEN in leading our Nation today that have brought us to this moment.

I want to close by saying that ultimately those who struck us on 9/11 missed their target. They misunderstood our spirit and our resolve as a nation. Last night, on the other side of the world, justice was served. The tragedy of those who were lost and the sacrifice of those who chose to serve have never been forgotten. But last night, on the other side of the world, justice was served.

Let there be no doubt among anyone around the world who would wish us harm, who would today plot to carry forward the terrible terrorist dreams of this now-dead man, Osama bin Laden: Our spirit is not broken. Our resolve is unbending. Justice will be served.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, John D. Rockefeller once said, “I do not think there is any other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature.”

The hunt for bin Laden seemed to battle against the force of nature itself. And the perseverance of those that hunted bin Laden—our brave troops, our intelligence officers, and countless other Americans—was essential to their success.

The brave Americans that hunted bin Laden battled a vast expanse of ungoverned territory across Afghanistan and Pakistan, central Asia’s frigid mountains, endless villages in the most remote part of the globe. Their mission at times seemed impossible.

But the perseverance of America’s bin Laden hunters helped them conquer

these challenges: perseverance; hard work; quiet dedication to duty. So many Americans worked so hard for so long to make this possible. I am so grateful to all those that serve, these quiet professionals have made all Americans very, very proud.

Today, we must pause to reflect on what this means. We remember the suffering of the families who lost loved ones on 9/11. We remember the sacrifice by our troops serving in harm’s way to keep us safe.

It is fitting that bin Laden lived long enough to witness the utter failure of the strategy he masterminded. From his hideout, he saw a peaceful revolution in Tunisia. He watched as millions of young Egyptians peacefully and proudly demanded change. He learned of peaceful protesters embracing democracy, refusing violent extremism in every corner of the Middle East—without bombs, without violence, using their intellect, their courage, and their pride, these young protesters took a path bin Laden had failed to imagine—a path of peaceful, democratic change. The future of the Arab world is now in their hands.

The success of these young democrats stands in stark contrast to the ideology of hate and violence that bin Laden dedicated his life to. How fitting it is that he saw this Arab spring with his own eyes; that he could witness such a thorough defeat to violent extremism.

We must work hard in the coming years to see that the young demonstrators in Tahrir square and across the Middle East succeed. Their success will erase the narrative that radical Islam seeks to write. These peaceful demonstrations must lead to change and violent extremism must continue to fail.

Looking forward, we face great challenges across the Middle East and Central Asia. Osama bin Laden’s hideout location raises serious questions about our relationship with Pakistan.

Since 2002, the United States has provided over \$18 billion in foreign assistance to Pakistan. In 2009, Congress authorized up to \$1.5 billion a year for civilian assistance to Pakistan from 2010 through 2014. U.S. economic and military assistance to Pakistan was the highest of any other country in 2009 except Iraq and Afghanistan.

In spite of these massive investments, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship continues to fray. We seem to be near a breaking point. The Pew Research Center found that in 2010 the “favorable rating” of U.S. among Pakistanis hit 17 percent, the lowest opinion of the U.S. among any population on earth.

During a visit to Pakistan last year, I made it clear to President Zardari and General Kayani that Pakistan must do more to eliminate safe havens within their own borders. We cannot accept excuses. We need results.

Without progress in Pakistan, we cannot succeed in Afghanistan. American troops continue to serve bravely

under the most difficult conditions every day, without weekends or holidays, carrying heavy loads over mountain passes, hunting down the Taliban and protecting villages.

This July, the U.S. will begin to hand over security responsibilities to the Army and police force of Afghanistan. I urge the President to make this transition robust, orderly, and persistent until all of our troops come home. It is time for the Afghan government to step up and take responsibility for this mission. American troops should not be doing the work that Afghans should be doing for themselves.

Beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan, our world is rapidly changing. Popular movements are transforming the Middle East. Breathtaking Chinese growth rates are reshaping East Asia. New technology is bringing citizens across the globe closer together: to cooperate, and to compete.

Amid these these changes we are facing enormous challenges at home—massive deficits, bitter partisanship, rising health care costs, high unemployment. We need to work together to make sure the 21st Century is the American century. We need to focus on improving education, rebuilding roads and bridges, and making the American economy the best place to do business in the world.

The death of Osama bin Laden marks a turning point in history. Today is indeed a great day for America. I salute the brave men and women who made this day possible. My thoughts are with the hundreds of Montanans serving our country overseas. May God Bless America and may He keep our brave troops safe.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today is a memorable day in our Nation's history. Osama bin Laden, the man responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocent victims, including so many Americans who were lost on September 11, 2001, has been killed.

I commend President Obama and his national security team for the careful planning of this operation, as well as the members of our intelligence agencies who have spent years collecting information that made it possible.

As many of us know, when the President nominated Leon Panetta to be the Director of the CIA, he told him that his first directive must be to find Osama bin Laden. I have known Director Panetta for nearly 30 years. I know this is a man who, when he takes on a task, takes it very seriously. I commend him and all those men and women who have worked with him on this. I know he gave singular attention to this issue.

I join Americans across the country in praising the brave team that stormed the compound where bin Laden appears to have been hiding for years. They completed their mission without loss of American lives, while taking care to avoid civilian casualties.

I have had the privilege of watching the special forces train. I have seen the

tremendous level of training the SEALs and the Joint Special Operational Command undergo to prepare for dangerous missions like the one conducted yesterday. They are remarkable people. Every member of that team had to go into the compound yesterday knowing that they may not return.

We remember today the victims of all of the attacks perpetrated by the man who more than any other represents the face of international terrorism. The September 11 attacks are at the forefront of our minds. Nearly 3,000 lives were lost, including those victims of the World Trade Center, in the Pentagon, and on the four airplanes. I remember that day as vividly as though it were yesterday.

We remember with gratitude the first responders who rushed in to save lives, even knowing they were risking their own. Many died while trying to save others in amazing acts of heroism. And we remember the passengers on Flight 93, who put the lives of Americans on the ground ahead of their own.

We also remember the 6 victims of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, and the victims of the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, which left 224 dead, including 12 Americans. We remember the lives of the 17 sailors killed in the bombing of the USS *Cole* in October of 2000. The death of Osama bin Laden will not bring them back to us, but we all hope it may help bring closure to family members and friends who still grieve their loss.

Today we remember the lives of the brave American servicemembers who have served in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the sacrifices made by their families, who mourn their loss, or help them recover from their injuries.

Vermonters have answered the call to serve—some for multiple deployments with the Vermont National Guard and many most recently with the 86th Infantry Brigade, which returned last December. Of course, we thank the brave men and women who have worked tirelessly to protect American soil from additional attacks.

Osama bin Laden cloaked his attacks in anti-American rhetoric, but his murderous and criminal path took the lives of innocents around the world, including many of his own faith. He proved himself to be a cold-blooded murderer whose indiscriminate attacks led to the deaths or maiming of Muslims and people of other faiths all around the world. Regrettably, he leaves behind followers who are committed to the same message of hate and destruction. They have no regard for the values that unite the rest of humanity in common cause.

President Obama pledged that we would bring bin Laden to justice. Last night, we learned that bin Laden has suffered the consequences of his atrocities. Justice has been served. Now I hope that Americans will claim this moment to stand side by side, as we did

in the weeks and months following the September 11 attacks. We must transcend our differences and stand in unity, unified in our support for the victims of bin Laden's crimes and in our resolve to keep our great Nation safe. We should also stand united in our commitment to the rights and principles that define us as a democratic nation that respects the rule of law. That respect is what distinguishes us from those who seek to harm us. It is what will ultimately enable us to succeed against them, and it is what people around the world expect of America.

Regrettably, the September 11 attacks, and other acts of international terrorism, have often been used to justify policies which strayed dangerously from those rights and principles. This has damaged our global reputation, hurt our credibility, and made it more difficult to build the broadest alliances against terrorism.

We must also remember, as so many military leaders have told us, that military force, while at times necessary, as it was in the operation against bin Laden, is not in and of itself a counterterrorism strategy.

We have seen how, nearly 10 years after 9/11, and after spending hundreds of billions of dollars to combat terrorism, the recruitment of terrorists among disaffected youth continues apace around the world, including in our own country.

We have also seen how much more we have to do to counter the misperceptions and misinformation fomented by extremists about the United States and our intentions. Addressing these challenges should be a priority as we go forward.

I urge all Americans to support our President in this continuing effort, and I urge all of us in Congress to join together for the good of the country and all Americans.

It is remarkable what this country accomplishes, and how strong and brave we are, when we stand together. Now is the time to stand together. We have done it before. We can do it now. And we are a better country when we do it.

Mr. President, I see the very distinguished Senator from California on the floor. I yield to her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank Senator LEAHY for his eloquent statement he made about the capture and killing of Osama bin Laden and the impact and the need for us to come together as one Nation.

Mr. President, almost 10 years ago after the horrific attacks of 9/11, I voted to go after Osama bin Laden, as all of us did in the Senate at that time, to make sure justice would prevail. Now we know and the world knows that Osama bin Laden has paid the ultimate price for what he did.

His death does not lessen the tragic loss of all those killed by al-Qaida or

the pain of their loved ones, but it closes a chapter on his unspeakable acts, and there were more than one. They go back to October 2000. They go back to 1998 when their operatives attacked our people on the USS *Cole* and the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, and there are other attacks that occurred as well.

What I want to do in a few minutes today is go back to some of the things I said on September 12, 2001, from a different seat, because I did not have much seniority. I was somewhere over on the front row. The reason I want to restate and read from the RECORD as to what I said on that day is because I think it is important for me, for myself, to get the type of closure I wanted to get when I cast that vote to go after Osama bin Laden, to go to war and get him. It reminds me of that thirst for justice we all had on that day and that we still have.

This is what I said on September 12, 2001:

Today I rise with pain in my heart and great emotion to offer my prayers and my condolences for the people in this country who have been directly hit by an act of war, people in the State of my birth, New York, looking at that skyline, the people who work at the Pentagon every day who have chosen to work to protect our Nation, and the people of California, my State, who were on those planes that were hijacked and, of course, to every other individual who was directly affected and to all of us who have been affected.

I went on to say this:

One of our colleagues said we remember where we were when tragedy hit this country. I remember too many things—not as many perhaps as Senators who are older, but I certainly remember where I was when I saw John Kennedy go down and Martin Luther King go down, the Challenger disaster, and yesterday the image of those planes, commercial and American planes, four of them going down, crashing into buildings, being used as lethal weapons against our people—an image that has shaken us but has not shaken our resolve.

I went on to say:

I am going to make a very strong statement. When we look back into history and what happened in Bosnia, people suffered genocide because of their nationality, and to the Holocaust, people suffered annihilation because of their nationality. People were killed yesterday because they were Americans. People were killed not because they were bad people—they were good people—they were killed because they were Americans.

That is what I said on the day after 9/11/2001. Then I said:

It is time for us to say we will fight and stand up for them and their memories. We will take a stand against inhumanity that occurred on our own soil. We are resolved to honor those who died. We are resolved to make our Nation as safe as it can be from those acts. We are resolved to hold those who planned these attacks and who harbor these people absolutely 100 percent accountable. We will hold them accountable.

That is what I said on September 12, 2001.

They must pay because this is the test of a civilized nation. We lead the civilized nations of the world. We will not back down.

I stand proudly with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with our President. We will be resolved to do everything—and do it well and do it right—to bring justice in the world.

Later that day, to the press I said:

I've never been at ground zero in a war, but, after this, war is not an overstatement. The people who perpetrated this are the scum of the Earth, and their views, their philosophy, their version of civilization, if you can call it that, will not stand.

I am going to conclude my remarks by saying that in my heart, the flames of justice are burning bright today. I thank our President for his resolve, for ordering this attack—a successful attack—on bin Laden's compound. To the bravest of the brave, I understand they were Navy Seals who went in there, not thinking 1 second about their own lives. The fact that the President ordered this, that he kept it quiet while he had to be distracted from things that, let us say, he should not have been distracted with—but he did it. He kept his focus.

It is an important moment in our history. The message is going out to anyone who would hurt us: They will be held accountable. They can run, but they are never going to hide from us and from justice.

We know we cannot let down our guard. We know that. But we also know we are not going to cower in a corner because we are fearful that somebody may try to hurt us. We are prepared. We are going to do everything we can to be prepared. But this is quite a moment.

I will never forget seeing the Pentagon on fire, flames shooting out. I was in an office right near here and looked out the window. We were told to evacuate the Capitol. That is seared in my memory.

Anyone who cares about justice, anyone who cares about the truth, anybody who cares about fairness and responsibility has to say that yesterday was a day when justice was done.

I am going to close by reading the names of the Californians who lost their lives because I told their families I will honor each one in every way I can. I think that ending my statement by paying tribute to them is important: David Angell of Pasadena; Lynn Angell of Pasadena; Seima Aoyama of Los Angeles; Barbara Aresteguis of Los Angeles; Melissa Barnes of Redlands; Alan Beaven of Emeryville; Berry Berenson of Los Angeles; Carolyn Beug of Los Angeles; Yeneneh Betru of Burbank; Mark Bingham of San Francisco; Deora Bodley of Santa Clara; Touri Bolourchi of Beverly Hills; Daniel Brandhurst of Hollywood Hills; David Brandhurst of Hollywood Hills; Thomas Burnett of San Ramon; Suzanne Calley of San Martin; Jefferey Collman of Novato; Dorothy Dearaujo of Long Beach; Darlene Flagg of Corona; Dee Flagg of Corona; Wilson Flagg of Corona; Lisa Frost of Rancho Santa Margarita; Ronald Gamboa of Los Angeles; Andrew Garcia of Portola Valley; Edmund Glazer of Chatsworth; Lauren

Grandcolas of San Rafael; Andrew Curry Green of Los Angeles; Richard Guadagno of Humboldt County; Stanley Hall of Rancho Palos Verdes; Gerald Hardacre of Carlsbad; John Hofer of Bellflower; Stephen Hyland of Claremont; Barbara Keating of Palm Springs; Chandler Keller of El Segundo; Jude Larson of Los Angeles; Natalie Larson of Los Angeles; Daniel John Lee of Van Nuys; Maclovio Lopez of Norwalk; Dora Menchaca of Santa Monica; Nicole Miller of San Jose; Laurie A. Neira of Los Angeles; Ruben Ornedo of Los Angeles; Jerrold Paskins of Anaheim Hills; Thomas Pecorelli of Los Angeles; Robert Penniger of Poway; Mari-Rae Sopper of Santa Barbara; Alicia Titus of San Francisco; Otis Tolbert of Lemoore; Pendyala Vamsikrishna of Los Angeles; Timothy Ward of San Diego; and John Wenckus of Torrance.

I said then on September 12, in the name of these Californians and in the name of the other innocent victims, it is time for the terrorism to stop.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington State.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the tremendous news our country received last night from President Obama.

Almost 10 years ago on September 11, 2001, I too remember looking out a window in the Nation's Capitol and seeing the black smoke billowing in the air over the Pentagon. On that day, America was brutally attacked by terrorists who took aim at the financial, military, and political centers of our country. And although these evil men killed thousands of Americans and caused great devastation, they were unable to do what they wanted to do most: break our country's spirit.

We came together as a community. We mourned, we rallied around the families of those who were lost, and we struck back against those who did us harm.

Last night's tremendous news is the close of a major chapter in the war on terror. It is a great day for justice and for all Americans to remember the strength and resolve of our Nation. I applaud the superb work of our intelligence communities and the work of this administration that brought the mastermind of the worst attack in our Nation's history to justice.

But today I want to pay special tribute to the men and women in uniform who have answered the call to serve after that fateful day 10 years ago. Since the attacks on New York and Washington, DC, more than 2 million American servicemembers have stepped forward to serve our Nation. Nearly half of these servicemembers have done more than one tour of duty abroad. Many who have served have come from the ranks of our National Guard and Reserves and have turned a part-time commitment into a full-time job protecting our Nation. These men and women who chose to join our all-

volunteer force come from all walks of life and from every corner of our Nation. In my home State, thousands have come forward to serve while thousands more have come to Washington State to train and make their home at our major military installations. These servicemembers have done everything we have asked of them and more.

While it appears that yesterday's raid came without American casualties, that, of course, has not been the case for so many missions in our fight against terrorism. Since 9/11, nearly 6,000 servicemembers have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country, and more than 40,000 have been wounded. For many of our servicemembers, the scars of their service are visible and for others they are invisible. Many have lost those closest to them on the battlefield and have come home with a burden that few others know. Others will need a lifetime of care from the Department of Defense and the VA. All have left families behind, who love and miss them, to protect our country. We cannot forget these families and the fact they have sacrificed right by our servicemembers' side. Moving from base to base, giving up jobs, putting their loved ones and their country before their own needs is a gift we must repay.

As the chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, it is my job to ensure that the lifetime of care that these servicemembers and their caregivers need will be delivered.

So, today, as we appropriately take pride in the most significant victory yet in our fight against al-Qaida and terrorism, we should also take pause to honor all of the veterans and Active-Duty servicemembers who have paved the way to this day. We must also remember that this tremendous victory has come with a tremendous cost, a cost that we must bear as a nation for many years to come as our servicemembers return home.

Mr. President, this is, of course, also a particularly meaningful day for the thousands of Americans who lost a family member or a friend or a loved one on September 11. We know this news can't bring back their loved ones, but our hope is that it can help ease the pain they live with each day.

Like many Americans, my first thought last night after this news was of the victims and their families, and my thoughts and prayers remain with them during this time.

Going forward we must remain vigilant and focused on the protection of the American people from terrorism wherever it may be, and we must continue to work in the interest of peace and security for all Americans.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate the men and women of our military for a courageous mission, and our intelligence community for accurate and important intelligence.

I would like to congratulate the President for his persistence in bringing a mass murderer to justice, and I would especially like to salute the men and women of our military services who, for the last 10 years, have fought the indispensable consequences of the actions of terrorism.

All of us, as has been said by many Senators today, especially have in our hearts and minds the families of the victims of 9/11 and hope that somehow, in some small way, this event helps bring some closure to what has happened to their lives.

EASTERN TENNESSEE DISASTERS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I have just returned from visiting east Tennessee where there were devastating tornadoes last week. The President, at the request of our entire congressional delegation, has declared four of our counties—Washington, Greene, Hamilton, and Bradley—as disaster areas, and we thank him for his prompt attention to that.

I visited today northern Hamilton County, just north of Chattanooga, north of where the new Volkswagen plant will be located. In Tennessee last week 36 men and women lost their lives as a result of these storms. The area I visited is one of the two areas most affected, the other being Washington and Greene Counties, where our Governor was today.

Someone asked me following my visit if anything about it shocked me. I said: It always shocks me when I see the consequences of a devastating flood or especially a massive tornado. This one had winds of nearly 200 miles an hour. Wherever you stand, you try to put yourself in the shoes of someone who might have been there when the tornado came through and try to imagine what it would be like. You see this funnel coming and know it will only interfere with your life for about 20 or 30 seconds; but after that, it will all be devastation. There is no way you cannot be shocked by it, and there is no way I can put myself in the shoes of those who were there.

I saw one man who was there, Arthur Bates, 70 years old, and I saw his house which was completely demolished. His upright piano was upside-down. He told me he had killed a calf and left to take some meat to the preacher. He had been gone for about 5 minutes when the tornado hit his house.

Not so lucky was another family not very far away. All of the members of that family were killed except for an 8-year-old boy who was found in a tree and survived.

Not far away, several families had signs that said: The Lord was with us. Surely, it had to seem to them providential that there could be such devastation almost in their front yards and yet their homes would be safe.

Ironically, today, as I went from Nashville to Chattanooga, I was reading about a commemoration of the

floods that hit Tennessee almost exactly 1 year ago—on May 2, 2010. These were floods that affected counties from Nashville to Memphis. In Nashville alone there was \$2 billion worth of damage. People are still recovering from that flood a year later. Businesses have closed in some cases, but most have opened. The Grand Ole Opry was shut, but it was opened again. The Opryland Hotel is open again.

Nashville is thriving again, and people are coming back to Nashville. But the commemoration today was for the large number of families in Tennessee who are hurting and some who are still in recovery.

Then, if that weren't enough, in the western part of our State, along the Mississippi River, we have reports that the water is rising and will rise to levels that will be higher than at any time since the flood of 1937. People are already preparing shelters. Tributaries of the Mississippi are already rising.

On Friday I will be going to Memphis to meet with the Army Corps of Engineers and local officials to make sure we are doing all we can. None of us in the Federal Government believe we can make anyone whole after a disaster like this, but we can help. As I said to those I saw today in Chattanooga, north of Chattanooga, there is a telephone number to call—2-1-1—which is a local number for help. There is a FEMA number to call—1-800-621-FEMA (3362). We found in the flooding of a year ago from Nashville to Memphis that was a big help to many Tennesseans. I hope the same will be true in east Tennessee and across our State today.

A year ago Tennesseans distinguished themselves by not looting and complaining, but by cleaning up and helping one another. I saw that again today in Hamilton County. The sheriff told me within a few hours after the devastation there were 500 or so men with chainsaws out clearing debris and trees from the roads and from the yards helping one another.

So, Mr. President, I speak today on behalf of all Members of the Senate in expressing to those in Tennessee our concern and our willingness to continue to do all we can to help.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD following these remarks a summary of the actions that we are taking in the events that are happening in Tennessee, as well as a letter from the congressional delegation to the President requesting disaster relief, which he granted promptly, and another to the general who was president of the Mississippi River Commission urging him to take every action possible to help the communities along the Mississippi River as water rises there.

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

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