

our debt course. We should try the one thing we refused to do from the beginning: open hearings, regular order, and a real legislative process and public participation.

I yield the floor.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an editorial from the July 21 edition of the Washington Post. I completely agree with this editorial.

The metric is not how many long overdue individual sanctions are made. We must instead be focused on our goal: preventing the acquisition of a nuclear weapons capability by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I fear we are spiraling at an accelerating speed to the point when we have but one option left to stop the Islamic Republic of Iran's illegal nuclear weapons ambitions. If that happens, history will judge that we were put into this position by our own failure to avail ourselves of other options while we still had them.

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

[From the Washington Post, July 21, 2011]
SANCTIONS AREN'T SLOWING IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRESS

According to a recent story in The Post, the Obama administration is "quietly toasting" the success of international sanctions against Iran. The Islamic republic is having increasing difficulty arranging imports, including food, and the central bank is reportedly short of hard currency. Billions of dollars in foreign investment projects have been canceled, and few banks, insurance companies or shipping firms are willing to do business with Tehran.

There are also signs of political stress. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is bitterly at odds with conservative clergy and a majority of parliament and appears to have lost the support of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran's closest ally, the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad, is slowly but steadily losing ground to a popular uprising, raising the prospect that Iran's once-firm foothold in the Arab Middle East will be reduced to an isolated Hezbollah militia in Lebanon.

We don't begrudge the White House a toast or two over these developments; the administration has worked hard and relatively effectively to make the sanctions work. But it's important to note a stubborn reality: There has been no change in Iran's drive for nuclear weapons or in its aggressive efforts to drive the United States out of the Middle East.

If anything, Tehran has recently grown bolder. Last month it announced plans to triple its capacity to produce uranium enriched to the level of 20 percent—a far higher degree of processing than is needed to produce nuclear energy. Western diplomats and experts say that Iran is preparing, and may have already begun, to install a new generation of powerful centrifuges in a plant built into a mountain near the city of Qom. As British Foreign Secretary William Hague wrote in an op-ed published by the Guardian last week, it would take only two to three months to convert uranium enriched at Qom into weapons-grade material. That means that Iran could have a "breakout" capacity allowing it to quickly produce a weapon when it chose to do so.

Mr. Hague told the British Parliament last month that Iran also has been secretly testing medium-range missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. Britain believes there have been three such tests since October. Meanwhile, Iranian-backed militias have launched a new offensive against U.S. forces in Iraq. According to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and other senior officials, Tehran has supplied sophisticated rockets and roadside bombs for attacks on U.S. troops, 15 of whom were killed during June.

Iran's ability to sustain its nuclear program and its meddling in Iraq reflect the fact that these initiatives are controlled by the Revolutionary Guard, which has not been affected by the political feuding in Tehran and has first claim on the oil revenue that Iran continues to reap. Economic and political hardship also has had no apparent impact on Mr. Khamenei, who has maintained the regime's refusal even to negotiate with the U.N. Security Council, much less obey its resolutions.

The bottom line is that the threat from Iran is not diminishing but growing. Where is the policy to reverse that alarming trend?

DEFENSE CUTS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a piece from Politico by my colleagues in the House, Chairman FORBES, Chairman TURNER, Congressman BISHOP, and Congressman CONAWAY.

I fundamentally disagree with the President when he said in a recent interview with NPR:

A lot of the spending cuts that we're making should be around areas like defense spending as opposed to food stamps.

I wish the President would listen to the advice of Secretary Gates, who said in his AEI speech this May:

I revisit this history because it leads to an important point for the future: when it comes to our military modernization accounts, the proverbial "low hanging fruit"—those weapons and other programs considered most questionable—have not only been plucked, they have been stomped on and crushed. What remains are much-needed capabilities—relating to air superiority and mobility, long-range strike, nuclear deterrence, maritime access, space and cyber warfare, ground forces, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance—that our nation's civilian and military leadership deem absolutely critical.

My colleagues in the House are absolutely right when they wrote:

The time to draw a line in the sand, and go on the offense to support national security must be now.

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

[From Politico, July 25, 2011]

ON THE OFFENSE OVER DEFENSE CUTS

(By Representatives J. Randy Forbes, Michael Turner, Rob Bishop, and Mike Conaway)

America's all-volunteer military is the most well-trained, well-equipped fighting force the world has ever seen. But the strength of our armed forces should not be taken for granted.

Without sustained investments in our troops and their equipment, the military

power our nation now wields in defense of our security—including our economic security—will slowly be hollowed out. The result is likely to be an America that can go fewer places and do fewer things in defense of its global interests.

While that may sound good to those who remain uncomfortable with America's leadership role in the world, starving the military will not make us any safer, given the global demands on our security interests.

The U.S. military confronts readiness shortfalls and a growing array of risks and security challenges. That is why I am deeply concerned about the avalanche of military spending cuts being discussed—from President Barack Obama's \$400 billion proposal to the Senate's Gang of Six proposal that could cut up to \$886 billion.

The time to draw a line in the sand, and go on the offense to support national security must be now.

Let's be clear: Defense spending is not what put us in this position, and gutting the defense budget to pay the bills is unlikely to get us out of it. As a percentage of our gross domestic product, the defense budget remains just 3.6 percent. This figure is low by all historical standards.

Even if we start slashing major portions of the budget—say \$50 billion each year over the next decade—that figure would still only add up to a fraction of the nation's debt. Yet the additional risk to the nation could be substantial.

Today's military is worn out from a decade of operations that have pushed already aging platforms to the edge. More than half the Navy's deployed aircraft are not fully combat ready, as we recently discovered at a House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee hearing, and approximately one in five of our Navy ships are deemed unsatisfactory or mission degraded.

With known shortfalls in the Navy maintenance accounts, the Defense Department would be severely challenged to meet the expected service life of its equipment. Even more concerning are the assessments from our Combatant Commanders in the unclassified portion of the Quarterly Readiness Report to Congress. This paints a distressing picture of a military stretched thin by nearly 10 years of war and a sustained lack of resources.

Even as our forces have been aged rapidly by the high tempo of operations in the past decade, the president has cancelled a generation of weapons programs in just the last two years. While much of the nation has smart phones and iPads, the Army is still operating on an Atari-like system.

With readiness shortfalls and pressure to modernize aging platforms, how can we pretend we can defend the country with even more defense cuts? Our national defense planning must be based on an open and objective review of the threats we face and the resources required to meet them. Unfortunately, we now have that process in reverse.

In many ways, it's like a family who is about to purchase a new home. The correct course would be to have an inspector look at the house and tell the family what the problems are and what they will cost to fix. What if, instead, that family told the inspector that they only had \$1,000, and they wanted the inspector to go through and identify only \$1,000 worth of problems to fix?

This is analogous to the way the Defense Department and the Obama administration expect Congress to approach national defense. They dictate how much we will spend on defense without fully and objectively detailing the risks we face, or the choices we must make.

This wouldn't be a sensible course for the new homeowners. So why does it pass as acceptable for managing our national security?

In the past two years, the administration has executed two rounds of defense cuts, with the masthead of another likely on the way as part of an agreement to lift the debt ceiling. With growing readiness problems and a generation of military modernization either cut or on the chopping-block, we are now facing a \$400-\$900 billion defense cut looming over the horizon.

While our armed forces are charged with defending our national security, it is the Congress' responsibility to provide them with the resources to accomplish the tasks we set for them. Our men and woman in uniform diligently execute these tasks.

It is time for the Congress to do its job and provide adequately for the common defense.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, July 26, 1990, 21 years ago today, was a great day in our Nation's history. When President George Herbert Walker Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, we could see the future before us, full of possibility and opportunity for people with disabilities. It was one of the proudest days of my legislative career.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is one of the landmark civil rights laws of the 20th century—a long-overdue emancipation proclamation for Americans with disabilities. The ADA has played a huge role in making our country more accessible, in raising the expectations of people with disabilities about what they can hope to achieve at work and in life, and in inspiring the world to view disability issues through the lens of equality and opportunity.

In these times of often bitter political partisanship, it is valuable to remember that passage of the original Americans with Disabilities Act was a robustly bipartisan effort. As chief sponsor of the ADA in the Senate, I worked very closely with Senator Bob Dole and others on both sides of the aisle. We received invaluable support from President George Herbert Walker Bush and key members of his administration, including White House counsel Boyden Gray, Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, and Transportation Secretary Sam Skinner. Other Members of Congress also played critical roles in passing the ADA—first and foremost, Senator Ted Kennedy; but also Senator ORRIN HATCH, and Representatives Tony Coelho, STENY HOYER, Major Owens, and Steve Bartlett.

Before the ADA, life was very different for folks with disabilities in Iowa and across the country. Being an American with a disability meant not being able to ride a bus because there was no lift, not being able to attend a concert or ballgame because there was no accessible seating, and not being able to cross the street in a wheelchair because there were no curb cuts. In short, it meant not being able to work or participate in community life. Discrimination was both commonplace and accepted.

Since then, we have seen amazing progress. The ADA literally trans-

formed the American landscape by requiring that architectural and communications barriers be removed and replaced with accessible features such as ramps, lifts, curb cuts, widening doorways, and closed captioning. More importantly, the ADA gave millions of Americans the opportunity to participate in their communities. We have made substantial progress in advancing the four goals of the ADA—equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.

But despite this progress, we still have more work to do. One of the critical challenges we still need to address is the persistently low employment rates among Americans with disabilities. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, less than a third of working-age people with disabilities—around 4 million individuals—are currently employed.

This is shameful, and we need to do better. In April, at a disability employment summit, I challenged the employer representatives in the room to work to increase the size of the disability labor force by 1 million individuals by 2015. Tom Donohue, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, endorsed this goal and encouraged his colleagues to meet or exceed the 1 million number because "it's a good thing to do, and it's good for business."

But if we are going to get serious about growing the size of the disability work force, we need to start by recognizing that people with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted by the bad economy. Compared to the general workforce, in the last 2 years, adults with disabilities have left the labor force at a rate six times the rate of adults without disabilities.

I am committed to doing everything within my power to turn these trends around, and to increase employment opportunities for all individuals with disabilities.

If all of us—Members of Congress, business leaders, employers, and people with disabilities—work together, I believe that we can meet the goal of 1 million new workers with disabilities—and ensure that all individuals with disabilities have real opportunities for employment that meet their goals, interests, and high expectations.

I would like to take a brief moment on this ADA anniversary to remember a leader in the disability community who recently passed away—Max Starkloff.

Max, who acquired his disability at age 21, was a well-known advocate for disability rights, both in his hometown of St. Louis, MO, and nationally.

In the 1970s, while still living in a nursing home, Max founded Paraquad, which became one of the first Centers for Independent Living in this country. Max began his lifetime of advocacy for the rights and independence of people with disabilities long before the ADA, and continued it all the way up until his recent passing.

The examples of his advocacy are too numerous to catalogue, but here are a few examples:

In 1972, he convinced St. Louis officials to install curb cuts in sidewalks.

In 1977, Max's advocacy led to the use of lift-equipped buses in the St. Louis metro area.

In 1979, Max helped to integrate accessible design in an apartment complex that he and Paraquad opened in St. Louis, including counters that could be moved up and down to accommodate wheelchairs, wide doorways, and stoves that could be used by individuals with limited mobility.

Max, and his wife Colleen, worked tirelessly for the passage of the ADA in 1990.

In 1997, Max's advocacy over a two year period resulted in the St. Louis Zoo making their facilities accessible for all.

Most recently, Max devoted himself to an issue that is near and dear to my heart—improving employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Although Max Starkloff is no longer with us, his accomplishments and good work live on, and improve the lives of Missourians with disabilities on a daily basis.

So as we celebrate the anniversary of this great civil rights law, we take time to remember the remarkable progress that we have made in the past 21 years.

On July 26, 1990, when he signed ADA into law, President George Herbert Walker Bush spoke with great eloquence. And I will never forget his final words before taking up his pen. He said, "Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down."

Mr. President, today, that wall is indeed falling. And we must join together, on a bipartisan basis, to continue this progress.

REMEMBERING OFFICER CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE GIBSON

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to two law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty at the U.S. Capitol on July 24, 1998.

Thirteen years ago today, Officer Jacob Chestnut and Detective John Michael Gibson each of whom had spent 18 years on the Capitol Police force, lost their lives while safeguarding the Capitol against an armed, emotionally disturbed individual. As a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives at this time, I interacted with these officers on a regular basis. Their tragic, violent deaths profoundly affected us all.

We want these officers' family members and friends to know that these two fine police officers did not die in vain; if not for their courageous and immediate response, many more innocent people could have been injured or killed on that day in 1998.

On this date, we take a moment to remember the sacrifice made by these