

## NOT VOTING—11

|          |           |         |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Biden    | Kerry     | Smith   |
| Campbell | Landrieu  | Stevens |
| Edwards  | Lieberman | Talent  |
| Inouye   | Murkowski |         |

The nomination was confirmed.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period of morning business with Senators speaking for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, where is Aung San Suu Kyi? Burma's political crisis grows, and much of the world is outraged. Burma's democratically elected leader, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and world-renowned icon of freedom, remains imprisoned. Burma's ruling generals so far have prevented both the U.N. special envoy, who has been in Rangoon for 3 days, and the International Committee for the Red Cross, to visit her. The generals seem unmoved by the world's condemnation, and their peoples' suffering. It is time for all respectable members of the international community to put weight behind their words and take active measures to secure the freedom of Aung San Suu Kyi and the Burmese people.

Most of the world sees the Burma crisis in staggeringly different terms than do its military rulers. Despite the regime's denials, the May 30 assault on Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters was a well-organized, premeditated attack by members of the Union Solidarity Development Association, a militia of the ruling, and misnamed, State Peace and Development Council. Given Aung San Suu Kyi's stature within Burma and around the globe, we know Burma's top generals, led by General Than Shwe, would have had to personally approve a physical attack on her and her delegation. We know that Than Shwe would never let his conscience interfere with any calculation of what is in the best interests of the junta's continued ability to repress the democratic aspirations of its people.

Aung San Suu Kyi's associates, including several who witnessed the May 30 attacks, say that at least 70 and perhaps 100 members of her National for

Democracy were slaughtered by the regime's militia in the most violent crackdown since the junta crushed the August 1988 popular uprising against the regime—and we know the junta's claim that only four people died on May 30 in what they call a spontaneous clash with the opposition is false. We know that Suu Kyi is not in "protective custody," as the junta insists, but that she is being held because her national popularity and clear democratic mandate ultimately make rule by generals impossible to sustain. We know the generals are holding her incommunicado because, if she were free to speak, she would speak the truth about their brutality, and about the ruin they have brought to their country. What's so dangerous about these obvious sentiments is that the generals themselves know they are true, and that it is they who are to blame for this devastation, exposed as they are before their people and the world.

The irony is that by crushing the democratic opposition, the generals have once again demonstrated to their people and the world the fragility of their rule, which no amount of repression will legitimize. That one woman, unarmed and leading only an army of citizens who believe in her, can so rattle a group of uniformed officers who control every instrument of national power is testimony to what Vaclav Havel called the power of the powerlessness. As Havel and many other brave dissidents behind the Iron Curtain knew, no amount of repression can provide a regime the democratic legitimacy that is the only basis for regime survival. No leader or leaders can systematically repress their people and loot their country and get away with it forever. The Burmese military has been doing it for 40 years, and their time is running out.

Another sad truth the current crisis has exposed is how little the leaders of Burma's neighbors, including the democracies, seem to care for the most basic rights of the Burmese people. The Prime Minister of Thailand arrives in Washington today: I hope he is prepared for a barrage of questioning—and criticism—of Thailand's warm embrace of the dictatorship next door since he assumed office in 2001. Under Prime Minister Thaksin, Thailand has moved aggressively to deepen Thai business ties with Burma, provide substantial economic assistance to the junta, collaborate with the Burmese military against Burmese ethnic groups who oppose rule by the generals, arrest and repatriate exiled Burmese democrats across the Thai-Burma border, and pursue a policy of cooperation and conciliation with a regime that is opposed by the vast majority of its people and known to much of the world as an outlaw.

Bangkok's coddling of Rangoon has gone well beyond passive acceptance of the regime next door to something approaching active sponsorship of the junta. Thailand has made no effort to

reach out to the Burmese opposition, which is especially unfortunate since some of its most fearless leaders reside in the Thai-Burma border region. Under Prime Minister Thaksin, Thailand has supported and sustained its historic enemy, at the very time when it could use its influence to help bring about the negotiated transition to democracy in Burma.

India's government also appears to have made a strategic decision to "constructively engage" Rangoon out of fear of growing Chinese influence in Burma. India has legitimate concerns about China's interest in using Burma as an outlet for Chinese commerce and military forces in the Andaman Sea. But given China's pervasive influence in Burma, India cannot hope to compete with Beijing for the junta's affection. A more effective strategy would be to support the Burmese opposition's campaign for a free Burma. I don't know what policies a Burma led by Aung San Suu Kyi would pursue towards China, but I'm quite confident she wouldn't choose to pursue a strategic partnership with an Asian dictatorship. Democratic India would be a natural ally of a free Burma, and I believe Delhi would be wise to help move Burma in that direction, rather than curry favor with the generals.

China's unreconstructed policy towards Burma following the attack of May 30 was best expressed by China's ambassador to Rangoon, who told U.N. envoy Razali Ismail that China considers the crisis to be Burma's "internal political affair." Interestingly, China has been helpful in dealing with the North Korean nuclear crisis, I hope because Beijing understands the costs of tying itself too closely to a regime that is actively alienating the rest of the world. Perhaps it is wishful thinking to hope that China's rulers will reach a similar conclusion about their support for the Burmese junta: that in their increasing repression and devastation of their country, the generals are fighting a battle they can't win, and that undermines the stability and prosperity China seeks in Southeast Asia. Perhaps Beijing would take a more resolution line with the generals if Southeast Asia were united in condemnation of their assault on the Burmese people.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations will hold its annual ministerial summit and security meetings next week in Phnom Penh. Secretary of State Powell is scheduled to attend the meetings of the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conferences from June 18-20. I urge Secretary Powell to reconsider his plans to travel to Southeast Asia unless the ASEAN nations, excluding Burma, agree to address the crisis in Burma as their central agenda item; agree to forcefully condemn the crackdown on democracy in Burma; agree to require the release of Burma's detained democracy leaders in order for Burma