Houston also has agreed to pay up to 12 months of housing assistance for Katrina victims, hoping for FEMA reimbursement, Tate said.

About 37,000 evacuees are in Dallas area hotel rooms, said Miller, and more than 150,000 evacuees are in rooms across Texas.

''We said, We can't wait for FEMA,''' said Dallas Mayor Laura Miller. ''What worries me is reading about all these other cities who are waiting for trailer homes to show up so they can re-create these trailer villages. That would be the worst thing you can do.''

Mr. CARPER. While it is certainly reasonable to house evacuees in hotels on a short-term basis, this situation is simply unacceptable nearly 2 months after Katrina struck the coast. I am told that real estate and housing experts have pointed out that perhaps hundreds of thousands of suitable and likely much more affordable apartments could be had throughout the gulf coast region. I am certain that they could probably be had for significantly less than the cost of a hotel room. In addition, the Washington Post recently reported that a joint FEMA–HUD rental assistance program is likely wasting millions of dollars. In at least some cases, the program is not doing much to help evacuees in some parts of the country find suitable housing.

Each evacuee participating in the voucher program, according to the Post, initially receives a subsidy amount based on the national median rent for 3 months. In some parts of the country, such as Houston, the national median rent probably isn't enough to find suitable housing. In other communities, it might be more than enough. This means that Katrina evacuees in some parts of the country may be getting more assistance than they need, and those in higher cost areas might not be getting what they need to provide for their families.

It has been suggested that the solution to the housing crisis in the gulf might be to place evacuees in trailers or some other form of manufactured housing. But I have heard reports that FEMA is buying many of its trailers straight off the lot at retail prices. I have also heard that there are thousands of trailers just sitting around unoccupied in vacant lots. We have all heard stories about how miserable some of the trailer camps are to live in that FEMA has set up in places like Florida.

We can do better than this. FEMA owes it to Katrina victims and to the American taxpayers to find a more comfortable, less expensive way to house our fellow Americans who are going through such a difficult time right now. That is why I am sending a letter today to Acting FEMA Director David Paulison to ask him to tell us exactly what FEMA's plan is to get Katrina evacuees out of hotels and into more stable living environments so that they can begin the process of bringing their lives as close to normal as possible.

The problems and the waste we are seeing in FEMA's Katrina housing program remind me yet again that we need to do some work to ensure that the money we are spending to help Katrina victims is spent wisely and effectively. To date we have approved in the Congress $62 billion for Katrina. More money will probably be needed, but given the number of stories we see almost on a daily basis now about financial mismanagement, about confusion at FEMA, and the Department of Homeland Security, we should not be writing a blank check.

A recovery effort this large needs additional oversight to make sure the money we are spending is going to the people who need it most, to make sure we eliminate wasteful spending and get the most bang for our buck, and to make sure we reduce the potential for fraud.

It is my understanding that we are not sure what legislation is coming to the floor next week. I have a suggestion. The Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, of which I am a member, approved two bills a couple of weeks ago that I believe are desperately needed to make sure Katrina recovery funds are spent properly and go to the people who are most in need.

One of the bills we passed would appoint a chief financial officer to oversee the day-to-day use of Federal funds in the cleanup and reconstruction efforts underway in the gulf. I cosponsored this legislation with Senator COBURN of Oklahoma and Senator OBAMA of Illinois. It enjoys bipartisan support, including the cosponsorship, I believe, of both the Republican leader and Democratic leader of the Senate.

The chief financial officer would oversee the various Federal agencies involved in the recovery efforts and hold them financially accountable. The CFO would be Congress's personal watchdog, issuing periodic financial reports about whether the money is going to the people who need it the most and whether it is being used to hire local workers who need jobs.

The second bill would expand the authority of the inspector general assigned to Iraq reconstruction to oversee the Katrina recovery efforts. The expanded office would audit recovery operations and investigate allegations of waste, fraud, and inefficiency.

Together, these two bills would better protect American taxpayers and bring some much-needed accountability to the recovery efforts.

We shouldn't settle for the stories we see in the papers every day about the lack of decent housing for Katrina victims or the lack of competition for Federal contracts. We shouldn't read stories about waste and resign ourselves to the fact that waste is just something that happens in the Federal Government. We can do better, and we must. We owe it to the American taxpayers to do better, and we owe it to Katrina's victims to do better.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAHAM. 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. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask permission to speak in morning business until Senator BROWNBACK arrives.

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

IRAQ

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I think it is appropriate this morning that those of us in elected office, and every American, show some appreciation for what is going on in Iraq this morning.

I turned on the television and saw a new face of Iraq. I saw a judge schooled in the law, loyal to the law, presiding over a trial of Saddam Hussein, a person who was schooled in thuggery, loyal to himself and his agenda, one of the most brutal murderers the Middle East has known. And I saw an attorney general laying out the case against Saddam Hussein.

How did that all happen? It happened through sheer will. First, violence had to replace diplomacy because diplomacy was failing. The effort to contain Saddam Hussein's regime, to rein it in, to clearly understand what his purposes were about weapons of mass destruction, to get him to stay out of the upheaval of the Middle East, to be a productive member of the Middle East society, the world community, in my opinion, failed miserably and we had to resort to force and violence to oust a man who had perpetuated many crimes against his own people and his neighbors.

How did it happen, at the end of the day? It happened through the bravery, commitment, and sacrifice of the American military, their coalition partners, and the Iraqi people themselves.

We have lost around 2,000 troops since the war began. To those families who have lost loved ones, there is nothing I can say other than I am sorry and, in my opinion, for what it is worth, your loved ones have advanced the cause of freedom by participating in a military operation to take Saddam Hussein off the throne and into the dock as a defendant.

To those coalition members who have stood with us and who have sacrificed, thank you. Because of your sacrifice, the cause of freedom has been advanced.

We do not appreciate enough, in my opinion, the sacrifice of the Iraqi people. I believe it is the judge or one member of the court whose brother was assassinated. To sit in judgment of Saddam Hussein is no easy thing to do. They are literally risking their lives to be a prosecutor, a policeman, or member of the army. They wear a target on

their back. Their families are at risk because the terrorists see it as a risk to their way of life. Those who take up arms against the terrorists in Iraq are literally changing the course of history.

To those men and women who have served in the American military, those who have lost life and limb, I hope you take pride in what is happening today. To the families of the loved ones who have been lost, those who have been injured, and those who are still serving, because of your sacrifice and commitment, your willingness to leave your comfort zones, to leave your family and friends, Guard members and Reservists leaving their businesses and loved ones behind, you have changed the course of Middle East history.

At the end of the day, we can't kill enough terrorists to win. Terrorism is about hijacking of a great religion. There is no place in the terrorist world for a different faith, people of moderation in the Islamic community, and there is no role for a woman. For that to change, it is going to have to be deeper than force of arms. It is going to have to be a transformation of a culture.

The culture of the rule of the gun versus the rule of law is happening before our eyes. What is going on today in Iraq is a sea change in the Middle East. It is about time a dictator in that region answers for his crimes. It is about time people in that region be allowed to live their lives in a normal fashion and raise their kids in peace.

That day is still far away, but we are closer than we have ever been. So to those men and women serving in our American military and those who have suffered, congratulations and God bless. Because of your sacrifice and those sacrifices of our coalition partners and the Iraqi people, there has been a sea change in the Middle East and you deserve all the credit.

I hope the American people will be patient to see this thing through because what happens in Iraq is directly related to our own security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to make a statement about the situation taking place in Darfur and to update my colleagues. But I wish to speak briefly to my colleagues and to others about the amazing trial of Saddam Hussein that has started.

This is a trial that is going to reveal a great deal about what took place, the carnage that happened under his rule, and what he did to the people of Iraq. I worked with a number of Iraqi dissidents over a period of time. The things they reported—the mass graves, the persecutions, the intimidation by this Government of Saddam Hussein—is something that has not been well revealed. Hopefully, that is going to come out in this trial. We will see change as it progresses.

DARFUR

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I wish to update my colleagues on what is taking place in Sudan in the Darfur region. This is something about which I spoke several times in this Chamber. It is a genocide as the Senate, the House, and the President declared it a genocide. Others at the U.N. call it crimes against humanity. Under either definition, it is a horrific set of circumstances that has occurred in that region. Yet the response to date has still not been effective. People are continuing to be killed and slaughtered and run out of their villages, and the African Union troops have not succeeded in securing peace in that region. I want to update my colleagues about what is taking place.

The mandate of the African Union troops—and this is the African countries that have formed the African Union force—is simply to monitor and report on the current cease-fire. That is insufficient. I am going to detail why it is insufficient and what has happened because of their insufficient mandate and rules of engagement not being appropriate for the circumstances.

To date, they have largely written and filed away reports. Without a mandate robust enough to protect the civilians or prevent violence or assistance robust enough to provide a well-sized and equipped force, there is not much hope for the people seeking safety in Darfur.

A few weeks ago, the African Union came out with their strongest statement regarding the violence. This was a clear call for the international community to shine the spotlight on this crisis and to realize the implications it will have on the entire region.

While the parties are engaged in the sixth round of peace talks—and that is progress; we do have peace talks engaged in by the people in Darfur, the Government in Sudan, the jingaweit militia that has been given equipment by the Government in Sudan—violence continues to take place even as these peace talks move forward.

In the last few weeks, attacks have been carried out by the jingaweit militia, the Government forces, and the rebel movement—all three. The African Union announced:

> You would recall that in the past one month, we witnessed a series of violations in Darfur, with widespread violence against villages, commercial and humanitarian conveys, and even IDP camps.

These are camps where individual citizens are going to get away from the raids and carnage.

> This rendered the work of the humanitarian agencies and NGOs in the area difficult and, in some cases, they were forced to suspend their activities.

There was an unprecedented move against IDP camps and the first reports of the Government of Sudan's use of helicopters since January. A number of coordinated attacks has been reported since mid-September involving hundreds of jingaweit militia—this is the militia armed by the Government of Sudan—and Government forces working together killing and injuring many and displacing thousands more. Just this week, a number of civilians were killed in fighting that took place in the town of Kutum after a rebel and Government force clashed.

The African Union articulates:

> A clearly premeditated and well rehearsed combined operation was carried out by the Government of Sudan military and police at approximately 11 a.m. in the town of Tawilla and its IDP camps in North Darfur. The Government of Sudan forces used approximately 41 trucks, 7 land cruisers in the operation which resulted in a number of deaths, massive displacement of civilians and the destruction of several houses in the surrounding areas, as well as some tents in the IDP camp.

In addition to these violations, there are reports that the Government of Sudan has painted their military trucks in the African Union colors, making it extremely difficult for civilians to distinguish between monitors or attackers. All parties have violated the cease-fire agreement on several occasions since it was established in 2004. Conditions for humanitarian organizations remain extremely difficult. This week, the United Nations announced its plan to withdraw all nonessential staff from Darfur.

In addition to an upsurge in violence by the Government and the government-backed jingaweit militia, I am very troubled by the recent violence aimed at the African Union by rebel groups. In particular, the recent kidnappings and killings of African Union troops should be strongly condemned and swift justice should be brought to the perpetrators of these crimes. The African Union has called for these events to be brought to the attention of the Security Council in their communique of October 10 of this year.

The New York Times reported yesterday that some of the once-government-backed militia groups are fracturing and targeting government-run entities, such as police stations. Infighting amongst the rebels is another common hurdle to achieving peace. This is the chaos that has plagued Darfur.

Ambassador John Bolton's recent decision to block the UN Envoy on Genocide from testifying before the Security Council has undoubtedly raised some eyebrows. However, if he means what he says—that actions speak louder than words—then I urge the Congress, the administration, the United Nations, and the international community to do something. I applaud Ambassador Bolton's recognition of the fact that the current arms embargo is not adequate, it must be expanded, and there must be compliance.

I urge my colleagues to consider these recent events and to redouble our efforts to bring an end to the genocide that is happening as I speak. I urge my colleagues and the chairman of the