

11, 2001, and it didn't end last night. We continue to fight, knowing that al-Qaida remains committed to attacking our homeland and our allies. We were reminded of this last week when police in Germany arrested three men associated with al-Qaida who were planning an attack there.

Since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom, we have matched the terrorist threat with the valor of our armed services and counterterrorism professionals. The men and women of the Central Intelligence Agency's Counterterrorism Center have unselfishly devoted themselves to preventing attacks against us and in hunting down bin Laden. Last night, their determined efforts met with success, and we are deeply grateful for their efforts.

As for the broader war, the death of bin Laden may create the opportunity to renew our efforts with Pakistan to bring fresh pressure on al-Qaida's senior leadership. President Obama noted in his remarks of last night that it is essential for Pakistan to join us in this fight. Today is the day to redouble our efforts in pursuit of al-Qaida.

In the coming weeks and months, these same counterterrorism professionals will focus on determining what bin Laden's death means for the threat posed by al-Qaida affiliates in Somalia, Yemen, North Africa, and for the remainder of al-Qaida's senior leadership. But today the world knows once again that wherever al-Qaida lurks—wherever they lurk—we will find them. It may not be days from now; it may not be months. But those who plot harm to innocent Americans and our allies will be captured or killed. For them too justice will be done.

Anyone who lived through the horror of 9/11 remembers exactly where they were on that terrible September day. Now they will remember where they were when they first heard the news that the man behind it had been killed by brave American forces inside Pakistan. We will remember where we were when, after years of effort, we finally got our man. America didn't seek this fight; it came to us. But ever since 9/11, we have been determined to fight al-Qaida to the end. We knew from the start it would require patience and great sacrifice, and that effort has paid off. Thanks to the skill and perseverance of many brave men and women, we have done what we said. America has not wavered, it has not lost sight of the mission, and we will prevail.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only until 4:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEATH OF OSAMA BIN LADEN

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, it was a little less than 10 years ago that I was in northern Wyoming driving home. It was the day of September 11, 2001. On that drive home that evening, I heard the press report saying that Osama bin Laden was behind the terrorist attack on the trade center, the Pentagon, and in that field in Pennsylvania where the plane went down. I said to myself then that it was just a matter of time before the United States would catch him and justice would be served.

Mr. President, across the remote mountains and dingy suburbs of Afghanistan and Pakistan, thousands of American troops dedicated themselves to stamping out Osama bin Laden and the evil he defined. All of those Americans made painful sacrifices at home, and many still are. Many are struggling with injuries, seen and unseen, and thousands have given their precious lives.

Of course, we will never forget the innocent lives taken in cold blood on that day of September 11, 2001. We all know how that day changed the course of world history. One man was behind it all. We have hunted him for the better part of a decade.

Now, thanks to the hard, diligent work of America's Special Forces and intelligence agents, that man is dead. At long last, catching him in a corner, a handful of American troops delivered justice to the entire world.

The price for Osama bin Laden's death was enormous. Although yesterday's precision strike was executed by the toughest, smartest, and most effective special operations force on Earth, its justice is the result of all the countless soldiers, marines, airmen, sailors, and intelligence agents and their families who went "all in" for us over the past decade.

This country—now and among future generations—will never forget their sacrifices.

Thirty-six Montanans have been killed in worldwide operations since 9/11. Dozens more have been seriously wounded, and a few were longtime servicemembers, but many of them joined the military specifically because of that awful day and what happened on September 11, 2001.

We are so thankful to them for all they gave and for all their families gave.

While Osama bin Laden's death is a true victory, our vigilance in the

worldwide fight against terrorism doesn't end here. The hundreds of Montanans still serving abroad today remind us of that every day.

Yesterday we blotted out Osama bin Laden forever, and that will make our world safer. But working together with the international community, our Nation will continue to be steadfast in our commitment to security, safety, and opportunity for all Americans.

Security and opportunity and freedom aren't just American values, they are human values. As Americans, we will never be afraid to fight for them.

In the days and months ahead, I expect we will refine and recalibrate the future of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. As this next chapter unfolds, my thoughts and prayers will always remain with the hundreds of Montanans serving there. We are grateful for their service. We are anxious to bring them home.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today to deliver a very difficult speech. This will be my farewell speech to the Senate. Serving as Nevada's 24th Senator has truly been the greatest professional privilege of my life. Growing up with a single mom in very humble surroundings, I simply never imagined that one day I would end up as a Member of such an august body.

Unfortunately, the amazing experiences that stem from the more than 10 years of my Senate service cannot be summed up in one single speech. I owe a humble thank you to many people who helped to get me here and who have helped me serve effectively, from campaign volunteers, staff, and donors, to some of the best people with whom I have ever worked, my Senate staff. I cannot thank you enough for the honor of the past many years. Each of you has helped me to achieve more than my individual talents alone could have ever accomplished. When I look back over my time, both here and in the House of Representatives, I am very proud of the many accomplishments that we together have been able to achieve. I wish to take a moment to mention a few.

The beauty of the State of Nevada has been greatly enhanced and protected for the enjoyment of future generations because of my work in authoring the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act and several other important lands bills. Because of these lands bills, Nevada has been able to

keep over \$3 billion that has been raised from land sales in southern Nevada. This is money that did not have to come out of the U.S. Treasury.

In the past, BLM land; that is, the public land in Nevada, was exchanged for sensitive land around the State. But as a result of the lands bills we worked on, we were able to, instead, auction this BLM land, raising far more money for the State of Nevada than the land exchanges ever were able to do. This land revenue has been used to purchase sensitive land to protect it for future generations, but also to construct over 100 beautiful parks and trails in southern Nevada. I cannot tell you how proud I am when I drive around Las Vegas and see so many families enjoying these beautiful areas. These lands bills have made the great quality of life we enjoy in Nevada that much better.

Additionally, for those in northern Nevada, my love for Lake Tahoe has been evident throughout the years. I have worked hard to ensure that the beauty of those tranquil waters and surroundings will be just as beautiful decades from now as they are today, and our lands bills helped to achieve this goal. Through this legislation, hundreds of millions of dollars have been devoted to preserve its ecosystem, and important fuel reduction projects around our State will help prevent catastrophic wildfires that so threaten the future of our State and its breathtaking landscape.

Additionally, I have been a passionate advocate for education reform. Our lands bills have directed millions of dollars to Nevada schools as an endowment our State will benefit from for many years yet to come. I thank Senators REID and Bryan for their cooperation in helping draft this legislation that so greatly benefits our State. I also thank the folks on my staff, especially John Lopez, who worked so hard to turn these pieces of legislation into law.

Speaking of legislation that became law, I wish also to highlight another accomplishment of which I am so proud.

As the only bipartisan provision in the so-called ObamaCare bill, Senator TOM CARPER and I worked against some powerful interest groups to get the Healthy Behaviors Act added to the health reform bill.

Our provision was modeled after efforts by Safeway in the private sector to both improve health care quality and to reduce the cost of health care. Essentially, our provision rewards people in the form of lower health care premiums for making healthy choices, such as quitting smoking. If we as Americans continue to eat too much, exercise too little, and to smoke, it really does not matter what kind of health care reform we enact in this country; costs will continue to escalate. I hope this provision will highlight the individual contribution we can all make to reduce our health care costs.

Certainly this legislation would not have become law if it were not for the spectacular job Michelle Spence from my office did. As I mentioned earlier, I simply cannot list the number of things or the number of people on my staff who have helped me with legislation. We have accomplished a lot. I wish I could do it in just one speech, but it is not possible. I could speak at length about my fight for lower taxes and individual freedoms, protection of constitutional rights, the dignity of our service men and women, education reform, and so much more, but there is not enough time. I hope my voting record and legislative record in the Senate will continue to speak for me long after I have left this Chamber. I would like to speak, though, about a few observations I have made through the course of my time here.

When I first ran for office back in 1994, I was rather naive. I was also very idealistic. I simply wanted to make a difference in this great country. Throughout the years, I may have lost my naivete, but I never lost my idealism. I still strongly believe the United States is the greatest country in the history of the world, and it is worth fighting for and worth protecting.

I will leave this place knowing there are some really outstanding people here who are just as idealistic or maybe more so than I ever was, and they are willing to take the tough political votes that are necessary to save this country from total bankruptcy. My prayer is that more people will join them in that courage. Our children and our grandchildren deserve to have the same country we enjoyed, and it is up to the House, the Senate, and the White House to stand together with the American people to save the future of the United States from self-destruction.

When I first arrived in the Senate, I observed several people who were so caught up in their own self-importance and busyness that arrogance literally dripped from them. Unfortunately, they were blind to it, and everyone could see it but them. When one takes a position of leadership, there is a very real danger of getting caught up in the hype surrounding that status. Oftentimes, the more power and prestige a person achieves, the more arrogant a person can become.

As easy as it was for me to view this in other people, unfortunately, I was blind to how arrogant and self-centered I had become. I did not recognize that I thought mostly of myself. The worst part about this is that I even tried not to become caught up in my own self-importance. Unfortunately, the urge to believe in it was stronger than the power to fight it. This is how dangerous the feeling of power and adulation can be.

My caution to all of my colleagues is to surround yourselves with people who will be honest with you about how you really are and what you are becoming, and then make them promise to not

hold back no matter how much you may try to prevent them from telling you the truth. I wish I had done this sooner, but this is one of the hardest lessons I have had to learn. I believe that if I had learned this lesson earlier, I would have prevented myself from judging two of my colleagues when I had no place to do so.

When I was chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, I was confronted with the personal issues facing Senator Larry Craig and Senator Ted Stevens. Following Larry's admission and Ted's guilty verdict, I too believed in the power of my leadership position, and I called on both of them to resign. I sincerely struggled with those decisions afterward, so much so that I went to each of them a few weeks afterward and admitted what I did was wrong, and I asked both of them for forgiveness. Each of these men was gracious enough to forgive me even though publicly I did not show them the same grace. I am very grateful to both of these men. When I announced my personal failure 2 years ago, Larry Craig was one of the first to call and to express his support. I truly cannot tell you what that meant then and what it means to me today.

The purpose of me speaking about this is to humbly show that in life a person understands mercy a lot more when they need it and when it is shown to them. Again, this is a hard lesson I have had to learn, but I hope I can now show mercy to people who come into my life who truly need it.

As I conclude, I have a few others I want to thank.

My colleague from the State of Nevada, Senator REID. I ran against Senator REID in 1998. He beat me by a little over 400 votes. Afterward, 2 years later, when I was fortunate enough to win the election, Senator REID and I sat down and we kind of made a pact between us that we were going to get along even though we were of different parties, we were going to put the past behind us, and we were going to work together for the people of the State of Nevada. A funny thing happened along the way over these last 10-plus years: Senator REID and I developed a friendship—two people with opposite voting records, opposite views on major national issues, but we worked together on a lot of issues that affected our State. A friendship formed between our staffs, and a true friendship formed between Senator REID and myself. And for that, I want to thank him.

To my Senate colleagues, I would like to take a moment to apologize for what you have had to go through as a result of my actions. I know many of you were put in difficult situations because of me, and for that I sincerely apologize.

My wife Darlene, who has been through so much with me and has fought through so many struggles, is owed more than I could ever repay. I do not deserve a woman like her, but I love her, and I am so grateful the Lord has put her in my life.

Our children, Trevor, Siena, and Michael, have never known anything other than their dad leaving each week to come back to Washington, DC, for my work. All three of them are incredible, and it has been a blessing and a privilege just to be their dad.

I have also been very blessed with a great set of parents who have stood by me through thick and thin, and also the rest of my extended family. I also have wonderful friends who have been there with me and my family through the highs and the lows.

Lastly, most importantly, I want to thank God for allowing me to be here. I have been encouraged by some not to mention God because it looks hypocritical because of my own personal failings, but I would argue that I have not mentioned him enough. I am glad the Lord not only forgives, but he actually likes it when we give Him thanks. So, Lord, thank you for all you have done in my life. I hope I can do better in the future. I hope I can learn to love You with all my heart, soul, and to love others as myself.

My colleagues, I bid you farewell. Know that you will all be in my prayers.

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL.) The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

ILLINOIS FLOODING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we have heard some terrible stories about severe weather and the damage it is causing across the United States. My heart goes out to the people of Tuscaloosa, AL, and all the communities in the South that were ravaged by tornadoes of record force and velocity.

In the Midwest, our problems are more subtle but also devastating in terms of the impact of floodwaters. It is nothing new in our part of the world. We have the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers at the southern tip of our State, further north on the Mississippi, the Illinois River and the Missouri River. Whenever there is heavy rainfall in one area or more, it ends up raising the levels of those rivers to perilous heights, which can inundate communities.

I can't tell my colleagues how proud I am of the people who come forward in the midst of this type of challenge every single year. Thank goodness it seems as though there is never a lack of volunteers. People are always willing to step up, starting with the Na-

tional Guard. They always do the best job possible, and I thank them over and over for what they do. Then, local law enforcement works overtime—the firefighters, the police, and all the rest. Then there is the extra work that is going on in hospitals and clinics and nurses and doctors working overtime.

In my part of the world too, State and Federal employees have pitched in at every level, starting with the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Natural Resources of the State of Illinois, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It is an amazing outpouring of support.

Last Friday, I boarded a plane in Chicago and flew down to Marion, IL, and took a helicopter into Cairo. Cairo, of course, is at the southern tip of our State, as I mentioned earlier, at the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi Rivers. I saw there some things going on in the town of Cairo, IL, which were truly frightening and disturbing.

This is a town which in its heyday was one of the major port cities in Middle America. Cairo, as the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers came together and then coursed on down to the Gulf of Mexico, was a major city with major economic activity. Over the years, as river traffic changed and the economy changed, Cairo changed too. Now it has a population of a little less than 3,000 people. Many of them are very poor. They have an African-American mayor, Mayor Childs. I believe he is their first, if not their second, African-American mayor. They have had issues of racial strife over the last 50 years. They struggle to keep businesses in place. Their schools are always challenged, and now, on top of that, comes a flood.

If you went along the Ohio River leading up to Cairo, you would see an amazing levee. It is the kind of wall of protection, concrete wall of protection, which every river community would love to have—on the Mississippi side, not so much. But the interesting thing I found when I went down there is even that side of the river, the Ohio River, with this huge concrete levee, has serious problems. It turns out that the water table is so high in Cairo, IL, that the pressure of the rising Ohio River is forcing the water into what are known as sand boils. So out of nowhere, in the midst of a lot or a street, up pops a geyser of river water. You think, what is going on here? It is 10, 15, 20-50 feet away from the levee. That is because the entire ground is so saturated and the river is working its way underneath, eating up the underlayment.

I walked along there with a National Guardsman who was taking pictures of the scene. We went to one street that had been closed with two major openings where water was bubbling, and as the National Guardsman was taking my photograph, the street collapsed under him and he fell 2 or 3 feet down because all of this water has eaten out all of the substrata under this street.

That is why this has become so serious that the mayor, Mayor Childs, started with the voluntary evacuation and then last Saturday night said: Let's everybody leave this town. We don't know what is going to happen next. That is the reality not only of Cairo but of several other communities.

The 2,800 people of Cairo, IL, were evacuated Saturday when the Ohio River reached its highest level since 1937. It rose above the 15½-foot level this weekend and is expected to go higher. Five other Illinois communities are now under a voluntary evacuation order. The people of Old Shawneetown, Junction, Brookport, and Golconda are being asked to clear out for their own safety.

The biggest threat of major damage is still at Cairo. I was in Cairo just a few days ago, and I can tell you the water levels there were continuing to rise.

I show you a picture of a home in Cairo, IL. The water level is already so high that the home is uninhabitable. I saw many homes like this, but I also saw some superhuman efforts which are hard to even describe, where people decided, even with a home that close to the river, they were going to build a wall of sandbags around their home and save it. It sounds impossible, but they are doing it. The sandbags are up to 5 feet high, holding back the water which, if they were not there, would have inundated the home. The pumps are pumping water out from the home into the surrounding areas, and people are up night and day, 24 hours a day, in rowboats, going back and forth trying to preserve the one thing on Earth that means so much to them—their home. That is the kind of battle that is taking place in homes all around Alexander County and Cairo. The sustained high water level has put an unprecedented amount of pressure on the levees.

As I mentioned earlier, these giant sand boils are forming, and they are working all night to try to contain them. Local volunteers and National Guardsmen are doing all they can, but the Ohio River is expected to stay at or above flood stage for the foreseeable future, and the levee may not withstand that pressure. If Cairo's levee bursts, the Army Corps estimates the town will be inundated with as much as 15 feet of water.

The entire State of Illinois is operating under a state of emergency; 320 National Guardsmen are on hand to help evacuate people and monitor water levels. The State has issued and helped fill more than 1 million sandbags, working with the Guard, the Army Corps of Engineers, and local responders to put in generators and supplies where they are needed.

My thoughts are with the people and families affected by the floodwaters in southern Illinois, especially those who had to leave their homes. I am grateful for all the people, military and civilian alike, who are working around the clock to control the Ohio River.