

pride we as a family felt in them, the stories that they told us, I will be sharing with my colleagues over the next several days. But just the lasting impression I had was this juxtaposition of feeling, as we talked to the moms and dads and children, of concern for their husband or their spouse and, yes, an insecurity about their safety, which is natural, as we would all feel, but at the same time an optimism, a feeling of being able to contribute to the United States of America and our great democracy.

They were upbeat. They were optimistic. They were patriotic. And that sort of juxtaposition of feeling was something that was a real privilege for me and my family to experience. The one thing they did all say, as we finished church and went to lunch, was: Make sure, when you go back to Washington, that you let your colleagues know and let the President of the United States know how much we appreciate their leadership, their support for our troops abroad. Let the President know that we are keeping him and his family in our prayers.

I yield the floor.

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, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 6 p.m., with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the first hour shall be equally divided between the Senator from Texas, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and the Senator from Arkansas, Mrs. LINCOLN, or their designees.

The Senator from Texas.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I thank our distinguished majority leader for visiting with the families of our troops from the 101st from his State. All of us are personally visiting with families of people who are there, and particularly in my case, I spent quite a bit of time talking to the families whose loved ones are either missing in action or are verified prisoners of war.

There is nothing more rewarding than talking to these incredible people who are afraid of what might be happening. They are, of course, going through something that all of us hope we will never have to go through, but they are very strong. They trust that we are doing everything possible to inform them, to find out the whereabouts

of these prisoners or missing persons. Most certainly, our military—this is something I personally ask in our briefing sessions—is trying to find out exactly where these prisoners or missing people are located.

They are working through the Red Cross to try to have a Red Cross representative see these prisoners just as the Red Cross representatives are being able to see the Iraqi prisoners who are being held by the allied forces. So it is a tough time for these wonderful people of America who are supporting their loved ones in this very trying time for them.

All of us want to be reminded that there are specific laws, international laws, called the Geneva Convention, about the treatment of prisoners. Article 17 explicitly prohibits inflicting physical or mental torture and any other forms of coercion on prisoners in order to obtain information of any kind, including publicizing photographs where they can be recognized. Prisoners of war who refuse to answer questions may not be threatened, insulted, or exposed to unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind.

Article 23 of the Geneva Convention prevents a prisoner from being sent to or detained in areas where they may be exposed to the fire of the combat zone, and in no case can prisoners be used as human shields.

The Geneva Convention also requires access to the prisoners by officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

We have informed the Iraqi Government that we intend to treat their prisoners with dignity and abide by the Geneva Convention. We most certainly are appealing to the Iraqis to let in the Red Cross personnel.

One of the benefits of the so-called embedded media is that they are on the scene with our military and are able to provide some very candid photos of our troops in action.

I want to show a few more of the photos. I started some of them last week. I think these photos really speak more than a thousand words about what it is to be at the front. We see the pictures on television, but I wanted to display some of the still pictures showing how we are treating prisoners of war and the people of Iraq as our allied soldiers are coming upon them.

This photo shows a U.S. marine helping an injured prisoner of war moments after securing the port of Umm Qasr in southern Iraq. It was taken on March 23 of this year.

U.S. Marine LCpl Marcco Ware of Los Angeles carries an Iraqi soldier who was injured in an attack on Ware's outfit on Tuesday, March 26, 2003. This unit has been attacking LCpl Ware's unit, but he found this injured soldier and is carrying him to safety.

I am very proud of the character and courage of our forces and the way they are treating those who are in their care. At the same time, we have seen our soldiers paraded on Iraqi television

in clear violation of international law. We applaud our troops' bravery, courage, and professionalism. Our prayers are with them and their families in this most difficult time.

President Bush has demanded that the Iraqis immediately comply with the Geneva Convention. I urge all of those who might have information that could be helpful to the Red Cross in getting in to see our prisoners of war to bring that forward. I encourage the Iraqi Government—if there is any shred of dignity—to make sure they abide by the Geneva Convention, just as our forces are abiding by it.

I know so many in the Senate are reaching out in their individual States, trying to make sure that we touch the families who are suffering so much. In churches throughout my hometown of Dallas, they have prayer lists including every person who is connected to a member of that particular parish. Those young men and women are being named individually in those prayers. I think all of us are touched. We have Texas embedded media.

I close with part of a piece in the San Antonio Express that was written by Sig Christenson, their military correspondent who is embedded with the 3rd Infantry Division:

March 25: It was a little after 3 p.m. today when the little slice of Iraq that we occupy dimmed.

A vicious sandstorm, almost certainly the worst one yet for the 3rd Infantry Division troops that have been here for months, swept over the sandy plateau we took from 200 or so Iraqi troops this past Sunday.

"Wow, it's dark," Airman 1st Class Dan Housely said.

Not to mention surreal.

In less time than it takes to watch a rerun of "The Beverly Hillbillies," the once-overcast but relatively clear desert was a swirling mass of sand. An orange hue descended over the landscape, creating a scene resembling Viking probe photos of Mars.

Sand gets into everything around here, and especially seems drawn to your sinuses and ears. Take a "Baby Wipe bath," as soldiers call it, and you'll clear out clumps of dirt from your ears—day after day.

Outside, gale-force winds kick up the sandy floor and turn each fine grain into a weapon. . . . Within an hour, I had a headache that pulsed at the back of my skull.

It could be worse.

We hold the high ground and have lots of firepower, but that won't stop Iraqis loyal to Saddam Hussein. Already we've lost a soldier within walking distance of my cot—he was shot dead—and our troops have encountered Iraqis wearing American military uniforms close to our camp.

If today's battle for a bridge outside An Najaf is any example, we can expect a determined, fierce resistance all the way to Baghdad. Iraqi regulars and elite militia driving trucks took on 70-ton M1A1 tanks, coming at them again and again.

That kind of fanaticism is cause for my imagination to go wild as I prepare to sleep. A sandstorm gives perfect cover to infiltrators and snipers out here, and as I worked today I found myself frequently looking out my Humvee. It could become a habit.

Mr. President, I appreciate very much Senator LINCOLN from Arkansas sharing this hour with me, and the rest of the hour on our side will be managed by Senator THOMAS of Wyoming.