

plan for a surge in troops or a deepening involvement in Iraq. It is a worthy debate for us to have because I think this is obviously a conflict that has gone on a long while, longer now than the Second World War. We have had a lot of discussion with the military leaders in the field about training Iraqi troops to provide for their own security.

Let's review what has happened in Iraq.

Saddam Hussein ran Iraq. We now know he was a butcher. We knew it then; we know it now. There are hundreds of thousands of skeletons in mass graves, of the victims murdered by Saddam Hussein. But Saddam Hussein doesn't exist anymore. He was executed. He has been buried.

There is a new constitution in Iraq, voted for by the Iraqi people. There is a new government in Iraq selected by the Iraqi people. This country belongs to Iraq, not to us. It is their country, not ours. The security for their country is their responsibility, not ours. The question for all of us is: When will the Iraqi people decide they are able to provide for their own security?

My colleague says it is a matter of being patient with training the Iraqi troops. Perhaps today there is going to be a young man or woman who is going to enlist in the Marines and the Army and they will go to training. It won't be very many months before they are fully trained and maybe committed to the battlefield—6 months, 7 months, 8 months. The question is: How long does it take to train an Iraqi army and Iraqi security forces to provide security for their own country? Years? Can they be trained, as American troops are trained, in months rather than years? The answer, at least in the last several years, seems to have been no.

It is very important for us to debate this question of our deepening involvement in Iraq. We all know what is going on there. It is sectarian violence, Shia on Sunni, Sunni on Shia. Seventy-five more people were killed today in Shia neighborhoods, multiple bombings, we are told by the news today, 160 wounded. The day before, dozens of Iraqis were killed, and 25 American troops were killed in numerous attacks. Our hearts break for all of them, particularly the American troops, but also for everyone who is losing their life in this conflict.

Suicide car bombers, simultaneous car bombings, beheaded bodies floating in the Tigris River, bodies with holes drilled in the heads and knees with electric drills, tortured, tortured bodies swinging from lampposts in Iraq, we read. It is a cycle of grim violence, unlike any most of us have ever seen. It is unbelievable.

Let me tell you what General Abizaid, who is in charge of CENTCOM, said about 6 weeks ago. He came to the Congress—and this relates to what my colleague had said and the debate we will have. General Abizaid said this:

I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the Corps commander, Gen-

eral Dempsey . . . and I said, in your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to the ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they said no.

This isn't an approximation of what the top general said; it is exactly what he told the Congress: I met with all of my top generals, and I asked them the question, if we were to bring in more troops now, does it add to our ability to achieve success? They said no. That's what General Abizaid said.

Let me describe to you what General Abizaid said following that comment. Again, this is 2 months ago in testimony before the Senate:

The reason is because we want the Iraqis to do more. It's easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future.

Less than 2 months ago, the top general said his top commanders in Iraq all said no to bringing in more troops. Why? Because it will say to the Iraqis: We will do the job. We will do what we would expect you to do.

As we talk about deepening the American involvement in Iraq and the issue of how many troops we are going to have in that battlefield, let me turn to another issue. If we have 20,000-plus troops to send to Iraq, what about Afghanistan?

Our military is, as all of us know, fairly overstretched. We are calling up guardsmen and reservists and some of them second deployments, some of them third deployments all across this country. But in Afghanistan, which was the home of al-Qaida, where the Taliban ruled and where we went first to route the Taliban and create a democracy in Afghanistan, the Taliban, by all accounts, are now taking hold once again and creating an even greater threat.

They are fighting hard to destabilize the Government of Afghanistan. That was our first battle, to go into Afghanistan and kick the Taliban out. We need more troops in Afghanistan now, not less, and yet my understanding is the President's plan would divert troops we have in Afghanistan to go to Iraq.

Let me read something that Mr. John Negroponte, the Director of National Intelligence said last week. He testified before the Select Committee on Intelligence, and here is what he said:

Al Qaeda is the terrorist organization that poses the greatest threat to U.S. interests, including to the homeland.

Al-Qaida is what poses the greatest threat to our interests, including our homeland. Then he went on to say this. This is again John Negroponte, Director of National Intelligence.

Al Qaeda continues to plot attacks against our homeland and other targets with the objective of inflicting mass casualties. And they continue to maintain active connections and relationships that radiate outward from their leaders' secure hideout in Pakistan.

Let me reemphasize:

And they continue to maintain active connections and relationships that radiate out-

ward from their leaders' secure hideout in Pakistan to affiliates throughout the Middle East, northern Africa, and Europe.

What does that mean? Osama bin Laden, do we know him? Yes. He is the person who ordered—claimed and boasted—he ordered the attacks against this country, killing thousands of innocent Americans. He still lives, apparently, in a secure hideout, according to the top intelligence chief in this country, in Pakistan. It seems to me the elimination of the leadership of al-Qaida, the organization that attacked this country, that murdered thousands of innocent Americans, ought to be the primary interest of this country. That is why moving away from Afghanistan and the related activities that ought to exist in Pakistan to deal with what are called "secure hideouts," the secure hideout from which al-Qaida operates, that ought to be job No. 1 for this country.

I don't understand. My colleague Senator CONRAD and I offered an amendment to the Defense appropriations bill last year on this subject. Does anybody hear anybody talking about Osama bin Laden anymore? Or perhaps better described "Osama been forgotten" these days? Nobody wants to talk about it.

Finally, last week the Director of our intelligence in this country said al-Qaida is the most significant threat to this country. The most significant terrorist threat to this country is al-Qaida, and it operates from a secure hideout in Pakistan. If that is true, what are we doing, deciding to find 20,000 troops by pulling some of them out of Afghanistan and moving them to Iraq? If those troops are available, they ought to be dedicated to dealing with al-Qaida and bringing to justice those who committed the attacks against this country. I will have more to say about that at some point, but I did want to make note of what the Director of Intelligence said last week that seems to be almost ignored in this debate about Iraq.

I am going to be talking as well this week about the minimum wage. We will have an aggressive discussion about that. That is going to be the pending issue of the day.

#### HEALTH CARE FOR THE FIRST AMERICANS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want for a moment this afternoon to talk about another issue that is of great importance to me and I think to a number of our colleagues here in the Senate as well. I am going to chair the Indian Affairs Committee in this session of Congress. I will be working with my colleague Senator CRAIG Thomas from the State of Wyoming. I am pleased to do that.

I want to mention that this week my colleagues here in the Senate are likely to see members of Indian tribes who are coming to town from all over the country. They will likely see them here

on Capitol Hill, perhaps in the halls of the Senate and the House. They are here to attend the "State of Indian Nations" address by the President of the National Congress of American Indians. They will come from across the country to hear this "State of the Indian Nations" address and they will probably also drop in some offices and meet with some Senators and Congressmen.

Let me talk about one of the things I am sure they will talk about in virtually every office, and that is the issue of Indian health care. I have seen hearings where, talking about Indian health care, very powerful tribal leaders have been brought to tears when they talk about family members who have taken their own lives because of depression or drug abuse, or family members who needed medical attention desperately and did not get it.

Let me talk a minute about the first Americans, those who were here first. American Indians and Alaska Natives die at a higher rate than other Americans from tuberculosis. There is a 600-percent higher incidence of tuberculosis than the American population as a whole; alcoholism, 510 percent higher than the population as a whole; diabetes, 189 percent higher than the American population as a whole. Let me say, in many areas it is quadruple, 8 times or 10 times higher than the population as a whole, in terms of the incidence of diabetes. Indian youth and teenage suicide on reservations in the northern Great Plains is 10 times higher than the national average. There are fewer than 90 doctors for every 100,000 Indians compared to 230 doctors for every 100,000 people nationwide. It is almost unbelievable to see what the Indian community faces with respect to the health care issues.

The Indian Health Service expenditure for each American Indian in 2005 was \$2,130, compared to \$3,900 that we spend for health care for Federal prisoners. We have a responsibility for the health care of Federal prisoners because we incarcerate them. If they get sick, it is our responsibility to provide for their health care. We have a trust responsibility for American Indians, and if they get sick—or in order to keep them well—it is our responsibility. Yet we spend almost twice as much money for health care for Federal prisoners as we do to meet our trust responsibility for American Indians.

I hope my colleagues will have a chance to talk to some of the Indian leaders who come to the Capitol this particular week and visit about these issues.

I want to show a picture of Ardel Hale Baker, to talk a little about what some people face. It is easy to talk about the statistics. Let me talk about the humanity of this issue. This is Ardel Hale Baker. She is a member of the Three Affiliated Tribes in my State. Ms. Baker had sudden and severe chest pains. Her blood pressure was off

the charts and she felt she was having a heart attack. So she went to the Indian Health Service clinic of the Three Affiliated Tribes in New Town, ND, and she was diagnosed as having a heart attack. At the insistence of the Indian Health Service staff on that reservation, she was sent by ambulance to the nearest hospital, 80 miles away in Minot, ND. When she got to the hospital, Ardel was being lifted off of a gurney from the ambulance to be taken into the hospital, and the nurse noticed a piece of paper taped to her leg. Curious about this woman, with chest pains, likely having a heart attack—curious about what kind of piece of paper was taped to this woman's leg, the nurse looked and it was a letter. It was a letter from the Indian Health Service, warning that both Ms. Baker and the hospital should understand the Indian Health Service had no funds with which to pay for the health care she needed, because this was not considered a "life or limb" medical condition. Ms. Ardel Hale Baker later, after she survived, received a bill for \$10,000.

Let me recreate that again. This is a Native American, living on a reservation. She was having severe chest pains, clearly a heart attack, put in an ambulance and driven 80 miles, and when they pulled her out of the gurney to run her in to the hospital, they noticed a letter taped to her leg in which the Indian Health Service says: "Understand, we don't have the money. Both Ms. Baker and the hospital should understand they may have to assume the cost because we don't have the money to pay for this. It is not life or limb." So this woman gets a bill for \$10,000.

Her life was saved, but it was saved notwithstanding a letter taped to her leg saying: "Admit this woman at your own cost."

This is called rationing. It is called health care rationing. If health care rationing existed in this country, there would be an outrage, and it does exist and nobody says much. There is a quiet yawn; somewhere between daydreaming and thumbsucking. People sit around and hardly even think of the fact that when they are sick, it is OK because they can get health care. But when this woman is sick, she might get a letter taped to her leg saying: "Yes, she is having a heart attack, but understand if you admit her, it is at your own expense."

An Indian tribal chief told us once that on his reservation everyone understood the admonition: "Don't get sick after June." Do not get sick after June, because June is the time of the fiscal year when they run out of money for contract health care on the reservations. The Indian Health Service runs out of money after June. If you get sick after June, I am sorry, they might tape a letter to your leg. It is "life or limb." If your illness is not threatening your life or your limb, you are out of luck. That is rationing. That is health care rationing, and it is an out-

rage in this country. It is happening in a quiet way, inflicting misery all across this country on the first Americans, those who expect we would meet our trust responsibility to provide health care for Native Americans.

We are going to try very hard to see if we can rectify that. I understand the Indian Health Service is staffed with some committed and wonderful doctors, nurses, and administrators. They are understaffed in a dramatic way, underfunded and understaffed. They tell us their budget allows them to treat about 60 percent of the health care needs of the Indian community. That means 40 percent is not dealt with.

One of the things I would have us consider is a new model for delivery of health care, particularly on Indian reservations, that tracks what is happening in some other parts of the country where there are the kinds of low-cost, walk-in clinics open at all hours, where you can get the routine health care, routine diagnosis. I hope the Indian Health Service could do that at no charge. But what is happening now is not working at all. Often health care is not available.

On one reservation of which I am aware, the clinic there is open 5 days a week. After 4:30 or 5 o'clock on Friday: So long, tough luck. You are 80 miles from the nearest major city hospital, and if you get sick, that is where you are going to have to look for some health care. We need to do better than that. I hope we can succeed in talking to the Indian Health Service about a new model, a new approach.

This is only one issue of many. We have a full-scale crisis, I believe, in Indian health care, Indian education, and Indian housing.

I have spoken previously about a woman who died lying in bed in her house, who froze to death in this country. A woman named Swift Hawk froze to death when she lay down and went to bed, living in a climate with 35 degrees below zero weather with, instead of windows in their dwelling, plain plastic sheeting. This grandmother went to bed and didn't wake up because she froze to death. If you saw that in the paper, you would think it was a Third World country, but no, it is not. It is this country and it relates to a health care crisis we need to address. It is not about statistics. It is about the humanity of understanding what is happening and a responsibility to do something about it.

I look forward to working with my colleague on the Indian Affairs Committee, Republicans and Democrats, who I think are of a like mind, that we have a responsibility here and we need to meet it, and we will.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, what is the regular order?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate is in morning business.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent I be recognized for up to 25 minutes in morning business.

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

#### BANNING JROTC

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, on Tuesday, November 14, 2006, members of the San Francisco School Board voted 4 to 2 to eliminate over the course of 2 years the San Francisco School District's Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps. We call this JROTC. This was an arrogant, mean-spirited, absolutely foolish decision. The decision was a disservice to children of every socioeconomic and racial background, and it reveals a gangrenous, antimilitary bigotry that festers in some circles of the United States today. The vote deprives hundreds of children of a safe, extremely popular, and cost-effective program that provides structure and enjoyment to the lives of children through an emphasis on physical activity, responsibility, self-discipline, and teamwork.

The merits of the JROTC program alone compel a reversal of this decision, but it is more than that. It is only the latest antimilitary decision in the Bay City. The antimilitary counterrecruitment movement is undertaken by activists and groups who have moved beyond simple disagreement with foreign policies to the outright opposition to the military as an institution. They explicitly deprecate basic civic service and exhibit an utter lack of respect for the sacrifices of men and women which they have made in the defense of our country.

Allow me to offer a statement of one such activist before moving on, to get the sense of the nature of the movement behind the JROTC decision. This is:

When soldiers are really hurt because there are no new recruits, then we are getting somewhere.

According to the San Francisco Chronicle, when the school board announced its vote to eliminate the 90-year-old program in which 1,600 children participated, the dozens of children and their families gathered at the board meeting were absolutely stunned. Many cadets burst into tears, their faces in their hands, in silent bewilderment. "It provides me a place to go," said a fourth-year cadet, Eric Chu, as he began to cry. At the same time, the board's decision was loudly cheered by JROTC opponents and counterrecruitment activists. Former teacher Nance Manchias summarized the reason behind their jubilation by declaring, "We need to teach a curriculum of peace."

Arguments marshalled in support of this kind of antimilitary activity are not generally arguments of outright opposition to the military. Counterrecruitment activists you usually hear cloak their opposition to the military

in discussions about discrimination, about the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy regarding homosexuals. But in this case these arguments do not apply—not to the JROTC. You don't believe me? The editorial board of the San Francisco Chronicle, which is not really a bastion of conservatism, explains. They say:

The high-flown arguments fall apart when the drill-and-discipline JROTC basics are examined.

The San Francisco Chronicle's board, writing in support of the JROTC program, continues by explaining the nature and specifics of the program:

Sorry, adults, but kids love this program as if it's family. There are 1,600 students enrolled in the classes, which fulfill physical-ed requirements. Punctuality, team work, camaraderie are the hallmarks. There, military drill competitions are as popular as football games. There are no weapons, just sticks and flags used in marching. Some ROTC members go on to serve in the military, but the vast majority don't, seeing classes as an enjoyable experience and a chance to learn new things: map-reading, leadership skills and self-discipline that goes with military-style assignments and crisp uniforms.

I am quoting from the San Francisco Chronicle's editorial board.

What were the reasons, then, for the elimination of this program? Were there safety concerns, a lack of interest in the program, budgetary issues, problems with poor management, or a troubling lack of diversity? In fact, none of these factors were at issue in the decision.

The program was popular. More than 1,600 kids were active participants in the JROTC program. Finances were not a problem. The program enjoyed a modest \$1 million budget from a school district budget of \$365 million. That is \$1 million out of \$365 million, or a cost of just under three one-thousandths of the entire budget. Was the program poorly managed? The San Francisco Chronicle answers:

No one has offered an alternative as coherent and well-run as the JROTC.

How about safety? Not a problem. There are no weapons involved. The programs are nonviolent; they are simply character-building exercises which emphasize leadership and self-discipline.

And what about the big one, diversity? For this, I repeat the words of the Chronicle reporter, Jill Tucker, in a story she wrote about the JROTC cadets at Galileo High School:

These students are 4-foot-10 to 6-foot-4, athletic and disabled, college-bound and barely graduating, gay and straight, white, black, and brown. Some leave for large homes with ocean views. Others board buses for Bayview-Hunter's Point.

Many of the students were immigrants, and one is autistic.

According to the San Francisco Chronicle:

Opponents acknowledge the program is popular and helps some students stay in school and out of trouble.

So, again, why eliminate a school program in which students simply re-

ceive phys-ed and elective credits required for graduation? Sandra Schwartz of the American Friends Service Committee, an organization dedicated to active opposition to the JROTC program, explains:

We don't want the military ruining our civilian institutions. In a healthy democracy, you contain the military. You must contain the military.

So we have an answer to the question as to why this program was eliminated. It wasn't because of any practical consideration such as cost, interest, or safety, nor was it opposition to a specific policy of the Government. It was opposition to the military as an institution.

But the JROTC decision in San Francisco should come as no surprise. It comes on the heels of two other antimilitary decisions in the Bay City which have taken place over the past year or so. Last year, San Francisco city supervisors refused to allow a ship to dock in the city's port. The ship was a historic World War II battleship, the USS *Iowa*. Just as in the JROTC decision, there were no practical considerations which necessitated refusal of the USS *Iowa*. Supervisor Chris Daly explained the reason for his vote:

I am not proud of the history of the United States of America since the 1940s.

The decision was intended to be an insult to our Armed Forces.

Also, last year, San Francisco passed measure 1, dubbed "College, Not Combat," which was a symbolic measure to ban all military recruiters in the city's public schools. "College, Not Combat" was the first local success of the counterrecruitment movement. Examples of other counterrecruitment slogans include "Don't die for recruiter's lies," and my personal favorite, "An army of none."

This decision enjoyed the support of many extreme antiwar groups, including ANSWER, Not In Our Name, Ralph Nader's Green Party, American Friends Service Committee, Code Pink, Cindy Sheehan, and the International Socialist Organization.

These decisions to denigrate the Armed Forces are the latest tactics of the antiwar counterrecruitment movement. But, again, make no mistake about the basis or the purpose of this movement. Ignore all the rhetoric about discrimination in the Armed Forces and "don't ask, don't tell." Forget about arguments that this is simply opposition to the Iraq war, to George Bush, or to some other specific policy.

The counterrecruitment movement opposes the military as an institution. Counterrecruitment activists and measure 1 supporter April Owens admit the purpose of her movement, and she is speaking in behalf of measure 1: