

election, which came up with a good result, finally be implemented so the people of Burma have a representative government and that those political dissidents—most notably, Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi—be released from house arrest. She has suffered enough.

I thank the Senator for bringing this up to the floor. I want him to know his sentiments are felt on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if I may just add, my friend from Illinois is absolutely correct. This is a regime which I have been following for a long time, having introduced the first Burma sanctions bill some 4 to 5 years ago.

He is absolutely right. They engaged in this kind of activity back in 1988, killed a significant number of Burmese citizens simply seeking to have an opportunity to express themselves, which they subsequently did in the 1990 election, which Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy won overwhelmingly, overwhelmingly, after which she was placed under house arrest and has been there virtually the entire time since then, since 1990. She was under house arrest while her husband passed away in London.

This is a pariah regime. Had they had nuclear weapons, I think the rest of the world would have been a lot more interested in this regime, as we have been, for example, in North Korea and in Iran. But they are now revealing their true colors once again. Technology is much better today than it was back in 1988. They will not be able to engage in these kinds of abuses with no one noticing.

I commend my friend from Illinois for making clear that all of us here in the Senate, regardless of party affiliation, condemn this behavior and look forward to the day when the election of 1990 is finally honored.

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 for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, against all odds, the long-suffering people of Burma have risen against one of the world's most repressive regimes. What began a month ago as modest, im-

promptu protests has now mushroomed into a nationwide peaceful democratic groundswell. Tens of thousands of students have joined Buddhist monks in the streets, marching and chanting in unison against Burma's brutal military rulers. I met with some of those rulers a number of years ago when I went to Burma. I also had a chance to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi in her home where she has been under house arrest.

It is an extraordinary division that is growing and growing in Burma, where the military junta, unbelievably unpopular, nevertheless clings to power through the force of the military which it controls. The riches of the country are exclusively being diverted to their spoils, while Burma remains now and increasingly becomes poorer and poorer.

The Burmese people need to know that the courage they are demonstrating today and what they are fighting for is being watched by people all over the world, that we admire what they are attempting to achieve, and that we stand in awe of their commitment, of their courage. Their actions follow in the venerable footsteps of Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Lech Walesa, and all of those heroes who understand that nonviolent resistance is humanity's greatest weapon against tyranny and injustice. We, with all of the tools available to us, need to make certain the people of Burma understand that their courage is breaking through and that this moment is one we share with them.

What is happening today in the streets of Rangoon is, however, as tenuous as it is unexpected. Just this morning, we learned that warning shots were fired and tensions are escalating. I do not know how many people realize it, but the Government of Burma, the junta, moved to its own sort of private capital and has created this almost surreal exiled government where they feel safe, as if living in a bunker within the isolation of Burma itself. Just this morning, we also learned that the cabal of generals that is pillaging Burma under the guise of governing it could easily meet these nonviolent protests with a bloodbath, just as they did in 1988. So it is important that none of us allow the scrutiny on Burma to be diminished. This could conceivably become another Tiananmen Square moment, if it does.

No one should doubt the Burmese junta's potential for brutality and large-scale violence. Since taking power, they have killed tens of thousands of Burmese, and they have razed more villages than have been destroyed in Darfur. Over half a million people have been internally displaced, and an additional 1 million refugees have fled the country. The tyrannical thugs who run the country are engaged in the systematic use of forced labor, human trafficking, forcible recruitment of child soldiers, torture and rape—an appalling laundry list of human rights violations. Yet, despite such grave dan-

ger, the people of Burma have stood strong in the face of this extraordinary evil. They demand Democratic reforms and basic human rights, and they have done so with dignity, and they have done so peacefully.

The United States and the rest of the free world must find more ways to make it clear that we stand with the people of Burma. The President's decision yesterday to target the top general for financial sanctions is a step in the right direction, but it will not solve the problem, and it is not enough.

The massive prodemocracy demonstrations in Burma represent the best opportunity for genuine political change in nearly years. Burma's Saffron Revolution is also an excellent chance for America to finally show greater diplomatic leadership on the world stage.

The United States needs to lead the international community in pressuring the military junta to release all political prisoners, starting with the venerable Nobel Prize laureate and opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, and take steps down the path from there to more thorough political change.

This week's gathering of world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly is ready made. It is a forum waiting to be utilized properly. My hope is that the United Nations will take the necessary steps to make even more clear the world's condemnation but, more importantly, to create real pressure, and that includes pressure from places such as China, which has been playing a clearly duplicitous game because of their deep investments, their proximity, and other occasional similarities in the way in which they have dealt with democracy uprisings. From the halls of the United Nations to the headquarters of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the message to the Burmese military needs to be clear: The world is united behind the people marching in your streets. Do not meet peaceful protest with still more butchering. We are prepared, all of us—and we must make this clear—to act in concert against you unless you immediately embark on serious negotiations toward sharing power with the people of Burma.

Showing diplomatic leadership on Burma also requires that we demand better from those countries that have propped up this brutal regime and are thus the best equipped to help pressure it. India and, in particular, China can make a significant difference in this outcome. The President and the United Nations must engage in strenuous diplomacy with Beijing, which carries the most sway with Burma's generals, and urge the Chinese to press for reform. China has in its grasp a momentous opportunity to demonstrate leadership commensurate with its growing power and status. Beijing can host the 2008 Olympics as an enabler of cruelty and repression or it can do so as a responsible stakeholder in the world community. The Olympics will not

masquerade or cover up for its absence from this challenge. This is an important test. The world is watching.

As the international community exerts greater pressure on the military junta, it must also reach out more aggressively with humanitarian assistance for the Burmese people. The people of Burma have suffered not only the bullets and bayonets of the current regime but also from decades of misrule that have transformed their resource-rich nation into one of the poorest in Asia. All you have to do is go to YouTube, and you can watch footage of the wedding of the general's daughter, one of the junta general's daughters, laden in diamonds the size of pebbles, an example of the excesses of their coercion of power while the country gets poorer and poorer and people suffer as a consequence.

Many of Burma's 52 million people live in abject misery. About one-third are mired in poverty. Nearly half of all the children never get to go to school. Malaria and tuberculosis are widespread. Mortality rates in Burma are among the highest in Asia. At least 37,000 died of HIV/AIDS in 2005 and over 600,000 are infected with HIV. Burma's suffering destabilizes southeast Asia—heroin and methamphetamines, HIV/AIDS, and other infectious diseases, as well as hordes of refugees spilling across Burma's borders into neighboring countries. The international community must respond to this ongoing tragedy by providing humanitarian aid to a desperate and deserving people.

Current levels of international assistance are simply woefully insufficient. We need a network of public and private donors to fund health, education, and infrastructure projects. The resilient and brave Burmese people have shown that they are more than worthy of our support and compassion. They are fighting for democracy. We need to join that fight.

I close by offering a final word of warning. We dare not forget Burma's last great democratic uprising. It occurred in 1988. It was brutally crushed by the military at the cost of over 3,000 innocent lives. That day and the repression that followed show the horrible human toll of our collective failure to act. A peaceful prodemocratic outcome in Burma is actually within reach, if the international community were to seize this moment. The United Nations, ASEAN, India, and especially China must stand with the United States in solidarity with the Burmese people. All of us must not fail the people of Burma again.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas.

CHIP REAUTHORIZATION

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I applaud my colleagues who have come to the floor this morning to speak out about the injustices in Burma and to remind us to not lose sight of the dis-

course and the injustices that occur across the globe, that we must keep a vigilant focus on those and speak out against them. I also think it is important to lead by example in our country. That is why I come to the floor today in such strong support of the Children's Health Insurance Program reauthorization, the CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2007, and urge my colleagues to support the incredible bipartisan compromise we have all come together to negotiate, to set the example of what our values are so that other countries might see that working together, the values we share and the moral obligation we have to our children can be met as we take these types of steps. That kind of leadership by example is critical not just in our country but to the example we set for the rest of the world.

I have to say, as a working mother, I know all too well the importance of reliable health insurance coverage for all children. I feel blessed that as a Federal employee, I have access to quality coverage. When I am up late at night with a sick child, as I was last week, I have been blessed as a Federal employee to have that access and to be able to know that when the Sun comes up, I can call my doctor. I can get my child the kind of medical care I believe he needs. Having health insurance coverage gives me peace of mind. But that peace of mind should not only belong to those families that can afford private health insurance, it should also belong to the working families that are struggling to make ends meet. That is why Democrats and Republicans worked so hard together to come up with a compromise on a bill this important. I commend my colleagues in this body and in the House of Representatives from both sides, both parties, who have worked diligently to come to this agreement.

Since the inception of SCHIP 10 years ago or, as we call it in Arkansas, ARKids First, because it is a Federal and State partnership to provide this health insurance for our children, the number of children without health care coverage has been reduced by one-third. During that time, I am proud that Arkansas has become a national leader in reducing its number of uninsured children from over 20 percent in 1997 to 10 percent today. Now nearly 65,000 of Arkansas's children currently receive coverage through the ARKids B part of ARKids First.

The bill before us is an important and responsible step forward in reaching the millions of children who remain uninsured. It applies the lesson of the past 10 years and builds upon the success of the program by giving States more of the tools they need while preserving their flexibility to strengthen their programs and ultimately cover more children. In doing so, it would provide an additional \$35 billion over 5 years that will allow our States to preserve coverage for children currently enrolled while reaching an additional 3.8 million uninsured,

low-income children. This proposal would also provide much needed funding to States for outreach and enrollment efforts to reach many of those currently uninsured but eligible, making sure we are reaching out. For those who are eligible, as we get them on the rolls, it makes a tremendous difference. Because as we begin to bring into the fold those who can be insured, those who are eligible, we begin to mitigate the risk and the balance of the entire cost of what we need to do in covering children. In addition, it takes steps to ensure that they get a healthy start by providing care for expectant mothers and establishing pediatric quality measures to improve the effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of the care they receive. For years we have been putting quality measures into Medicare and other programs. Now we are going to put those same quality measures into pediatric care and children's care so we cannot only be reassured that our children are getting the best of care, but we are going to also see the benefits economically of those quality measures.

Our plan would also invest in the development of evidence-based quality measures for children's health care and provide access to much needed dental care for lower income children. I am sure many of my colleagues have done as I have, visited Head Start facilities or other places where children are learning dental hygiene. It is absolutely essential, because when you visit the places where they are not getting dental care and dental hygiene, you see children who have rotting teeth, who can't pay attention in school, who are malnourished because it hurts to eat when they get the opportunity. Dental care is essential because those children who do get it are going to be paying attention in class. They will be getting better at their education, and they will be healthier individuals because they will be receiving nutrition. They are going to be on a pathway to a healthier lifestyle.

We ensure that children enrolled in this CHIP would also be able to access mental health care that is on par with the level of medical and surgical care they are currently provided. Earlier this month I hosted forums across the State of Arkansas to discuss renewal of this vital program. We had a wonderful opportunity to meet with health care professionals, parents, single working mothers, business individuals who see the productivity of their employees better when they know those parents have that peace of mind when their children are getting health care, others who emphasize just how crucial this program is to Arkansas. They are anxious for us to get this program reauthorized. We have the opportunity, and we must seize it. They know the clock is ticking. If we don't act in some form or fashion by September 30, we could endanger the coverage of 6.6 million children currently receiving care.

Further, those I spoke to wanted to see tolerance. They wanted to see us