

Federal Government. In the first years of President Lincoln's administration, he not only was involved in the Civil War, but he and the Congress passed the Homestead Act and the Land Grant Colleges Act and the Transcontinental Railroad Act. They conferred opportunities on Americans everywhere, and then the Americans used their own elbow grease to make things happen.

This administration, this 100 days, is a command-and-control type of administration, with regulators and politicians running the banks, running the auto companies, and nationalizing student loans. It is an opportunity to have a new blueprint of a kind we haven't seen before, not one that confers opportunities but a planned America with less freedom, with fewer choices, fewer opportunities, a society planned and run by Washington regulators and politicians that our children and grandchildren cannot afford, not a society that confers opportunities and choices for the people.

In addition, there is the prospect of no check and balance on one-party rule which risks what the perceptive young Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, said in the early 1800s was the greatest threat to the new American democracy when he warned about the tyranny of the majority.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

NATIONAL SECURITY GRADE

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today marks day 100 on the job for the Obama administration. Many in the media and commentators will be grading the President on his leadership and policy decisions. As vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I am most concerned about what is shaping up to be the President's failing strategy in national security policy. Unfortunately, the Obama administration's national security policy appears to be in disarray. While the administration is busy trying to decide who from the previous administration, which kept us safe from attacks since 9/11, they should prosecute for those efforts, they don't understand that as far as the American people are concerned, they are the ones on trial now. The President and his team have to answer how they are going to protect the American people. What are they not going to do? What will they do that will be successful?

Don't get me wrong. The President has some high points when it comes to national security, and I applaud him for those. On some very important issues, campaign rhetoric has met national security realities. To date the President has shunned the advice of Code Pink and others and stayed the course in Iraq. As several of my colleagues have said, his initial rollout steps of a new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan are in the right direction, and he has continued strikes against

al-Qaida and other terrorists in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. President Obama took appropriate measures, I believe, to prepare for the North Korean missile launch.

Over the last few weeks the Obama administration has faltered. Now we are seeing some national security decisions made on what I fear is politics, not on what is in the best interest of the American people.

Just look at the recent examples. The President has decided to close our terrorist detainee facility with no backup plan. He has decided to release CIA memos on highly classified terrorist detention programs. Now he plans to release photos of alleged detainee abuse.

First, let's talk about the President's decision to close our terrorist detainee facility with no backup plan. The facility at Guantanamo Bay, or Gitmo, doesn't house middle-of-the-road, white-collar criminals. Instead this terrorist detention facility houses deadly combatants who in the past, when released, have gone back on the battlefield to kill Americans. Don't take my word for it. The Department of Defense has confirmed that at least 18 detainees who were released from Gitmo have gone back to the fight. The Pentagon suspects another 43 of doing the same.

Despite confirmation that Gitmo detainees have gone back to the battlefield to kill Americans, President Obama has decided to close Gitmo with no plan on what to do with these terrorists.

The President also has no plan to deal with new terrorists who are captured on the battlefield. Where does he plan to detain them? Does he plan on telling our troops to release them so they can go on killing Americans? This is one of the scariest of Obama's "ready, fire, aim" national security strategy points.

I can tell you this: Missourians in my State, and I believe people in most States, will not stand for importing terrorists such as 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed to their neighborhoods. They surely do not want a bunch of them housed in secure facilities in their community because al-Qaida has a nasty tendency to launch massive attacks on detention facilities to release their brethren.

Like me, Missourians and all Americans are still waiting for Obama to make the case that his decision to release the detainees at Gitmo is in our country's national security interest.

The President has failed to make the case that the release of these terrorist detainees will make us safer. The President has failed to make the case that the release of these terrorist detainees will not pose a threat to Americans.

It is clear that without having a plan to deal with the current and new terrorists currently at Gitmo, President Obama's decision was not in our Nation's best interest. Instead, this was a

national security policy decided for the purpose of appeasing the ACLU and many in the leftwing.

Another national security policy decided for the benefit of the ACLU—and at their request even—was the President's decision to release memos on the CIA's terrorist interrogation program.

While the ACLU was in favor of releasing these memos, President Obama's own CIA Director and the four previous CIA Directors all opposed this foolhardy decision. The decision is a serious blow to our terror fighters and, even worse, to their ability to obtain the intelligence we need to prevent another 9/11.

The release of these memos sends a chilling message to our intelligence community: The CIA better change their mission to "CYA" because their Government is not going to stand behind them.

No intelligence operator can feel safe that the legal guidance they are given or the orders they follow from superiors can be counted on to last beyond a single administration. This means our intelligence operators will be worrying about protecting their hides, not their national security mission.

Former CIA Director General Hayden and former Attorney General Michael Mukasey called President Obama's decision a step in the weakening of our intelligence gathering. Regretably, I could not agree more. This politicization and weakening of our intelligence gathering could result in a retreat to the pre-9/11 mentality that led to the tragic intelligence failures that ultimately cost the lives of more than 3,000 innocent Americans.

In addition to weakening our intelligence gathering, the release of the interrogation program limitations and their operating guidelines ties the hands of our terror fighters. During his confirmation hearing, President Obama's own CIA Director purposefully left open the door to future use of interrogation techniques in an enhanced fashion for the high-value detainees who are believed to have vital information who will not talk under normal questioning.

But now that President Obama has officially given al-Qaida the playbook, he has made any future use of these techniques ineffective. He has also told the terrorists that if they, in the course of trying to kill Americans, are captured, they have nothing to fear. They will not be subjected to any more harsh or coercive tactics than we have subjected hundreds of thousands of Americans who have volunteered to be marines, SEALs or pilots.

It is hard to imagine that this administration could make this situation even worse, but last week President Obama managed it. After his decision to release the CIA memos, the President went to Langley and told employees:

Don't be discouraged that we have to admit that we've made some mistakes and then move forward.

In these few words, President Obama provided valuable propaganda to the terrorists. He told our enemies that our intelligence operators were wrong in what they did, an admission that will be seized upon by our enemies to fuel the hatred of Americans. Is it any surprise that the morale at the CIA has been severely damaged? Our terror fighters need to know whether the President has their back or will stab them in the back.

Unfortunately, the President completely disregarded the damage his decision would have on the CIA. He completely disregarded the damage his decision would have on our ability to get the intelligence we need to stop terrorist attacks. He completely disregarded the ammo his decision would give the terrorists bent on our destruction. Instead of these critical national security concerns, the President's decision was a political one aimed at appeasing the far leftwing.

The President even tried to claim that the ACLU's Freedom of Information Act request made the release of these memos necessary. But the first exemption under the law is for "classified secret matters or national defense or foreign policy." The memos on the CIA terrorist interrogation program certainly meet those definitions. At the very least, President Obama should have made that argument in court. Instead, he handed over a victory—not for national security but for the ACLU.

While many in the media are getting mired in the details of each of these bad decisions, the bigger question is this: What is this administration's strategy for confronting the terrorist threat and keeping America safe? The world did not suddenly become safer when President Obama was elected.

Instead of telling Americans the strategy to keep our Nation safe, the latest Obama administration move has been staging costly glamour shots of Air Force One. I am not sure if everybody has heard about this stunt, but earlier this week the White House decided to update their photos of Air Force One—only they chose to take the photos of the jet at the Statue of Liberty with a fighter jet escort.

Across downtown Manhattan—where the Twin Towers once stood—New Yorkers were panicking. Thousands fled New York skyscrapers. You see, New Yorkers were not told this glamour shot was going to happen. After living through the horrors of the September 11 attacks, New Yorkers, of course, feared that another attack was happening. And 9/11 was fresh in their memories.

While the Obama administration tried to shrug off this incident, I think it is telling. This stunt is a symbol of how far from their minds the attacks of 9/11 are.

In addition to the administration's glamour shot stunt, President Obama's advisers have been busy releasing classified information that only tells the side of the story they want to share. I

think everyone knows this, but let me lay out the details.

First, the Director of National Intelligence, Admiral Blair, in a letter to the intelligence community, said the interrogations provided "high value information" and gave the U.S. Government a "deeper understanding of the al Qaeda organization that was attacking this country." Blair also detailed how Congress was repeatedly briefed on the program. But in the public statement which had to go through White House clearance, these details were left out.

Next: The White House releases the memos that describe in detail the interrogation techniques that were used. But missing—in fact, I assume purposefully redacted—is the information on the lifesaving intelligence we received from these interrogations.

Also, President Obama—and many Democrats in Congress—supported the release of the CIA memos but are now opposing the release of information on what Members of Congress were briefed on the program.

Now, let me get this straight. So the facts about our interrogation program of terrorists—how we do it, and the strict limits on it to avoid torture—are fair game for release, but who and what Congress was told needs to remain secret?

I think the President's advisers got it wrong. You see, it is not supposed to be cherry-picking time in Washington today. Unfortunately, the Obama administration is not above politicizing intelligence.

Message to the administration: Get a new calendar. The election is over. With victory comes responsibility. It is now up to the Obama administration to keep our Nation safe. You are in charge of protecting the American people and stopping terror attacks—I pray with the same success the previous administration did every day since 9/11.

While President Obama failed the national security test at the 100th day mark, the final grade is not in yet. It is up to the President to choose our terror fighters over terrorists, to choose troops over ACLU lawyers, to choose national security over politics.

Protecting our families from terrorist attacks should not be a political issue, it is an American one.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining Republican time be reserved.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority time has expired.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I believe I have 25 minutes. I would appreciate it if you would let me know when I have 5 minutes remaining.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair will do so.

Mr. BENNET. Thank you, Mr. President.

PROMISE OF A BETTER LIFE

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today we celebrate the first 100 days of our new President's administration. It has been somewhat less remarked upon, but this week also happens to mark my first 100 days in office.

Together, we have done important work in these 100 days. We have taken decisive action to get our economy moving again. We have provided better access to health care for our children. We have made the workplace fairer for women.

For me, these 100 days have provided a remarkable opportunity to listen to Coloradans. In dozens of townhall meetings, in each and every corner of the State, in cities and small towns, in good weather and bad, I have listened to thousands of Coloradans—young and old, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents, teachers, nurses, farmers, workers, ranchers, and small business owners, people from all walks of life with every conceivable point of view.

I have been struck by how much—despite the trials we face at this moment in our history and despite whatever disagreements we might have—more than anything the people of Colorado long to build a better future for the next generation.

America has always embraced the promise of a better life for our children.

My family's story is no different. After their lives were shattered by World War II, my grandparents set their sights on Franklin Roosevelt's America as the one place they could rebuild their lives. And it was.

My mother had even more opportunities than my grandparents dreamed, and she and my father were able to create a better life for me, my brother, and my sister. Since our founding, generation after generation, we have worked to form a more perfect union, always fulfilling the promise of a better life for those who come after us.

Yet now that promise is in question.

I am here today as the father of three young daughters of my own—Caroline, Halina, and Anne. I think of them and worry that we are at risk of being the first generation of Americans to have less opportunity than we ourselves were given.

Our economy is in turmoil; 5.1 million Americans have lost their jobs since the beginning of this crisis, and our unemployment rate is at 8.5 percent and rising. Between 2000 and 2007, median family income in this country actually declined by over \$300. At the same time, the cost of health care rose by nearly 80 percent and the cost of higher education by roughly 60 percent.

The gulf between rich and poor has gotten wider. Americans are now less likely than people living in a number of other industrialized countries to improve their economic status in their lifetime. As many as 100 million Americans now live in families earning less in real terms than their parents did at the same age.