

Laden's presence in Abbottabad by suspending all aid or military ties or by taking other drastic actions would make it much harder, not easier, to operate against the terrorists who threaten us.

On the contrary, withdrawing forces from Afghanistan and cutting all aid to Pakistan would merely reinforce two of the most prevalent conspiracy theories in South Asia—that the United States will always abandon those who rely on it, and that we were only there to get bin Laden anyway. We should, instead, build on the symbolic victory of killing bin Laden by following through with the president's strategy to dismantle and defeat the militant Islamist groups supported as proxies by some in the Pakistani security apparatus. Only by defeating those proxies can we reasonably hope to compel Pakistan to reevaluate its security interests and develop a policy to oppose and suppress all militant Islamists operating within its borders.

But al Qaeda has not confined itself to its sanctuaries in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Al Qaeda thrives in political weakness and has been in the process of expanding around the globe. The core al Qaeda group of which bin Laden was the head (often referred to as Al Qaeda Central) has long had at best only a tenuous control over the operations of its dispersed franchises. That control rested partly on resources Al Qaeda Central directed, partly on the value of its recognition of a particular group as worthy of the al Qaeda brand, but largely on the symbolic importance of the charismatic bin Laden. Bin Laden's likely successor, Egyptian doctor Ayman al-Zawahiri, is far less charismatic. His accession to the leadership role could prompt a competition between Al Qaeda Central and its franchises over which group really is at the center of the movement. Such competitions, unfortunately, unfold in the form of spectacular attacks, particularly those conducted on the territory of Western states.

Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), in Yemen, is the most active and perhaps the most dangerous al Qaeda franchise in the world. The Arab Spring has reached Yemen with a vengeance—massive protests have led to the defection of elements of the Yemeni military, with the result that armed forces are concentrating for potential civil war in and around the capital and elsewhere in the country. Attempts to broker a negotiated departure for Yemen's hated president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, have broken down. It is far from clear that any such agreement would keep the peace there for very long in any case. Already Saleh has brought back to his capital some of the elite, U.S.-trained Special Forces units supposedly dedicated to the fight against AQAP. As the work of Katherine Zimmerman at AET's Critical Threats Project has shown, almost any likely scenario going forward will give AQAP more freedom to train, plan, stage, and conduct attacks from increasingly lawless tribal areas in which it has considerable local support. The combination of Yemen's slide toward state failure and bin Laden's death could create a tremendous opportunity for AQAP. His death may also lead to an increase in AQAP's efforts to conduct spectacular attacks against the United States and the West.

Another al Qaeda affiliate already has control over large portions of a state: Al Shabab is the de facto government of much of southern Somalia outside of Mogadishu. It has not been formally recognized as an al Qaeda franchise, but its ties with AQAP are long and deep, and its ideology closely mirrors al Qaeda's. Shabab is kept from controlling all of southern and central Somalia only by the presence of peacekeepers from Uganda and Burundi, who have been barely able to hold

parts of the capital. Shabab is unlikely to suffer at all from bin Laden's death, but it may see a chance—or feel the need—to expand the reach of its strikes in sympathetic retaliation.

Al Qaeda in Iraq, fortunately, remains relatively ineffective, despite efforts to revive itself as American forces withdraw. But the continued presence even of American military trainers in Iraq after the end of this year remains in doubt, and it is not clear that the Iraqi military on its own will be able to maintain the necessary degree of pressure on that al Qaeda franchise. If the complete withdrawal of American forces now underway leads to the explosion of ethnic conflict between Iraqi Arabs and Kurds, as some analysts fear, Al Qaeda in Iraq could find fertile ground to reestablish itself, undoing the progress we have made since 2006.

A protracted stalemate in Libya could also set conditions for al Qaeda groups to pose again as the only reliable allies of eastern fighters feeling abandoned by the United States and the West. Although the current Libyan resistance leadership is not penetrated by al Qaeda or supportive of that organization or its ideology, eastern Libya is the area that has produced the most al Qaeda fighters in that country and that has the conditions most conducive to the injection of al Qaeda's ideas and leaders.

More remote scenarios could see the rise of al Qaeda franchises or fellow travelers in Egypt, elsewhere in North Africa, the Levant, or Equatorial Africa, but there is no need to belabor the point. The struggle with al Qaeda, to say nothing of the larger struggle against militant Islamism generally, is far from over. Clear and present dangers are, in fact, emerging. It can be tempting to argue that these threats merely show the wisdom of withdrawing from Afghanistan, which is not now a center of al Qaeda activity, to focus on more pressing problems elsewhere. We must resist that temptation. Our struggle against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula will not be helped by our giving its affiliates and allies free rein in Afghanistan and returning Taliban leader Mullah Omar, whom all al Qaeda affiliates recognize as "the leader of the faithful," to a position of power.

Success in Afghanistan and Iraq remains vital. American withdrawal from either commitment will be taken throughout the Islamist community as a sign of weakness and indecision. But success in those two theaters is not enough. This moment in the war with militant Islamism is the time to take stock of our global strategy and to develop coherent approaches to the dangers already visible on the horizon. No one wants to invade Yemen, Somalia, Libya, or any other country. But the strategies we have been relying on in Libya and Yemen are failing, and we have never had a strategy for Somalia. The United States must seek every possible way of averting the dangers of stalemate, state collapse, and the triumph of al Qaeda groups, preferably without deploying more of our own forces.

It may be that, in the end, America simply cannot be secure if terrorist groups with international ambitions have uncontested control over sanctuaries and resources. But the U.S. government has never yet focused its attention fully on these challenges, let alone focused resources on them. It is past time to do so. Those sincerely concerned with America's security should be demanding that kind of commitment and should reject utterly the notion that bin Laden's death will allow us to declare "mission accomplished" and withdraw from the Middle East, and the world.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, since my time is about expired, I will say this is

one of the best statements I have seen recently, by Frederick and Kimberly Kagan, where they write about the result of the death of bin Laden, not offering an excuse to end the war in Afghanistan or our other efforts against terrorists but, rather, that success will come to us when we understand the nature of the threat and maintain our efforts to root it out wherever it may be, whether that be in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, or wherever. I think it is an excellent piece. I commend it to my colleagues as suggesting the way forward as we continue to fight the radical Islamists who would continue to visit ill on the United States and other western powers.

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

#### FLORIDA VOTING

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I want to call to the attention of the Senate the fact that a number of State legislatures, including our State legislature in Florida, have been enacting election law bills that severely constrict the right of the people to express their vote.

This has just occurred in the State of Florida, with the legislature adjourning in the early morning hours of Saturday, enacting a bill that has been sent to the Governor that would make it harder for the people of Florida to vote, harder for them to have their vote counted, and harder for the people to be able to register to vote.

Common sense would tell you what we ought to be doing is exactly the opposite—that we ought to be making things easier to vote, and especially in a State such as ours, which went through that awful experience in November of 2000, when there was so much chaos, not only in the voting in the Presidential election but then in the counting of the votes. Of course, we all know how that ended up—Bush v. Gore in the U.S. Supreme Court, which stopped the recount that was proceeding.

Because of that experience, to the credit of the State legislature, they started to make voting easier. For example, instead of just voting on election day, they had a 2-week period for early voting—something that other States have been doing for some period of time, so that people could go to designated polling places prior to election day. It certainly made it a lot easier on the supervisors of elections, the very people who are charged with the responsibility of registering voters and counting votes, because it spread the amount of people coming in to vote over time, so that all of them weren't there just within a 12-hour period on election day. This has turned out to be so popular in Florida that half of the voters in the last two elections voted prior to election day.

Well, can you believe that the State legislature has seen fit to cut the 14-

day early vote period back to 8, under the guise, well, we are going to make the amount of hours the same by giving the supervisors of elections discretion so that they could increase the voting days on early votes from 8 to 12 hours? But that is a ruse, because that means the election supervisors are going to have to pay time and a half, and those election supervisors are under the same kind of fiscal constraints that all of the other levels of government are right now and, as a result, what is going to happen is the voting hours are not going to be extended, and the State legislature has just constricted the number of voting days from 14 down to 8—and, by the way, they didn't let it run right up to the day before the election; they backed it off several days before the election, which would be the last day of early voting.

Why, when we want to make it easier to vote? Well, doesn't the legislature—and I hope the Governor, who has this bill coming to him—understand that it is a tremendous convenience to senior citizens to make it easier for them, instead of having to stand in a long line on election day, that over a 2-week period they can go and vote in a designated place?

Is there some reason they are trying to make it harder for senior citizens to vote? Well, it could be a lot of politics in this, but the fact is they are making it harder to vote, when in fact it ought to be the opposite.

I wish I could report to the Senate that that was the only thing they have done, but it is not. They made it harder to register to vote. As a matter of fact, well-respected organizations, such as the League of Women Voters, for years and years have taken it as their responsibility to go out and try to register people to vote. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization, which has as its sole goal to try to promote activities that promote our democracy. Here is what they did. They said if you go out and register people to vote, and under current law, there is a period of something like 1½ weeks to 2 weeks that you can turn in the names you have registered—no, no.

This time, what the legislature has done is said if you don't turn those new registration forms in within 48 hours, you are going to be subject to a fine and possibly a criminal penalty. And the President of the League of Women Voters of Florida, Diedre McNabb, has said, in effect, what that means is that they will not put that onus on their members of a fine and a criminal penalty and, in effect, they will stop registering people ahead of time.

What the election laws ought to do is exactly the opposite. We ought to have laws that encourage the registration of voters and try to get more people to participate. But that is not what the Florida legislature has done. It has done exactly the opposite.

I wish I could report to the Senate that was the only thing they have

done. But they did more. For four decades, Florida has had a law, in a highly mobile society, if you have moved and you go on election day to cast your vote, and your registration address is different than the address that you show, for example, where you registered to vote years ago—maybe even a year ago—but in the meantime you have moved and your documentation—say, your driver's license—shows your new address, for four decades the law of Florida has said that a voter can change their address in the polling place to update that record, showing proper identification of who they are and that their signature matches.

Not so now. The legislature of Florida has just changed the law that if your address or your name changes—what happens if you got married in the last year and now your name doesn't match your registration name, but you still want to vote? What has the legislature of Florida done? They are going to require that you not cast a ballot. You are going to have to cast a provisional ballot, and you are going to have to have your authenticity certified after the fact.

The experience with provisional ballots in the last Presidential election in Florida, in 2008, was that of the over 35,000 ballots cast, 17,000—half of them—were not counted.

Who are the people who have been operating and have benefited by that law in Florida for four decades? They have been people who have gotten married and their name has changed. They have been people in the mobile society in which we live who have moved and bought a new house or moved into a new apartment. In other words, all of us—we and our neighbors.

Who else especially might have been the reason for the legislature of Florida to change this four decades-old law? The last Presidential election, college students in Florida voted in record numbers because college students in Florida in the town of their college went down where they had their registration. Yet their identification showed their address as their parents' home, not the registration address they had registered in their college town.

That is not making it easier to vote. That is not encouraging college students to vote. That is doing exactly the opposite. That is suppressing the vote.

What I am reporting to the Senate has been widely commented on in Florida in almost every editorial page in the State of Florida, with the bottom-line conclusion of what I have just said: It is trying to suppress the vote by making it harder to vote, harder to register to vote, and harder to have one's vote counted as it was intended.

I have written the Governor, and I have asked the Governor to consider all these things. It is widely commented in the Florida press that the Governor will sign the bill, thus constricting, restricting—whatever word you want to use—the right of the peo-

ple to vote. If the Governor does sign the bill or lets it go into law without his signature, then our only other mechanism at this point, since there are 5 counties in Florida's 67 counties that are under a watch list under the civil rights legislation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965—it is my intention to encourage the Department of Justice, the Civil Rights Division, to examine this legislation with regard to the Voting Rights Act. Preparatory to that, I had sent a letter to Thomas Perez, the Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, alerting him to this fact.

I have quoted in that letter several supervisors of election, both Democrats and Republicans, who have said that cutting the early voting period from 14 days to 8 will shrink poll access by 50 percent and disenfranchise a significant number of voters. That is what the supervisors of election, the elected officials in each of the counties, were telling me.

I wish to quote a Republican supervisor of election, Deborah Clark, in Pinellas County, which is the county of St. Petersburg and Clearwater, FL. This is what she said:

Not allowing address or name change changes on election day will create an undue burden on eligible voters.

She continues:

It will also result in long lines at the polls and discourage many voters from voting.

It is self-evident, and this is an assault upon our democracy that should not be tolerated. But it happened and it happened in the last week of the legislative session. I hope—I hope—there will be such an outcry that this legislative policy gets reversed.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST JOSEPH CEMPER

Mr. JOHANNES. Mr. President, I rise today to remember a fallen hero, U.S. Army SPC Joseph Cemper. Specialist Cemper was based in eastern Afghanistan, in the area east of Kabul bordering Pakistan. This area is one of the areas where the fighting in the Afghan war has been the most intense.

Specialist Cemper was serving with the 101st Special Troops Battalion of the 101st Airborne Division, one of the Army's most elite units. He and four fellow American soldiers were killed in a suicide attack that ultimately took 10 lives.

Specialist Cemper had a long desire to serve his country, and was rightfully proud of his commitment to defend and to protect.

He is mourned by his parents, three sisters, two brothers, a fiancée, and an infant son Liam. I know his family is proud of him, and will always remember his spirit, enthusiasm, competitiveness, and can-do attitude. They are the