

President Bush, during the campaign, said he wanted to change the tone of things in Washington. The tone has not been changed. Someone should get to the President and say this has got to stop. I cannot imagine President Bush liking this. If he does, it speaks volumes.

Top White House officials have said he wanted to change the tone in Washington, but today we learn he is working in tandem with those keeping secret lists of people's personal activity for intimidation, professional retaliation, or maybe even character assassinations.

It is not enough they block access to all non-Republicans. The story indicates that the "chief aim is to prod trade associations, lobbying firms, and corporations to hire more Republicans to represent them in Washington."

It is somewhat ironic the party most opposed to affirmative action supports its application when it comes to hiring lobbyists. They support affirmative action when it comes to the hiring of Republican lobbyists but oppose it when it comes to helping a minority gain entry to college.

The person behind this secret list is a frequent adviser and a visitor to the President. His name is in this story. The President should pick up the phone, call his friend, and denounce it and tell him that President George W. Bush will not tolerate what amounts to Nixonian-McCarthyism.

I don't know this President as well as I know his father, but I guarantee the first President Bush would not condone this. I guarantee that. One thing about the previous President Bush, he was a very pragmatic man. This is so wrong. It is extraordinarily disappointing if the President is complicit in these secret lists, lists designed to suppress workers' liberties in order to protect special interests. This is a witch-hunt, tracking and documenting people's personal choices with invasive tactics to threaten and intimidate freedom in the workplace.

If you have someone who represents a company or a trade association, will they now, each time there is an election where there is a turnover, have to fire all Republicans or fire all Democrats until all the lobbyists are of the same party as the person who is President of the United States? I hope not.

We have lobbyists, advocates, and consultants talked about in this article. Does it mean that next they will go after researchers, maybe teachers, doctors, or lawyers? Or maybe people from Hawaii? Pick any group. Where will it end? Will the Republican lawmakers be told not to meet with Democratic constituents? For a party that defined itself during the cold war as the enemy of communism, their new playbook would be the envy of one of the Communist dictators. Every elected official, Republican and Democrat, should denounce this. This is wrong.

Every person should call upon the President, a lawmaker, and say, stop

this. Today's story about his supporters secretly compiling a new enemies list changes both the tone and the clock, but it changes it in the wrong direction. We do not want to turn the clock back to Nixonian-McCarthyism.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2600 AND H.R. 2143

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to read the two bills en bloc, and then I would object to any further proceedings at this time with respect to these measures.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will read the bills by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2600) to ensure the continuing financial capacity of insurers to provide coverage for risk from terrorism.

A bill (H.R. 2143) to make repeal of the estate tax permanent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming, Mr. THOMAS, is recognized.

HOMELAND DEFENSE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I want to take a few minutes to speak a little about an issue that is current: homeland defense. It is not new to be current. Of course, homeland defense has been a very high topic in all of our minds since September 11, and will continue to be, indeed, for a very long time. I think the war we are in requires a great commitment from all of us to continue to provide homeland defense and security and the new prospects for us. I think we are unaccustomed to that. I want to take a few minutes to talk about that, and particularly about the President's proposal.

I think there is no question that homeland defense has become one of our most important issues, and that, of course, is coupled with what we are doing overseas. There is also no question about the best method of homeland defense, partly because it is something we haven't done in the past. It is particularly difficult to develop, and it is hard to determine the best way to do it. It is a domestic activity about which we haven't had to be concerned,

particularly in the past, and we haven't dealt with it certainly to the extent we are now and which we must in the future.

I will admit—as you will probably detect—that I am not an expert on this at all. As a matter of fact, I am not on committees that are basically involved with it. But I am a bit disturbed about the reaction to the President's Cabinet-level plan he announced last week. The critics have been very vocal about not having a plan. We have been hearing that now for a number of months—that Tom Ridge has not been doing what we need to do; that he doesn't have the authority which we need to have for him to be able to accomplish what is going on here. Fairly high level criticism has been taking place. It is interesting. The critics for not having a plan are now just about as vocal about the plan the President has provided. I think that certainly is a strange kind of thing and one that is not helpful to accomplishing what we want to accomplish.

I think there is no question that a plan of this size and of this importance will be altered before it is put into place. I do not know of any plan this size that has come before the Congress that isn't changed, polished, and accommodated before it is finally agreed to. But the point is there has to be one to begin. I think it is really important that we deal with it now. It is there, and it is what the critics wanted. I don't know why they continue to criticize.

I am surprised and am a little dismayed that the media has continued to use this proposal as a way to create controversy. I guess the media's job—whatever the issue is—is to pick on that part which is reflected on by a minority of the people who have been critical rather than a majority. Indeed, 72 percent, according to the polls, are favorable. It is kind of interesting that this moves their way, and I guess that is the media's way of doing things.

One of the complaints is that the plan came out overnight—it came out very quickly. I think that is not the case. Tom Ridge did an interview the other day in which he indicated that he has been in place now for quite some time and has not, of course, been a Cabinet member. He has not had anything but his own office to handle. But he has been working on this for a long time, including a lot of people. The idea that it came out overnight from people in the President's little group is not the case. There has been a great deal of talk about it within the administration and a great number of ideas as to how this might best be done, as I think it should be. I think it would be sort of ridiculous to be talking about something publicly before it comes out. That is why it came out now, and that is why this is the time to talk about it publicly.

I must confess I get a little impatient sometimes with the way these things are handled. It is easier to sit up in the

grandstands and be critical than to be on the field and have to call the plays. That is, of course, what the President has to do.

I think it deals with a problem. The problem, of course, is that all of us are concerned about security. There is no one in government or outside government who doesn't want to try to detect what is going on and do something about it, whether it is a highway patrolman in Wyoming or a CIA agent or an FBI agent. Sometimes it is objective, sometimes it is seen, or sometimes it is suspected; then what do you do?

We haven't had a central place to accumulate all of these possibilities so they can be evaluated and so something can be done about them. There are as many as 100 different government agencies that have some responsibility for homeland security. I suspect it is almost every agency. No one has had the final accountability. No one has had to say there is something that really should be investigated and should be turned over to people to further investigate.

The Coast Guard has several missions: Research, rescue, maritime treaties. It, of course, reports to the Transportation Department. Its primary responsibilities are rails, bridges, and airways.

There is really sort of a lack of continuity.

The Customs Service, among other duties, collects tariffs, prevents smuggling. It is part of the Treasury Department whose primary responsibility is not regular security but indeed physical security.

We have not had a central place for this information until recently. Now we do. Times have changed.

Absolutely now, there will be someone in charge. The bureaucrats are unchangeable, it is said. I don't believe that. I believe change can come when the leadership shows the way and insists upon change. That is what it is all about. That is why there are heads of departments. It is why someone is a Cabinet member—to take the policy of their leader, the President, and to ensure it is implemented. I have never worked in the bureaucracy, but I suppose where there are thousands of people, it is a little bit difficult to do. But that is their task. That is their job. I think it can bring about change.

It would be too bad if the Congress failed to change. I read about some of the congressional committees being concerned about their jurisdiction and that this might change that. Change is inevitable. Change is something we ought to look at and accept, if it has merit. The idea of being resistant to change is a little hard, and it is not very helpful. I suspect there is some of that in the Senate. We hear all kinds of voices coming out here.

I am no expert, as I mentioned before. I suspect that maybe this department could be smaller. You could have a little more selective group that

comes together, if indeed then the things that are determined by this smaller homeland security group could be brought to the President and to his Cabinet, and the President would ensure that each of these Cabinet people caused their departments to do what is necessary; that is, to support the central agency. Even today I understand that. But when you are talking about hundreds of thousands of people, of course, it is less easy. I understand that.

But I do think there has to be a central but real war to a large extent—both domestically and overseas—carried out by intelligence, and carried out by centralized information, and by knowing what is happening. This is an entirely different kind of war than we have ever had in the past. We will have to have different arrangements to do it.

I think if you are a frontline worker for the FBI, CIA, or some other law enforcement or intelligence agency, and you see something that raises suspicions, you need to have a place to report it immediately, and you should expect your supervisors to treat it with the seriousness it deserves. Information must be fully shared so that we can follow all of those leads and hopefully prevent a tragedy such as happened to us before.

I hope we can consider the President's recommendation and make the changes we believe we need. I think we should see what weaknesses we have had so we can change those. Certainly there have been some. I suppose some of them were not necessarily weaknesses. There is a difference in the climate, there is a difference in the atmosphere, a difference in the challenge. When that happens, there has to be a difference in the way we behave.

I look forward to that. I hope we can come out with something better than what we received.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, am I correct, we are in morning business at this time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PENSION REFORM

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, the front page of today's New York Times has an article with a title that reads "Enthusiasm Ebbs for Tough Reform in Wake of Enron." That headline points out a political challenge that those of

us in Congress have to deal with over the next few months; that is, the challenge to enact meaningful legislation while this terrible catastrophe which befell many employees and investors in relation to Enron is still fresh in mind.

I, for one, am not ready to concede that we cannot take legislative action to make sure the country's workers are not protected from the next Enron-type meltdown. We need to take that legislative action. It needs to be a priority of the Congress. I rise to speak about some of the elements that legislative action ought to contain.

Hardly a day goes by when we are not hearing about the collapse of another corporation. It is not just Enron.

I think we have all come to recognize the problem of corporate mismanagement, the problem of questionable accounting, or actual dishonest accounting, the problem of misuse or abuse of the tax provisions early in the law. All of that is, unfortunately, more widespread than just the Enron example.

These corporate misdeeds, executive malfeasance, accounting chicanery, unfortunately, provide grist for virtually every front page we see these days. These stories will not stop on their own. The problems will not go away on their own. Apparently, the system we have had in place for a long time is not working as it should. We need to pass legislation to address these recurring themes or else we will jeopardize a long-term economic recovery, which I know we are all hoping very much is in place and scheduled to occur.

I have referred to a New York Times article. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WYDEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See Exhibit 1.)

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, as noted in the article, Senator DASCHLE has indicated he would like to bring a bill to the Senate floor dealing with these issues before the August recess. I think that is an admirable goal, one that the entire Senate needs to join. Unfortunately, the administration and the House and some colleagues in the Senate have not shown the kind of zeal for these necessary reforms that is going to be required. I certainly hope the delays and obstacles that have arisen so far do not prevent us from bringing meaningful legislation before the Senate.

Let me refer to a couple other articles while I am on the subject. I was reading these articles over the weekend in Business Week. One is an editorial in the current edition of Business Week, entitled "Accounting: Stronger Reforms, Please." It is a very interesting article, one that I think deserves the attention of everyone. Let me read a couple of paragraphs from it because I think it does make a point on which all of us need to focus. It says:

If you hoped that the Enron/Andersen scandal would provide an opportunity for just