

I have been asked by reporters: Was this a calculated move?

I said: No; you should have been there and just seen the reaction.

I remember the junior Senator from California, the senior Senator from New York, and some others of us urged him to go to the floor and to just speak his mind. He was saying to others: Maybe I ought to reflect on it. No, you should speak what you think.

I think it is clear, and I have been talking with people in my State, that the President has stepped over the line with these remarks. This weekend, I was asked by many people way to the left of me: Isn't the President, when he wants to go into Iraq, using politics?

I said: No, I don't think so. I think he has been wanting to go into Iraq from the very beginning.

Then for him to accuse Democrats of using politics, in my judgment—and I wonder what the Senator from California thinks because she has spoken in a heartfelt, compassionate way—I think the American people are fundamentally fair, and ugly tactics like that will backfire on their own, but I also believe it has to be pointed out because war is serious stuff and we need unity. We do not need political games.

Senator INOUE said it best. I just ask the Senator if she is finding the same thing in her State as mine; that people are not sure, they want some questions asked before we go into war, and people do not like one party accusing the other of not being patriotic or being less concerned about national security simply because they ask questions. I wonder what the Senator's opinion is.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator from California yield for a parliamentary request?

Mrs. BOXER. I certainly will.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are on H.R. 5005; is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate go off the homeland security bill and proceed to a period for morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for a period not to exceed 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. My understanding is the Senator from California wishes to speak for how long?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Twenty minutes.

Mr. REID. The Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, for 20 minutes following the statement of the Senator from California, Mrs. BOXER.

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

HOMELAND SECURITY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, let me respond to my friend from New York. The phone calls, letters, and e-mails we

have been getting have been one-sided against an open, blank-check resolution, as they are phrasing it, as was sent over. They are very much against what the President sent over.

More importantly are my conversations with my constituents. They clearly are very pleased that Senator FEINSTEIN has made remarks regarding Iraq, and I have spoken out. I have received calls now because I raised a number of questions in the Foreign Relations Committee regarding working with our allies, working through the U.N., asking: Is there a path to peace here?

What I pointed out is in recent years, I have voted for two resolutions to go to war: One was to stop the genocide by Milosevic, that was with a Democratic President, and one with current President Bush to respond to the brutal, inhumane terrorist attack on 9/11 for which every single Democrat in this particular body voted.

To me, it is not a question of will I ever vote for such action. It is a question of what is the best way to proceed. My constituents want to hear what I am thinking. I have been in Congress for 20 years. They do not want to see debates where one party is saying to another: You do not care about the American people. My friend is so correct. They look to us to engage in a rational debate, not to have one-line zingers as the President put out. This is not what they want.

Then Ari Fleischer, who is the press secretary for the President, said this today:

It's time for everyone to work well together to protect our national security.

That was his remark after he was questioned about the President's statement.

That is the point that Senator DASCHLE was making, but not as rhetoric, as fact. There is an expression, I believe it was John Adams said: Facts are stubborn things. The facts are this President said very clearly: The Democrat-controlled Senate "is not interested in the security of the American people." My people at home are appalled at that.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mrs. BOXER. Yes, I will continue to yield to both my colleagues.

Mr. CORZINE. I want to reinforce what the Senator from New York said. By the way, this statement about not being interested in the security of the American people was made in Trenton, NJ, on Monday at a political rally. It is hard for me to understand what special interests are being reflected in the President's comments and its repeated nature.

I wonder if the junior Senator from California actually knew this was made in Trenton, NJ, at a political rally for the competitor to our side of the aisle? Is that not political in and of itself?

Mrs. BOXER. I say to my friend, I learned of this quote reading the front page today of the Washington Post,

and I am going to read what it says. It says four times in the past 2 days Bush has suggested that Democrats do not care about national security, saying on Monday that the Democratic-controlled Senate is "not interested in the security of the American people."

His remarks, intensifying the theme he introduced last month, were quickly seconded and disseminated by Republican House majority whip TOM DELAY of Texas.

I was unaware of this, although it is interesting to me, because that particular race, of course, in New Jersey, which is pivotal to the future of this Senate, and adds to the political nature of this comment.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the junior Senator from California continue to yield?

Mrs. BOXER. Yes.

Mr. SCHUMER. I believe my friend was here when I was back in 1991. There was a long debate. I think it was a debate on the merits.

Mrs. BOXER. Yes.

Mr. SCHUMER. Both sides debated strongly in a heartfelt way. The Nation voted to go to war. Whatever side you were on, it seemed to me by having the debate, by keeping the invective aside—I do not remember the previous President George Bush ever using lines like that. After the debate, the vote was close, I believe, in both bodies. It certainly was in the House. The American people were more unified. There was a feeling that everyone had their point of view, that everything was explored.

I would say to my friend from California, at every townhall meeting about Iraq, and I have had a bunch of them around the State, they say you must know something we do not know. There must be some secret.

I have attended a few of the classified briefings and obviously would not want to disclose what is in there, but I say to them, no, as to the basic broad facts, not any kind of detail that would involve security, but the basic broad facts are known to every American because they are in the newspapers. There are no hidden, deep, dark secrets, at least that I am aware of. Maybe there are that we do not know about. But in a democracy, you cannot go to war this way. You cannot say if you are a leader of the country, I know something you do not know, when you are sending the sons and daughters of America to be put in harm's way.

I do not know how I would come out if we had to vote today, but whether I would end up voting yes or no—and I do not know what the resolution would look like—I sure would feel bad if we did not have a debate, if we did not have a discussion, if a whole variety of questions were not asked.

I would like to hear my friend's opinions on this. This is the most awesome, humbling decision that a Member of the Senate or the other body can make, because you are putting the beautiful young people of America in harm's way. You have to be careful.