

Last week on this floor, the senior Senator from North Dakota had this to say, and I quote:

This administration told the world Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, that they are trying to develop nuclear capability, there is a connection to al-Qaida, and each and every one of those claims is now in question, every one of them. It is not just 16 words in the State of the Union. It is far more serious than that.

I find this charge to be simply indefensible. It is an accusation that flies in the face of everything that we have seen about Saddam Hussein's regime. It offends the reasoning mind. It maligns all good Members of this body who weighed the intelligence about Iraq in the balance and decided that this war was just and right—and voted for it. I might add, months before the President's State of the Union speech.

We have heard similar statements echoed from others on this floor and in the press in recent weeks. I have the utmost respect for my fellow Senators. Yet I must confess I am dumbfounded at how soon they forget the truth about the vile regime of Saddam Hussein.

I believe their line of reasoning goes something like this: They charge that the President was looking for excuses to go to war with Iraq, and that his claims concerning weapons-of-mass-destruction were just a pretense for this war.

I find this line of reasoning nonsensical at best—and downright offensive at worst.

First, if one buys the idea that Saddam Hussein did not possess the weapons or the capabilities the administration assigned to him, the dictator did not fool us alone as to his guilt. Every significant intelligence service in the world, including the vast majority of those in nations who opposed this war, were convinced that Iraq possessed these weapons. That is why the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441, which declared Iraq in material breach of its obligations under numerous previous resolutions, including failing to account for weapons of mass destruction that Iraq had previously admitted to building and stockpiling.

As Richard Butler, the former head of the U.N. arms inspection team in Iraq, wrote in 2001:

It would be foolish in the extreme not to assume that [Saddam] is developing long-range missile capabilities; at work again on building nuclear weapons; and adding to the chemical and biological warfare weapons he concealed during the UNSCOM inspection period.

Yet it is that same logical position that some in this body are arguing against today. Those who make accusations based on their political desires, not the facts, lump the international political community, the media, the intelligence community, and the President of the United States into some fantastic form of shadowy conspiracy. This is hardly responsible, and I believe it does a great disservice to the American people.

Second, if one honestly argues that because of one offending sentence every other claim made by the administration concerning Iraq is now under question, you run into a very hard brick wall of solid fact. Perhaps my colleagues will explain what form of gas Saddam used to kill more than 100,000 Kurds, including 5,000 in just one day. Perhaps they will explain why, prior to kicking out the U.N. inspection team in 1998, Iraqi officials admitted that they had produced biological weapons agents—including 4 tons of VX, 8,500 liters of anthrax and 19,000 liters of botulinum toxin—and biological weapons delivery munitions, including aerial bombs, aerial dispensers, and Scud missile warheads. Perhaps they will explain why, for more than a decade, Saddam Hussein stymied inspectors, buried research facilities, built mobile biological weapons labs, intimidated scientists, and even removed the tongues of those who questioned his regime.

I would ask my colleagues who have made these arguments to answer a question for me, then. Under their line of reasoning, why did our President seek the authority to pursue this war? If, as they claim, there was no overarching consensus that Saddam Hussein represented a danger to American security and peace in the Middle East and around the world, why did the President undertake this war? Why did so many vote to support the President, here in the Senate and in the United Nations?

War is a serious enterprise, one that is not undertaken without risk. The fact that Baghdad fell in 3 weeks, with so few casualties among coalition forces, fulfilled our greatest hopes for this conflict. I know I am thankful for that fact, and I know the President is as well. I also know that the case for this war remains solid.

This was a case built not on one piece of evidence provided by British intelligence, but on a much deeper long-term purpose. It was built on the noble goal of ending the decades of brutal and violent works by Saddam Hussein, and on our clear duty to ensure America's security in the post-9/11 world by removing state-sponsors of terrorism and opposing regimes that threaten other nations with weapons of mass destruction.

Three-hundred thousand people, maybe more, are buried in mass graves spread throughout Iraq, in nearly a hundred reported sites. They stretch from Basrah to Baghdad, from Najaf to Kirkuk. They are silent monuments to Saddam's legacy of ruthlessness and evil.

The suggestion in the face of these silent witnesses that Iraq, the Middle East, and America are not better off today than we were before this war is simply ludicrous.

We have finished the fighting. Now we must finish the job. We seek to make Iraq secure, to make it a place where the rule of law can be estab-

lished, so that civilian leaders and the Iraqi Governing Council can establish a new government for a new nation.

This is not an easy task—and it is not without cost. But it must be done, so that Iraq can flourish as a free nation, and so that the victories won, the lives risked and lost, will not be in vain.

Those we spend their time playing political games with our mission in Iraq, even while our brave men and women labor to secure and stabilize this fledgling nation, dishonor our soldiers in the field and the memories of all of those who sacrificed their lives opposing the bloodthirsty regime of Saddam Hussein.

President Clinton argued in 1998 that if America did not act, Saddam Hussein would:

... go right on and do more to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction. And some day, some way, I guarantee you, he's use the arsenal.

President Bush agreed with that argument, and he deduced to do something about it. Many of us agreed with that argument, and we voted to support the President. And I am confident history will record it as the right decision—a decision based strongly on the principles of human freedom that inspired America's foundation.

Last week, Prime Minister Blair reminded us that we have a duty as a powerful nation to take great care regarding what kind of world we leave for our children. I believe that the task that falls to us at this moment in history is spreading the blessings of liberty, bringing the light of freedom to a nation imprisoned in the darkness.

Let those who are more comfortable playing political games—play on. Those of us who wish to accomplish something greater will labor on, undeterred, always confident in our ultimate goal: We seek a just, free, and peaceful world—for ourselves, for the Iraqi people, and for future generations.

#### IN REMEMBRANCE OF STROM THURMOND

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD my remarks of December 9, 2002, before the U.S. Capitol Historical Society.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

“Who well lives, long lives; for this age of ours should not be numbered by years, days and hours.”

We are gathered here today to salute a friend and colleague who has lived long and spent his days well.

Strom Thurmond has been a teacher, an athletic coach, an educational administrator, a lawyer, a State legislator, a circuit court judge, a county superintendent, a soldier, a Presidential nominee, and a Governor—and all of that was packed into just his first 52 years.

In 1954, Strom won his first election to the Senate as a write-in candidate—beginning

his Senate sojourn with the singular achievement of being the only person in history to be elected to the Senate in that fashion.

As he began his Senate service with a "first" he also leaves it by setting two more records—that of being the longest serving Senator in U.S. history and also being the oldest person to serve in the U.S. Senate. May I note here that he is also the only person in the Senate who is old enough to be my big brother. But, Strom, like Casey Stengel, I'll never make the mistake of being 70 again.

Strom Thurmond's life is not just about length and achievement, it is about personal service and commitment.

Now, I am not speaking here about Strom's well-known appreciation for the gentler sex. I am speaking about his love of his country and his commitment to serve it.

Consider the fact that Strom Thurmond volunteered for service in World War II. He did that when he could have stayed safely at home. Strom was beyond draft age in 1942. Additionally, as a judge, he held draft-exempted status. Yet he went. And in 1944, Strom Thurmond was part of D-Day—the invasion of the beaches of Normandy that signaled the defeat of worldwide fascism. He risked his life to serve the nation he loved.

After the war, Strom Thurmond served the State that he loved by becoming its Governor.

In 1948, Governor Strom Thurmond tried again to serve the country that he loved by running for President as a States rights Democrat. He carried four States and won 39 electoral votes. Undaunted, in 1954 Strom found another way to serve his beloved State and country by being elected to the U.S. Senate. It is in this role, that of U.S. Senator, that we have come to understand the extraordinary service of this man from South Carolina.

Strom Thurmond is a man who, because of the quantity of his years, has seen enormous change—the rise and fall of Nazi Germany; the Russian Revolution; the rise and fall of the Soviet empire; two world wars; space exploration; civil rights upheaval; and incredible advances in technology and medicine. Indeed, the world is very different from the one that Strom Thurmond knew as a young man. He has been witness to the "vicissitudes of fortune, which spares neither man nor the proudest of his works, which buries empires and cities in a common grave."

And yet Strom has never lost his desire to serve, to make his contribution, to add his voice and his views to the rich conglomeration of beliefs and viewpoints which, when mixed together, yield an idea called America.

Strom is never one to become discouraged, disheartened or disenchanted. He loves his country, and he has been a faithful and devoted defender of the Nation's need for a strong defense. No summer soldier, no sunshine patriot, he.

Youth is not a time of life—it is a state of mind. It is not a matter of red cheeks, red lips and supple knees. It is a temper of the will; a quality of the imagination. Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for a adventure over a life of ease. This often exists in a man of 50, more than in a boy of 20. Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years; people grow old by deserting their dreams.

Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.

Whether 70 or 16, there is in every being's heart a love of wonder; the sweet amazement at the stars and starlike things and thoughts.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence,

as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

In the central place of your heart, there is a wireless station. So long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, grandeur, courage, and power form the Earth, from men and from the Infinite—so long are you young. When the wires are all down and the central places of your heart are covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then are you grown old, indeed!

In the words of Pericles: "It is only the love of honor that never grows old."

Today, it is not the length but the quality of Strom Thurmond's life which we celebrate. For that marvelous life of character and courage I salute him. It is a privilege to know him, an honor to serve with him, and an education to ponder his remarkable life.

#### MULTIPLICATION TABLE OF HAPPINESS

Count your garden by the flowers  
Never by the leaves that fall;  
Count your days by the sunny hours,  
Not remembering clouds at all;  
Count your nights by stars, not shadows,  
Count your life by smiles, not tears,  
And on this beautiful December afternoon,  
Count your age by friends, not years.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an American political icon, patriot, war hero, and lifelong South Carolinian, Senator Strom Thurmond. While many will recall Senator Thurmond's half-century career on the political stage, I shall fondly remember the many kindnesses he extended to my family and me. He was a warm-hearted, gentle man, and I will count it as one of my life's honors to have served with him in the U.S. Senate.

I join my colleagues in extending my heartfelt condolences to his family who have lost a beloved husband, father, and grandfather. Strom was a legend in the Senate and touched many of us during his long career. In fact, I will always remember Senator Thurmond's 90th birthday party when he turned to the audience and said, "If you all eat right, exercise, and don't drink whiskey, you'll be here for the 100th birthday party." Strom Thurmond was a remarkable American; I don't think we'll see another one like him for a long time, if ever.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, we mourn the loss of Strom Thurmond, the legendary Senator who held his first public office in the late 1920s and who died on June 27 in his hometown of Edgefield, SC. The State of South Carolina lost a beloved native son and the Senate lost a cheerful, robust, honorable, and dedicated colleague. He was someone who was always eager to help me and to accommodate my concerns. It was an honor to work with him on issues of national defense, foreign policy, and many other matters important to the people of the United States.

South Carolinians' outpouring of respect when he died was massive. Senator Thurmond had been a judge, a soldier who landed in Normandy as a member of the 82nd Airborne Division in 1942, a Governor of South Carolina, and chairman of the Judiciary and Armed Services committees in this body. He was also someone who

changed his mind on an issue of great import—race in America—and he was a fine example to his fellow citizens on that score.

Strom Thurmond was an indomitable spirit. He represented continuity in the U.S. Senate, becoming, in 1996, its oldest serving Member and, in 1997, its longest serving Member. Those are for the record books. But on a personal level, I can say I admired tremendously his buoyant spirit. I appreciated him for assisting me in so many ways, and for his stalwart service to our country.

#### THAILAND'S BUSINESS AS USUAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in the struggle for freedom in Burma, I am becoming increasingly convinced that Thailand is on the side of the representative junta in Rangoon.

To with, the Foreign Minister of Thailand was recently quoted: "We are trying to find an exit for the Myanmar Government, the also reduce pressure from the international community."

Instead of trying to find an "exit" for the repressive State Peace and Development Council, SPDC, Thailand should be trying to secure the release of democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other democrats jailed in the wake of the brutal May 30 attack on the National League for Democracy, NLD.

Thailand's "business-as-usual" approach places that country at odds with other Associated of Southeast Asian Nation, ASEAN, members—including Malaysia. Given the SPDC's refusal to release Suu Kyi and other Burmese democrats, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir rightly commented that Burma could be expelled from ASEAN "as a last result."

Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra must defend democracy in Burma and should join with Malaysia and other ASEAN members in holding the SPDC accountable for their actions.

Thailand should take note that I included a provision in S. 1426, the fiscal year 2004 Foreign Operations appropriations bill, that conditions United States assistance to that country on a determination by the Secretary of State that Thailand: one, supports the advancement of democracy in Burma and is taking action to sanction the military junta in Rangoon; two, is not hampering the delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in Thailand who have fled Burma; and three is not forcibly repatriating Burmese to Burma.

It is past time for Thailand to prove its commitment to the cause of freedom and the rule of law in Burma. The Thai Foreign Minister has an opportunity to set the record straight in Bali this week. He should not miss it.

#### TRIBUTE TO LINDA FLATT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to my fellow Nevadan, Linda Flatt, from Henderson, NV.