

KERRY's votes as recorded in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, it is clear he is not ready for the final exam.

A generation ago, Senator KERRY vigorously attacked America for its role in another war. He claims to have moderated his views since then. But this "global test" is strikingly similar to what he said in 1970: "I'd like to see our troops dispersed through the world only at the directive of the United Nations." He hasn't changed. He wants to turn our troops into blue-helmeted human shields.

President Bush is playing offense by taking the fight to the terrorists, where they live, and he supports giving our military and intelligence forces every last tool they need to win the war on terrorism. That is the only way to protect America. Only America has the will and the means to protect America from attack, and only this American Government has the authority to decide how and when. President Bush gets that. Senator KERRY does not.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). The Senator from Wyoming.

FIGHTING THE WAR ON TERRORISM

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments made by my friend from Kentucky. Certainly those are the discussions going on today.

I take a minute or two to talk about the war on terrorism. We are in a war on terrorism. We need to conduct that war and take it to the terrorists, not here at home. We do have a plan. In war, obviously, the plan does not always turn out the way one hopes and we have to change from time to time.

We need to be together on the goals. Our goal is to win. We must do whatever is necessary to win. We should not have all of our conversations about this war based on politics. Hopefully that will be over soon. We ought to talk about the challenges before the country. We need to support our troops and goal—and that is to win.

We are not alone in our effort, although that is talked about sometimes. Some 80 nations are working together with us to ensure the world is a safer and a more secure place. The coalition is removing the threat of terrorism and building a foundation to enhance national and international security.

The war being fought in Afghanistan and Iraq is bringing about a fundamental change to the environment that has given rise and power to the extremists who export terrorism.

Contrary to what those who focus only on the negative would have you believe, we have some good things to talk about that move us toward this goal of winning over there. Coalition forces have not lost an engagement at the platoon level or above in 3 years of war.

This terrorist enemy knows we cannot be defeated by him, but he is fo-

cused on winning the battle of perception by attacking civilians to spread fear among local populations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The terrorists' goal is to win the perception battle and to force us to lose our will to win.

Unfortunately, by trying to exploit the negative aspects of the war, some in our country have fallen into the trap and are unwittingly advancing this cause. This is unfortunate and, quite frankly, very counterproductive to our goal of winning.

We have been successful in Iraq and Afghanistan in many ways. Of course, the situation is still violent. It is still volatile. It is not the way we would like it to be, and much more remains to be done. But, again, we will succeed by focusing on success and by moving toward our goals.

Today, in Afghanistan, coalition and Afghan forces are setting the conditions for a stable and safe environment for a successful presidential election in October, followed by parliamentary elections in the spring.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan reports that over 10 million voters are registered as of August 29 for the October 9 presidential election. More than 41 percent of registered voters are women. This is an unusual kind of change for Afghanistan.

Today, more than 18,000 coalition forces, together with the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police, are increasing their security operations in towns and villages. These are tremendous accomplishments by any standard. Although several months ago, when I had the privilege of attending there, you could tell—you could tell from the kids in school, you could tell from the people on the street—this movement was taking place. Unfortunately, of course, it is being slowed down by the terrorist attacks in Iraq.

Despite the negativity coming from the President's opponents, the United States remains fully committed to assisting the Iraqis in restoring security and rebuilding their nation. The Iraqi National Conference met and has selected the Interim National Council. This Interim Council for the Iraqi Government is now planning for elections, of course, in January. Some say: Well, can that happen? It will not be smooth. Of course it will not be smooth. To make a transition of this kind is not a smooth operation. But the fact is, violence will continue to exist and these things will continue to happen. But this movement toward a change in government to self-government will persist.

The enemy obviously is unscrupulous and will do anything, including, of course, the killing of innocent children, to stop this movement toward freedom from taking seed.

Overwhelmingly, however, the people of Iraq want to rebuild their country and to defend it from fringe groups that wish to tear it apart. The largest single contributor to Iraq's security is

that effort of Iraqi people who continue to step forward to join the various Iraqi security forces. More than 230,000 Iraqis serve as part of their country's security force, with another 20,000 in training. Again, I had the opportunity to visit some of these training facilities, and they were new at that time, they were still becoming efficient at that time. You could sense this was happening, and there was a commitment on the part of Iraqis to do some things that were much different than they had been accustomed to.

They have been trained and are on duty in areas including police service, national guard, border enforcement, the Iraq Army, and the Iraqi intervention force.

Now, there are those who may say: I know, but they are not doing very well on the borders. Of course not. It takes time to do these things. This an extreme change from what they were doing in the past. We also know in our own country how difficult it is for border protections.

So while performance varies in regions, Iraqi security forces continue to improve. And they are recruiting additional persons to strengthen their efforts to be very successful.

I think it is clear that the Iraqi people have much at stake in defeating the terrorist insurgency, and they are indeed taking on this burden which, of course, is exactly what has to be done in order to transfer the governance and the security of Iraq to the Iraqi people—our goal.

They need our unequivocal support, not talk of cutting and running, because the mission is difficult. All of us knew it was going to be difficult. Again, we have to go back to the basis of terrorism; we have to go back to 11 September; we have to go back to the previous gulf war where the agreements made by Saddam Hussein were never put in place.

So all those things go in to where we are. Where we are now, you can argue about, but that is where we are. We need to win. We need to be positive. We need to be supportive of our troops and of our commitment. Our goals are lofty, and the road, of course, has not been easy and will not be easy in the future. There will be tough times before we are through. But we must remain resolute and be sure the job is completed and that we win. Because only by fostering freedom and democracy and hope in these oppressed regions of the world can we truly root out and defeat the terrorist threat we have faced and continue to face today.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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