

replace a percentage of income beyond what Social Security disability pays. So any change that lowers Social Security disability payments would actually raise the price of private disability insurance, because there would be a larger gap to make up between what people get from Social Security and a minimum replacement level.

More to the point, this kind of disability policy would not be available to just anyone. For instance, according to Patricia Owen, the former Associate Commissioner of the Social Security Administration:

Private insurance generally will not cover the blue-collar occupations. And long-term disability insurance for workers is the least offered. With Social Security disability insurance, all are covered. I would guess that the price of private long-term disability insurance would be at least 4 to 5 times higher than the percent of FICA that goes to disability insurance.

Young people better start thinking about this. They better start thinking about what this privatization means in terms of disability.

Any one of us on the floor today, anyone watching us—an accident could happen tomorrow and you could be disabled. I am concerned that in the rush to privatize Social Security we are failing to consider unintended consequences. Americans with disabilities are at risk under the privatization plans now being discussed. I think what we have here is a crisis of mass destruction. Before we went into Iraq we had the weapons of mass destruction. We found out they didn't exist. The President now says there is a crisis in Social Security that justifies slashing benefits by up to 50 percent, that justifies borrowing up to \$2 trillion to partially privatize Social Security.

Just as there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, there is no crisis in Social Security. But if we go down this path of privatizing Social Security, cutting benefits, making it harder to get disability coverage, we will have mass destruction all right, we will have mass destruction of the American family, our American family, pulling together, helping each other in time of need by putting us all in this great big pool called Social Security insurance.

If the President and Mr. Norquist and those privatizers get their way, we will have mass destruction all right, here in our country—to our way of life, to our American family. We will have mass destruction to a future that people can look forward to knowing that if, they become disabled, they are going to have a safety net to look forward to. If the major breadwinner in the family, he or she, gets killed, dies unexpectedly, that the survivors will have a safety net to get them through school; looking forward to a future when you retire you will have some golden years and you will know that your future retirement years don't depend on whether the stock market goes up or the stock market goes down, that it only depends on one thing, the survival of

the United States of America. That is what Social Security is.

I can tell you that in recent weeks my office has been flooded with letters and e-mails from my fellow Iowans who are deeply worried about the reports they are reading. They read about the President's 2001 privatization commission. Many of them know that the calculations assume disability benefits will be slashed. They have heard the proposals that we will just take people with disabilities and put them into SSI. This is deeply disturbing for people with disabilities who rely on Social Security, not just for income but for their dignity.

Social Security disability insurance has been a lifesaver for countless Americans. I think of Steven Cook, a former truckdriver from Iowa City, IA. After a lifetime of working hard, playing by the rules, he found himself unemployed, sleeping in his car, and diagnosed with renal failure. After qualifying for Social Security disability insurance and corollary health benefits, he was able to receive a kidney transplant and begin to put his life back together.

I don't want to add to the worries and fears of people with disabilities, people such as Steven Cook who rely on Social Security, but we have an obligation to raise these issues now, to discuss them, and to find out what those unintended consequences might be of the privatization of Social Security. As I said, the calculations and projections of the President's Commission on Privatization assume that disability benefits will be cut along with retirement benefits. The Commission recommended that "the President address the disability insurance program through a separate policy development process."

That recommendation was made 3 full years ago, but, to my knowledge, there has been no such effort to develop any policy to safeguard the disability insurance program. In the absence of any reassurance from the administration, Americans with disabilities—widows and their survivors and orphans—have been left with the worst: Their benefits are going to be slashed in a draconian fashion. This is not compassion, and it is not acceptable.

I have come to the Senate floor today to raise these profound issues. It is time to talk about the fate of millions of Americans with disabilities who rely on Social Security benefits. Is the administration developing a plan to protect these people? Does the administration intend to take its cue from the Privatization Commission and propose steep cuts in disability benefits? Americans need answers. More than 6 million Americans who rely on disability benefits need answers, as we all do. Any one of us could become disabled and face a dire need of this safety net.

I urge the President to consider this issue. If the plan is to privatize Social Security on the backs of our most vulnerable people, that is profoundly a

moral mistake. Such a plan I hope will be unacceptable to Members of this body. I urge the President and his advisers to give very careful consideration to this issue.

Yes, we need to address long-term challenges to Social Security. However, Social Security is sound. It is as sound as the United States of America. Will it need changes 50 years from now? Yes. Minor changes can fix it. Does it need to be privatized? No. Do we need to protect the social insurance program for people with disabilities or for people like you and me who are not right now disabled but may be tomorrow? The answer is yes. We can only do it if we have one national social insurance program. It has served us well.

Not all old things are bad. The older I get, the more I think about that. Not all old things are bad. Sometimes I see people wanting to change this or change that. For what reason? They say: Well, it is old. So what? The Ten Commandments are pretty old. I don't think they need to be changed.

Social Security insurance has served us well. It will serve these young people here today well. It will serve all young Americans well as long as we think about it in terms of the American family. We are all in this together. We will all go our separate ways and do our separate things in life, but if trouble falls, if one person becomes disabled, if one person dies and the widow or widower and the kids need help, we are there. We are there as part of a family. You will not get that if you privatize Social Security.

We will fix the long term balance sheet on Social Security. But we should always keep in mind that Social Security is as strong and as sound as the United States of America. If you do not believe in America, you don't believe in Social Security. If you do not believe in the future of our country, you don't believe in the future of Social Security. But if you believe in America and if you believe in the future of our country, you believe we can come together to truly protect Social Security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for such time as I may require.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. President.

#### ELECTIONS IN IRAQ

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, some of my colleagues are suggesting that as a result of yesterday's election in Iraq, the United States needs an exit strategy, that we should begin to withdraw troops, and that we should set a timetable for bringing the rest of our military men and women home. That is a very appealing thought.

I can think of about 3,000 families in Tennessee of the 278th Cavalry of the National Guard whose husbands and wives and sons and daughters have interrupted their lives for up to 18 months. And they are now in northern Iraq. Their families would like to have them home. I can think of families around Fort Campbell and Nashville. They would like to have their loved ones home. I think of the \$80 billion the President is going to ask us to spend, and I can think of 80 billion ways to spend it on education and improving our competitiveness. It is a very appealing thought—to bring the troops home.

But we don't need an exit strategy in Iraq. The United States needs a success strategy in Iraq. If we are to succeed in Iraq, I am afraid that means those troops are likely to have to stay there for a while longer.

Yesterday, the Iraqis did for themselves what we haven't been able to do for them in 22 months: they isolated the terrorists. The count was about 7 million or 8 million to 5,000 or 10,000—voting Iraqis versus terrorists.

In October of 2003, Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wrote a memorandum which was widely circulated around Washington. He said:

It is pretty clear that the coalition can win in Afghanistan and Iraq in one way or another, but it will be a long, hard slog.

Concerning the overall war on terror, Secretary Rumsfeld went on to ask:

Is our current situation such that "the harder we work the behinder we get?"

The Rumsfeld memorandum leaked, and some accused the Secretary of not having all the answers. I am glad we had a Secretary who is willing to ask the questions that he didn't know the answers to. He was worried that our actions in Iraq and being successful in the war were, in the postwar time, inflaming Arab opinion in such a way that we were creating more terrorists than we were destroying.

I know a lot of wise people around Washington, DC, who have been thinking about Secretary Rumsfeld's question since October of 2003. I have yet to hear one of them come up with a very good answer to his question.

How do we in the postwar conflict keep from creating more terrorists than we are destroying? The answers to the question come from all sides.

We in Congress have discussed, for example, more public relations, more television, more radio programming, more cultural exchanges. Those are all good ideas. They are important parts of effective public diplomacy. I hope we do them. But yesterday we witnessed a much better answer to Secretary Rumsfeld's question: elections; elections giving people a voice and a stake in the future of their own country. Those elections yesterday isolated the terrorists. That was the most important lesson of yesterday. It was 7 million or 8 million for democracy and 5,000 or 10,000 for the terrorists. It wasn't the Americans who were in the

7 or 8 million; it was the Iraqis. It was the Iraqis.

We discovered that we know how to give people their freedom. We have a military strong enough to do that virtually anywhere in the world. We did it in Iraq, and with stunning success, in 3 weeks toppling Saddam Hussein's government. We can give most countries their freedom in a few weeks or a few months, but we are being reminded in Iraq that building a democracy takes a long time. And people have to build a democracy for themselves. We can't do it for them.

We should know that from our own history. The Declaration of Independence was written in 1776. Our Constitution was signed in 1787. But women didn't receive the right to vote in America until 1920. It took 133 years. Blacks were enslaved and counted as three-fifths of a person by our Constitution until our Civil War, and they didn't receive full voting rights until the Voting Rights Act of 1965, 180 years after the signing of our Constitution. Even today, the United States of America is still a work in progress. We are the oldest democracy in the world. There is no such thing as an instant democracy. We, of all democracies, should understand that.

We also could learn some lessons from our role in nation building in the world. We spent 8 years in Germany and Japan. We are still in Bosnia and Kosovo.

According to this book, "America's Role in Nation Building: From Germany to Iraq," a RAND study by Ambassador James Dobbins and others, "There is no quick route to nation building. Five years seems to be the minimum required to enforce an enduring transition to democracy."

This is a book about nation building in Germany to Afghanistan with lessons for Iraq. We have plenty of experience in nation building since World War II, and the lessons from those experiences are documented in this book and many other places: Any time we decide to engage in nation building, it is going to take more troops, more time, more money, and certainly more sacrifice than we at first thought when we invaded Iraq.

That doesn't mean we should reconsider our presence in Iraq. We are there. We need to finish what we started. We need to get the job done. It does suggest that in the future we should think carefully about the number of troops, the amount of time, the amount of money, and the amount of sacrifice it takes when we engage in nation building.

I believe the Bush administration as well as the Congress has some responsibilities going forward. First, as far as the administration goes, I would like to see the administration be more specific about its success strategy in Iraq. I mentioned last week in the Senate the Washington Post op-ed by two former Secretaries of State, Henry Kissinger and George Shultz. They argue,

eloquently and in detail, that we should not set, as some of my colleagues have suggested, a specific timetable for pulling out our troops. We do not need an exit strategy. But they went further than the administration has gone so far in outlining the framework for a success strategy. These are the kinds of questions they ask in their framework.

Are we waging "one war" in which political and military efforts are mutually reinforcing? Are the institutions we are helping to build sufficiently coordinated? Is our strategic goal to achieve complete security in at least some key towns and major communications routes as opposed to 100 percent in every town and 100 percent security on every communication route? Do we have a policy for eliminating sanctuaries in neighboring territories, such as Syria and Iran? Are we designing a policy that could produce results for the people and prevent civil strife for control of the state and its oil revenue? Are we maintaining public support of the United States? Are we gaining international understanding?

They went on to conclude:

An exit strategy based on performance, not artificial time limits, will judge progress by the ability to produce positive answers to these questions.

That is the administration's responsibility at this stage. We have a new Secretary. We have a new election. We are being asked to appropriate 80 billion new dollars. I would like to hear a more specific success strategy.

We have our own responsibilities in the Congress. Our responsibility, now that we have authorized this war—we authorized it with 77 votes in this Chamber. Now that we have authorized this war, we have the responsibility to have the stomach to see it through to the end and not begin talking about premature exit strategies before we finish what we started.

The focus should not be on what day in July or August we will get out. Instead, we should be asking, for example, what are we willing to do to help provide the security needed so that elections in October and December are successful?

Yesterday's election was the first election. It was the first strong signal from the Iraqis that by a vote of 7 or 8 million to 5,000 or 10,000, they prefer democracy to terrorism. It did something that we could not do ourselves in 22 months: It isolated the terrorists in public opinion. There will be another election in October. There will be another election in December. And we should be talking about what we can do to help those elections be successful. Let's send another message isolating terrorists—not the United States, but the Iraqis. We will give them that opportunity two more times.

What can we do to train Iraqis to take over their own defense and to establish a constitutional government? What can we do to encourage Iraqi neighbors to allow a success strategy

to continue? Those are the questions we should be asking, and the answers to those questions will produce a success strategy.

At some point, one thing we can do to isolate terrorists in the Middle East is to leave Iraq. Then Iraqis are defending Iraq. All of us want that as soon as possible. Iraqis want that as soon as possible. But to abandon Iraq before we have implemented a success strategy is abandoning a country we have led to risk its lives in order to vote, and abandoning the brave Americans and those from other countries who have fought, bled, and died to give Iraqis their freedom and to give them an opportunity to govern themselves.

In 1994, I met a man named Larry Joyce in Chicago. He worked for the American Heart Association. Larry Joyce had been in Vietnam. He was about my age. He sought me out because he wanted anyone who might be in public life to learn the lessons he and his family had learned in Somalia. Larry Joyce's son, Casey Joyce, had been killed in Somalia. The lesson Larry Joyce wanted me to know and wanted every Member of this Senate to know and every policymaker to know was this: Before we engage in a military mission, we should do three things: One, we should have a specific mission; two, we should have more than sufficient force to complete the job; and he said, three, most importantly, we should have the stomach to see the mission through all the way to the end.

His greatest complaint about the American Government in Somalia was not the mission, not the force, but that we did not have the stomach to see all the way through to the end the mission in which his son was killed.

Larry Joyce himself has now died, but I remember that conversation. I think of his son. When I think about this war and committing American men and women to Iraq or any other place in the world, I think about seeing that mission all the way through to the end.

That is why I react badly to the talk of my colleagues who suggest an exit strategy based on some artificial date. Leaving Iraq prematurely would undermine every objective we have in the war on terror and in the Middle East. I am disappointed to hear talk of an exit approach. I would like to hear more in this Chamber and more from the administration and more in this country about a success strategy in Iraq.

Yesterday's election was a thrilling event. For the first time in 22 months it answered Secretary Rumsfeld's question of October 2003, How do we isolate the terrorists? If we do not do it, the Iraqi people do it, 7 or 8 million of them, versus 5,000 to 10,000 terrorists. They isolated the terrorists.

We should not be talking about leaving Iraq before we are finished. We should be talking today about those October elections, about those December elections, and what we can do in

our country and in Iraq to help the Iraqis have the opportunity to build a constitutional government and to be in a position in October and December to once again send a message to the world that they prefer democracy to terrorism and that they, the Iraqis, are isolating the terrorists by a vote of millions of Iraqis to a few thousand terrorists.

I yield the floor and 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. MCCONNELL. 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. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday freedom took a giant step forward.

History will rank January 30, 2005, alongside November 9, 1989, the day the Berlin Wall fell, as a day when man's innate desire to be free broke the shackles of tyranny.

Millions of Iraqis stood up to the terrorists and told them: We reject your credo of violence. We reject your claim that Iraq cannot join the democratic family of nations. We reject your belief that Iraqis deserve nothing more than to live in fear of oppression.

One Iraqi voter, a businessman named Samir Sabih, put it better than any of us could. Of yesterday he said:

Fear has no place in our hearts anymore. We became free.

The Iraqi elections for the National Assembly must be heralded as a major success. Turnout has been reported as being anywhere from 60 to 70 percent, defying all expectations. Thanks to the dedication and bravery of our troops, and the Iraqi police that we have trained, there was much less violence than expected. We were all moved by the courage of so many ordinary Iraqi citizens, each one risking their life to proudly display a purple ink-stained finger.

While we do not yet know the results of the election, we can name the winners—the people of Iraq—for enthusiastically embracing democracy; the nations of the Middle East, that can now look to Iraq as a model; and the people of every country, who now live in a world more favored toward freedom.

Some cynics have missed the point of this election. For instance, some say the vote is illegitimate if not enough Sunnis chose to participate. But by all reports, the Shiite majority will not let this stop Sunnis from having a voice. There will be a place for all religions and ethnicities in the government. Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, himself a Shiite, has said:

Let us work together toward a bright future—Sunnis, Shiites, Muslims and Christians, Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen.

I also heard a news reporter ask yesterday whether the election results

were good for President Bush. In case this reporter missed it, President Bush was not on the ballot. Yesterday's historic achievement was not about which party can collect political points. It was about the march of freedom.

There is still a lot of hard work ahead before Iraq becomes a stable democracy. America must stay committed. The Iraqis are counting on us to help them in their quest for freedom, and we cannot, and we will not, let them down. We must do what it takes for our security's sake, so that Iraq never again becomes a cauldron of terrorism.

Many Americans and Iraqis risked everything to help realize the first free vote in Iraq since 1953. Some gave their lives. We should offer our thanks and our prayers to those who valiantly sacrificed. We can honor their deeds by completing our task in Iraq.

Amidst the joy and celebrations yesterday, one Iraqi woman actually gave birth at her polling station. She gave birth at her polling station. Despite her pregnancy, she was determined that nothing would stop her from casting her ballot. She named the child after the word "election" in her native language.

Mindful of the hard work still ahead, I hope and believe this baby will grow up never knowing tyranny and oppression, never living under totalitarian fear, never seeing a family member spirited away to be murdered.

I hope and believe this child will grow up in a free society, with the power to make his own destiny. Let's finish the job and ensure that is so.

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

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

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 7, the nomination of Samuel Bodman to be Secretary of Energy, that the nomination be confirmed, that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and that the Senate then resume legislative session. Finally, I ask that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Samuel W. Bodman, of Massachusetts, to be Secretary of Energy.