The people are about to lose their livelihoods. We have done everything we have been asked to do to reduce the cost of this bill, and now we are told: Sorry, there is no help. We won't even consider it. We won't even allow a vote to occur because we know what would happen if there was a vote. It would be overwhelmingly passed, as it has been in the past when it was far more expensive than the bill we come with today.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. ROBERTS. I ask unanimous consent that I be added as a cosponsor to this legislation.

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

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, the reason we know it would pass, I would say to the gentleman, and I thank him for introducing this—and I am a little out of breath because I didn't realize we were debating this, so I ran over here. But at any rate, I thank my colleague for introducing this bill.

The reason we know it would pass is it has already passed the Senate as part of the supplemental. It is about $4 billion. Everybody understood at that particular time we had an urgent need in farm country. Everybody understood at that particular time we had a lot of problems with disasters, but as others have pointed out, if you have a hurricane, you get in the headlines. If you have a forest fire, you are getting headlines. If you have those kinds of tragedies, like a flood or even a mudslide in a State where people build houses perhaps where they shouldn't build them—obviously it attracts attention

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be granted an additional 5 minutes. I know there are other Members waiting, but I would like to at least proceed with the Senator, my friend, for another 5 minutes, if that would be all right.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that—I was to be the next speaker for 15 minutes, so I ask that I be granted 20 minutes on my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROBERTS. I wish to thank Senator GREGG for his generosity in regard to allowing me, with the gentleman yielding to me, to make some additional comments.

I was saying that all of these tragedies end up in the headlines. We know, and all of us who are privileged to represent rural areas, especially the Plains, that we have had a drought not 1, not 2, but in some cases 5 or 7 years in a row, and we know we don't have any subsoil moisture. We also know energy prices have gone up 113 percent since 2002. It isn't exactly that we were rolling in clover to begin with, but now there is no clover that will come up.

We also know, although people may not want to talk about it right now, that the current farm bill doesn't work in this circumstance. I voted against the current farm bill. It is not my intent to come down here and discuss the farm bill, however, there are some very real problems. First, it is the countercyclical program. It means when a farmer doesn't have a crop, he gets no payment. It also means he has no real crop insurance because the average production history on his crop insurance has gone down. So no crop insurance, no payment. High and dry. This is the only way we are going to provide assistance to farmers.

Now, I regret it is the 11th hour and 59th minute. I fully expect an objection. I hope that would not take place. But at any rate, we are building a case that if we have to come back here during what is called a lameduck session, something can be done. I credit the Senator for his leadership in this regard.

A drought is a drought is a drought, and it doesn't get much attention, but the people affected suffer just as much as people who suffer from other tragedies. I again credit the Senator for bringing this up. I am a cosponsor. Whatever we get done, I look forward to working with him. We have done it in the past. We did it with the supplemental. It was taken out in the House, by the way. We need this relief, and we need it now.

As I said before, I will vote for the bill, and I will speak for it, as I have done. And quite frankly, if this is headed for a Presidential veto, I will vote to override it.

I thank the Senator.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank very much the Senator from Kansas, the former chairman of the House Agriculture Committee and a real leader on the Senate Agriculture Committee and my friend. I would advise him that an objection has already been raised, so we are going to be denied even a chance to vote. I regret that and I regret that deeply because I know what it means, after having been all across my State and having farmers tell me—some farmers who have been in the business for more than 30 years who have told me this will be their last year; to have had the bankers of my State come to Washington to tell me that if there is a failure to provide disaster assistance, 5 to 10 percent of the farm and ranch families of my State will be put out of business. That is the harsh reality. And this afternoon, an objection has been raised and raised in a way that will preclude us from even having a vote. I think we all know what would happen if a vote were held: this legislation would pass, and it would pass overwhelmingly.

We should advise our colleagues this will not be our last attempt. If there is a lameduck session, we will be here and we will insist on the chance to have consideration for this legislation.

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

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 minute 20 seconds remaining.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me just follow up on the point that this would be a bipartisan vote here in the Senate today. I want to point out that the piece of legislation Senator CONRAD has worked on and that I have added as an appropriations measure twice has passed the Senate. Twice I was in conference with that. Twice it was defeated in conference. I wish to make that point because the implication was the Department of Agriculture didn't have much to do with that. The fact is the House conferees defeated this because the President threatened to veto it, and the House conferees were listening to the Department of Agriculture, which also opposed it.

Look, it seems to me we need the administration to understand what is going on here. This is bipartisan on the floor of the Senate. We need some help downtown as well from the Department of Agriculture as well as the White House to get this done.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I have been asked to ask unanimous consent that Senator CLINTON be given 15 minutes at the end of the current queue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GREGG. Yes. I have a unanimous consent request that following Senator HUTCHISON, who will follow me, the following Senators be recognized in order: Senator CLINTON for 15 minutes, Senator CHAFEE for 5 minutes, Senator KYL for 15 minutes, and Senator BYRD for up to 45 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized to speak on the bill I believe is before the Senate, the Secure Fence Act, for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized for 20 minutes.

EFFECTS OF BUSH TAX CUTS

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to speak briefly on what is an interesting point that I think needs to be made a few times because there has been a bit of discussion in this Chamber and questions in the public's mind as to how the President's tax cuts have affected the economy and affected Americans.

If we were to listen to the mainstream press from the Northeast, for example, or to the mainstream commentary and to our colleagues on the other side, you would think the President's tax cuts were basically a benefit to the wealthy in America to the detriment to those who are not so wealthy. That is the basic theme—class

warfare. That is what we hear day in and day out.

Well, the facts are in. The facts are in on the President's tax cuts, and they are very good for this country.

To begin with, let's put in context when those tax cuts occurred. At the end of the Clinton administration, we had seen the largest economic bubble in the history of America. The stock market went up dramatically, way past real values, based on basically paper, as a result of speculation around the Internet. That bubble collapsed, forcing us into a recession. That was followed by the attack of 9/11, which was not only a traumatic cultural event for us, involving a horrific loss of life, it was also a huge economic attack on the American economy. Those two things together should have thrown us into almost a depression or certainly an extraordinarily severe recession.

But what happened in the middle of this was that the President suggested cutting tax rates on all Americans. That tax cut came at just the right time because it softened the blow of those two huge economic events, those two extraordinarily recessionary events, and allowed the economy to bottom-out in a shallower and less harmful way and start to move back up dramatically. In fact, the practical effect of those tax cuts is the following because after 5 years, we know the facts, very interesting facts.

No. 1, the revenue to the Federal Government has increased dramatically as a result of the tax cuts.

No. 2, interestingly enough, high-income Americans, the highest income Americans, the top 20 percent of Americans in income are paying a higher share—a higher share of American income—of the income tax burden of America than they did under the Clinton years.

No. 3, low-income Americans, those people who are in the bottom 20 percent who don't pay any income tax to begin with, are actually getting back from the Government in the form of direct subsidy through something called the earned-income tax credit more money than they received in the Clinton years.

So you have the situation where the Federal share of revenue taken out of the economy is back to its historic level: 18.2 percent. So we have a situation where the Government is getting more revenue, where the tax laws are becoming more progressive, and where the economy recovered, creating 5.7 million jobs.

Now, how did that happen, one might ask. How can we get more tax revenues if we cut taxes? How can the high-income people in this country be paying a higher burden of the taxes if we cut taxes? The other side of the aisle rejects that concept. They say: You just have to keep raising taxes. Raise taxes, raise taxes; you always get more revenue.

Well, it doesn't work that way. Something that—if you just think for a moment, it is pretty obvious—is called human nature intervenes. If you raise taxes to a level that people perceive is unfair, and especially if they are high-income individuals, they can afford to, and they do, figure out ways to avoid paying taxes by investing in things which give them deductions. So tax revenues don't go up dramatically if you raise revenues. In fact, the way you raise revenues is by making the tax burden fair. You make it fair so that high-income individuals pay those taxes and are willing to go out and invest in activity which generates income, which is productive and actually creates jobs, which in turn generates economic activity, which in turn generates more revenue to the Federal Government.

That is exactly what has happened as a result of the President's tax cuts. We are now at a fair tax burden, so people, rather than avoiding taxes, are willing to pay taxes. People are now willing to invest in taxable activity, and the Federal Government is benefiting from a robust recovery, there is job creation, and more people are paying more taxes, and the high-income people are paying even more in taxes.

I brought along a few charts to explain this more precisely. This chart reflects the fact that in the last 2 years—these are the revenues to the Federal Government, and these are the increases in revenues—in the last 2 years—this is the period when we had the Internet bubble and we had the 9/11 attacks, when the war began. This is where the tax cuts came into place. There was a dip in revenue as a result of the recession, the Internet bubble, and the 9/11 attacks, and then those tax cuts started to work, and people started to produce more economic activity, make investments, create jobs. As a result, in the last 2 years, we have the 2 highest years of increase in revenues of the Federal Government in the history of our Government—the 2 highest years. So there has been a big jump in revenues to the Federal Government, another result of which is that our deficit has dropped precipitously. It has gone from a $450 billion estimate down to $270 billion this year.

This chart reflects the fact that we are now back, after the recessionary event—well, the blue line reflects the historical level of the percent of gross national product that is usually paid in taxes: 18.1 percent. That is the blue line here. The black line represents how much we are spending as a government. The red line represents how much we are receiving as a government. You can see it goes up and down.

What happened was, in the Internet bubble, when people were manufacturing money basically through paper, there was a huge amount of revenue generated as a result of mostly capital gains. But when that bubble collapsed and when we were hit with 9/11, the economy dropped, and the incomes dropped. Down here is where we made the tax cuts, and then the economy started to come back. So now we are back at a historical level of revenues for the Federal Government. We are actually above the historical level right now. We are getting 18.2 percent of gross national product into the Federal Government.

A very interesting fact is that the high-income individuals in America today—these are the different quadrants, the different groups, people who make $15,000, people who make about $34,000, $51,000, $77,000. And then people making over $184,000—that is the high-end income earner in America.

Those folks are now paying almost 85 percent, essentially 85 percent of the Federal income tax burden; the high-income Americans. That is a pretty progressive system when you have the low-income people, those with $34,000 or less, actually getting money back, and the high-income individuals paying the top 20 percent paying 84 percent of the tax burden. That is called progressive taxation. That is after the tax cuts.

In fact, prior to the tax cuts, during the Clinton years—this is a chart of that top 20 percent—the high-income individuals during the Clinton years were paying 81 percent of the taxes, whereas now, under the Bush tax cut, they are paying 85 percent of the taxes. Again, I point out, if you think about it, this is actually just common sense. If you have a fair tax law, people who are in the high incomes, who have the knowledge, the ability, and accountants to invest their money in a way that either pays taxes or doesn't pay taxes—if they believe the tax burden is unfair, they are going to invest in a way that avoids taxes. They are going to buy interest-free bonds or buy highly depreciating assets. So they reduce their tax burden. But if you give them a fair tax burden, they are going to do things that are taxable, and that is good for the Government and actually it makes the tax law more progressive—a very important fact.

As I mentioned, low-income individuals under this President are actually getting a better deal now than they did at any time in the history of the country. This is the line, what low-income people pay. Actually, it is a payment to them because this would be the line where they would pay something. Since this President has become President, low-income individuals are receiving more in direct payments as a result of the earned-income tax credit and other credits which they receive than they ever received before.

You can compare this to the Clinton years. Low-income people, the bottom 40 percent of earners in America, basically received about 1.5 percent back in payments to them. They weren't paying any taxes. Under President Bush's tax plan they are getting almost 3 percent back. So we have created a tax system now which seems to be doing everything right in that it is generating a historical level of Federal taxes—how much we should take out of

the economy for Federal taxes; it is generating huge revenue for the Federal Government; the highest income people in America are paying by far the greatest share of it, 85 percent, much more than they paid in the Clinton years; and low-income Americans are getting a benefit from the tax rebates which we give them at the highest level in history and about twice what they got under the Clinton years.

Probably as important, if not most important, it has generated 18 consecutive quarters of economic growth. This has led to almost 5.7 million new jobs—and having a good job is the key to economic prosperity.

What we have accomplished is pretty impressive with these tax cuts. Yet we continue to hear them be vilified by the Democratic Party and our liberal colleagues. They just want to keep raising rates. They want to go back to the Clinton years when they would raise rates and thus reduce the amount of taxes that the high-income individuals would pay because they would invest in shelters or find ways to generate income that were not as taxable. As a result, it also impacted low-income people because under the Clinton years we actually had low-income people getting less benefit. It probably significantly reduces this economic recovery which is a direct result of the fact that there is a tax burden today which creates an incentive for the person who is willing to take a risk, an entrepreneur, that person who has a great idea, that man or woman who says: I want to go start a restaurant. I have an idea I want to try out to build and sell. That individual who is a risk taker and a job creator has a tax climate which says: If you are successful, we are going to give you a benefit. That would be curtailed.

The other side of the aisle, my liberal colleagues, they want to raise the tax on capital. They want to raise the tax on dividends. They want to raise the tax on income. All of those things are going to have the practical effect of stifling economic growth, stifling revenues to the Federal Treasury, and undermining the entrepreneurial spirit of America and the effective use of capital, which is a bit of an economic argument, but it should be pointed out.

When you maintain a low tax burden on capital—capital being savings and things people are willing to invest with, money people are willing to invest—that money flows to its most efficient use. But if you put a high tax on capital and savings, people put it in places where it is not efficiently used. They put it into tax shelters to put it in hard example terms. If you are an entrepreneur and you are going to go out and start something and you have a 15-percent tax rate on capital, you are going to take a risk. You are maybe going to invest in building that new software or that new computer technology system or starting that new restaurant with that money. You are going to invest. But if you have a 30-percent tax—which is what the Democratic Party and our liberal colleagues want to return to, on capital—you are going to say to yourself: I don't want to pay that much in taxes, so I am going to invest in a tax shelter. I am going to invest in something that probably doesn't make a whole lot of money, but at least it saves me taxes.

It is not an efficient way to use money, and it is not an efficient way for an economy to run and it skews investment arbitrarily, which is totally inappropriate and counterproductive and would certainly not lead to these types of numbers where you have economic growth for 18 quarters, where you have 5.7 million jobs created.

We have the Federal Treasury with the two largest tax revenue years, two largest years of revenue in the last 2 years, where you have the highest income people in this country paying the largest share of Federal taxes in the history of the country, 85 percent; where you have the lowest income people paying no taxes and actually getting more back as a result of credits and benefits under the tax law than at any time in history. And where you have an incentive, most important, for the entrepreneur, who is the essence of America's economic strength, to go out and take risks, invest, and create jobs.

The numbers are in. This hyperbole we hear from the other side of the aisle—which is a function of 1950s-Galbraith-Harvard University economics which says, if you just keep raising taxes on people you are going to get more revenue—a stake was put in that by John Kennedy when he cut taxes. Another stake was put in that concept by Ronald Reagan when he cut taxes and got economic growth. And certainly the final stake has been put in it by the fact that we have cut taxes, we have a fair tax system now which incentivizes people to go out and be productive and causes them to be willing to invest in things that generate revenue, thus creating jobs. So that idea doesn't work.

It only makes sense probably if you are a former theater critic who happens to be an editorial writer for the New York Times. There is no economic theory that can stand up any longer because it doesn't work. The tax burdens, as are shown by the numbers in this country, are pretty close to where they should be because we are generating huge growth, huge revenues, and we have an extraordinarily progressive system of taxation where the highest earners pay the most.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from North Dakota is recognized for 20 minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I didn't come to the floor to speak about our economic situation, but I get so inspired by my colleague from New Hampshire that it is hard not to respond to at least a portion of it. Let me just make a comment about where we are with this economy of ours because the implication in the presentation was, boy, these tax cuts for wealthy Americans really did help this country.

In 2004 the economy grew at 4.2 percent. Yet the median family income in this country fell and poverty increased. This is the first sustained period of economic growth since World War II that fails to provide real income growth for the average working family in this country. The fact is, wages and salaries are now at a lower percent of the GDP in this country than they have been since they started keeping score in 1947; some progress for working people.

I admit, the folks at the top of the ladder are doing really well because the economic program provided by the majority and by this President says ''let's provide the largest tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans because we believe it will all trickle down someday to the rest of the American people.'' But, it will not and it has not and, regrettably, we now have a dramatic increase in indebtedness. We are going to borrow close to $600 billion in the coming year in budget policy and $800 billion in trade deficits. That is a total of $1.4 trillion in a $13 trillion economy. So, that puts us over 10 percent of red ink in a single year.

This is working real well? I'm sorry, that doesn't even pass remedial economics. That is not why I came to the floor to speak, but it is hard to ignore cheerleading for an economic policy that has put this country up to its neck in debt, hurt working families, and enriched the most wealthy Americans.

I came to the floor today and asked for some time because I wanted to talk about what I have been seeing in the newspapers and what I read this morning in the newspaper. The President, yesterday, went on another political trip, and the President, in Alabama, said that the party of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Democrats, are the cut-and-run party. That follows Congressman HASTERT, the Speaker of the House, suggesting Democrats are coddling terrorists. That follows comments by the majority leader of the House, Congressman BOEHNER, suggesting that Democrats care more about terrorists than the American people.

This stuff is way beyond the pale. Cut and run, the President says? Cut and run? What kind of talk is this? I don't understand that. Is someone in this Chamber suggesting that we cut and run someplace? Not that I am aware of. Not one person I know of is suggesting we cut and run.

But it would be worth us talking about whether our fight against terrorism is a fight that is tough and smart because I don't believe the current fight is very tough or very smart.

You know, it is probably useful for us to review some history. So, let me do a bit of that, since the President is suggesting that his party is the party that

is muscular and the other party is weak.

Winston Churchill once said: The farther back you look, the farther forward you see.

Let's look back, August 6 in 2001. On August 6, 2001, the President received what is called a Presidential Daily Briefing which said that ''Osama bin Laden was determined to strike in the United States.'' That was the heading of the briefing received by the President: ''bin Laden determined to strike in U.S.''

Here is what the 9/11 Commission report said, and I will give you the page numbers. After that briefing to the President on August 6 of 2001, ''bin Laden Determined to Strike in the U.S.,'' here is what the 9/11 Commission said they found, on page 260: The President, ''did not recall discussing the August 6 report with the Attorney General, nor did he recall whether his National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, had done so.''

On page 261, the 9/11 Commission found that the President's National Security Council never met to discuss the possible threat of a strike in the United States as a result of the PDB that said ''bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S.'' Imagine that, the President was told, on August 6, 2001, that ''bin Laden determined to strike in the United States'' and nothing was done.

In fact, the 9/11 Commission found, on page 262, no indication of any further discussion before September 11 among the President and his top advisers regarding the threat of an al-Qaida strike in the United States.

The Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, page 262, did not recall any discussions with the President of the domestic threat in the weeks prior to 9/11.

Finally, it says this, page 265 of the 9/11 Commission report:

> In sum, the domestic agencies never mobilized in response to the threat. They did not have direction, and did not have a plan to institute. The borders were not hardened. Transportation systems were not fortified. Electronic surveillance was not targeted against a domestic threat. State and local law enforcement were not marshaled to implement the FBI's effort. The public was not warned.

Those are the facts of what was and was not done by the President and his advisors after they were warned on August 6, 2001 that ''bin Laden was determined to strike in the United States.'' Those are not my facts, but the facts on the record from a bipartisan commission that investigated following the specific warning of August 6.

Now the President is saying, ''Cut and run.'' Let me describe a bit more history. The President and his advisers also said there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We now know they were not. There were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

He said the aluminum tubes were being purchased to reconstitute nuclear capability in Iraq. We now know those who told us those were facts knew that there were other facts at hand inside the administration that disagreed with their conclusion, but they never saw fit to offer that to the Congress or the American people.

Mobile chemical weapons labs, we were told, were a significant threat. The development of mobile chemical weapons labs in Iraq, we now know, came from a fellow code-named ''Curve Ball.'' He was the only source. One source. A man named ''Curve Ball,'' apparently someone who is probably an alcoholic and a fabricator. A single source tells this country there are mobile chemical weapons labs in Iraq, and this country, through the Secretary of State, tells the world that it's a fact. Yet, it turns out to be a fabrication. One source, a drinker and a fabricator, told someone about it and it becomes part of this country's national dialog.

Yellowcake. I don't need to go much further about yellowcake from Niger which turns out not to have been true either, with forged documents, mind you.

And Mohammed Atta, one of the hijackers, in Prague, turns out not to have been true.

As a result of all of that, the war on terrorism took a detour and we went to Iraq. We are now in Iraq. Saddam Hussein was found in a rat hole. He is now on trial. Is that good? Sure, it is good. He was a repressive, brutal dictator who murdered people. Sure, that is good that he's out of power.

We are now in the middle of a civil war. Yes, we can describe it that way, probably a low-grade civil war, but a civil war in Iraq. That is where we have American troops stationed at present. And the President just says, stay the course. If anyone suggests, maybe we ought to have a discussion about being smarter and tougher in winning that war, the President says you believe in cutting and running. Being at war deserves thoughtful debate, thoughtful debate about how to win that war, about the detour from the war on terror. Just saying cutting and running, that is thoughtless debate, in my judgment.

Stay the course? Stay the course? How? Where? When? For what? The fact is, it is a mess. We have ourselves in a mess. We cannot pull American troops out of Iraq. None of my colleagues, I believe, have suggested we should. None that I am aware of have suggested we should.

But stay the course? Shouldn't we be smarter, tougher, more effective, and make course corrections when necessary? Course corrections that will give this country a chance to succeed rather than fail? We have debates about wiretapping in the context of all of this because the President has decided he is going to speak about Iraq in the same context as the war on terrorism. Of course, they are different. They are related somewhat now because we went to Iraq, but they were different. So the President talks about wiretapping. I am for wiretapping conversations between al-Qaida and the United States.

I say, wiretap, eavesdrop, find out what terrorists are saying. But no President, no Republican and no Democratic President, ought to have the right to indiscriminate eavesdrop and wiretap on all Americans.

We do not even know what this has been about. We do not know how extensive it has been. We don't know how many Americans have been listened to, how many records have been looked at. Yes, let's wiretap and find out what al-Qaida operatives are saying in telephone calls. Let's also protect the basic liberties of this country as we do so.

Last week, we had three people testify before a policy committee hearing, with a combined service to this country of over 100 years. They were all combat veterans from Iraq. They led our troops. Two generals, two-two star generals and a colonel. One of the two star generals was offered a promotion to a third star and had a bright promising future, but he turned it down and resigned. He did that because he could no longer serve under the Secretary of Defense and follow a flawed strategy and policy.

Here is just one example of what they said. They repeatedly asked for more troops in Iraq. As commanders of their units they repeatedly asked for more troops and repeatedly were turned down.

That is at odds with what we, all of America, were told all along the way by GEN. Tommy Franks and General Myers. That is also at odds with what General Pace has stated standing next to Secretary Rumsfeld and standing next to President Bush. These Iraq combat veterans said we repeatedly asked for more troops. We needed more troops to finish the job and do the job, to prevent the growth of the insurgents in Iraq, and we were repeatedly denied. That is at odds with everything the American people have been told.

That's not all. Body armor? A young man told me he signed up to go to Iraq, felt it was his duty after 9/11, quit school to do it, and when he gets there his mother, an elementary schoolteacher, had to go online on the Internet to purchase body armor to send to her son in Iraq.

Colonel Hammas said, we know we have better armored vehicles to protect our soldiers than the up-armored Humvees. We know we have better armored vehicles. We have already produced 1,000 of them. Why are we not mass producing those vehicles? At the end of World War II we were producing 50,000 airplanes a year to support that war. This country mobilized and said, we are in a war, we are going to win it, we are going to produce what is necessary to support our troops, to protect our troops. Right now, we have better armored vehicles, but we are not producing them. We have not marshalled this country to fight this war, to protect our troops, to win. We have not mobilized this country.

Don't believe me, talk to the generals who have been there, who now are risking their reputations by being willing to speak out now on behalf of the troops who can't speak, who can't tell us these facts.

There is an old saying, ''A lie travels halfway around the world before the truth gets its shoes on.'' But finally the truth is getting fully dressed. We need the truth and the facts to understand what this country confronts. This country has great capabilities. We should be one nation indivisible. We are not these days. There is too much shouting. There are too many slogans like cut and run.

We should be one nation as we confront this terrorism that threatens our country. We should be one nation as we search for ways to deal with the conflict in Iraq and to protect American soldiers who are there on behalf of their country.

Most importantly, we need to be tough and smart as we take on these challenges. This is a new war, a different war, the war against terrorism and the circumstances that our troops find themselves in, in Iraq, fighting a war against an insurgency that doesn't wear uniforms. This requires us to be smart and tough, requires us to change tactics and strategy when necessary and to have a national discussion about how we succeed as a country.

Yet this President will hear none of it. He will not hear and he will not listen. He is content to go to Alabama and say that those who openly question anything he does are people who suggest we should cut and run. I regret that.

What we need to do, it seems to me, is to accept advice from some of the best minds in this country. Bring people together, Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, academics and others, bring them together and let's get the best of what everyone has to offer instead of the worst of each.

Let's bring people together in this country. Let's stop this nonsense, one side is coddling terrorists, one side wants to cut and run. That is a playbook we have heard before. It is tired. It is limp. It makes no sense. It divides this country.

I ask the President, the Speaker of the House, the majority leader of the House and others, stop this sort of thing. Let's join together and work together to find ways to solve problems; to, as I said, be smart and tough in ways to defeat terrorists, take on these terrorists as one nation.

If I sound upset by what I read in the paper today, I am. I don't think it is worthy of the kind of debate we ought to experience in this country.

We have seen it twice leading up to the last two elections. We saw the fellow who lay on a battlefield losing one arm and two legs bleeding for his country. We saw him tarnished in television commercials. Political commercials equated him with Osama bin Laden, questioning his courage and commitment to his country. It made a lot of people sick to see that sort of thing.

Maybe we can have a national debate that elevates the discussion of this country a bit. Maybe we can have a national debate that sets a little higher tone. I hope so. We can agree that this country is in a tough fight, one we need to win. We will not win this fight if we have these kind of political tactics continued again, one more time, the next 30 days before the election, the third election in a row questioning someone's patriotism, questioning someone's commitment to their country.

They did that even with the generals. The general, the two-star general who refused a third star and resigned instead, who commanded the first infantry division in Iraq, had his commitment to his country questioned. Why? Because he had the temerity to speak out, to say, ''I was there. I was leading my troops, I was asking for more troops and I was turned down.'' People need to know that.

We shouldn't be questioning the motives or patriotism of people who have committed themselves to their country, who have dedicated their lives to their country, our country.

Let's elevate this debate. Let's come together. Let's act as one America. And let's fight these terrorist groups. Let's succeed and prevail, together.

Yes, let's find a way to accomplish our objectives in Iraq. Let's do that. If it takes more troops, let's do that. If it takes a different strategy, if it takes changing the course, let's do that.

But let's do it together. Let's not get on Air Force One and go to a State six or eight States away and suggest that your political adversaries want to cut and run. That hardly serves thoughtful debate in this country. This country deserves better. Democrats and Republicans need to come together and speak out and speak up for the interests of this country.

But, to do that, we have to listen to each other. We have to listen to people like the generals. We have to listen to people who might disagree with us. We can't be stubborn. That's the only way, together, we will win against the terrorists.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized, under the previous order, for 15 minutes.

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. President.

RYAN WHITE CARE ACT

Mrs. CLINTON. In 1990, Congress enacted a law that has been a vital part of our national strategy to fight AIDS and HIV, the Ryan White CARE Act, which directs support and resources to the people and places most in need throughout our Nation.

It was an incredible act of compassion, smart decisionmaking, and bipartisanship. Members in this Chamber put aside politics, recognized the seriousness of the crisis, and took action.

How far we have come. Unfortunately, though, the recent debate around the Ryan White CARE Act has been marred by misconceptions and mired in politics. It is time to set the record straight.

First, some of my colleagues have alleged that New York receives more funding per case than the national average, suggesting that New York is somehow getting more than its fair share. But the numbers I heard being used on the Senate floor yesterday only represented part of the funding under the Ryan White CARE Act, skewing the data to make a political point.

When you look at the whole picture and see the funding under the whole bill, the story is very different.

According to an analysis prepared by the Communities Advocating for Emergency AIDS Relief Coalition, the CAEAR Coalition—as seen on this chart—the national per case allocation for people with AIDS is $4,745.

Here is the State-by-State breakdown. New York is by no means at the top. This analysis does not even account for the higher cost of living and treatment in my State.

Some of my colleagues have cried foul saying they get far less per person with AIDS than New York. I heard my friends and colleagues from Wyoming and Alabama making that point. But here are the facts, and they say otherwise.

When you look at all of the titles under the Ryan White CARE Act, Wyoming and Alabama actually receive more per person with AIDS than New York and more than the national average. The difference between Oklahoma and New York is about $100 per person living with AIDS. And, again, these numbers do not account for differences in costs.

Second, there are those making misleading statements about my State, that we misuse funding, or do not use the funding we receive, claims that are simply not true. Some have even asserted that New York has allowed dog walking to count under the CARE Act.

Well, let me set the record straight. New York is not using Federal dollars for such services. And to point fingers and make such outlandish assertions impugns my State and is profoundly unfair to the thousands of New Yorkers who rely each and every day on the CARE Act for treatment and needed services.

New York has been audited by the HHS—the Health and Human Services—inspector general. They said New York complies with all requirements and is not misspending or mismanaging its funds.

Another specious claim is that New York is somehow not even using the funds we receive, that we retain surpluses every year. Well, being fiscally responsible is good management.