

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, Madam President, I have nothing but the highest regard and respect for those who are involved in the conflict and fighting for the United States. I regret sometimes that we have not provided them with the military equipment that we should have. But I have the highest regard and respect for the Armed Forces of the United States, and I have supported, and will continue to support, to make sure they have the equipment they need to carry on their mission. They are all heroes.

The question is the policy. At some time, I will respond, whenever—Madam President, what is the time allocation now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia has 3 minutes, the Senator from Massachusetts has 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Fine. Well, that will be the answer. When the Senator is finished, I will be glad to respond generally to his theme.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I am perfectly willing to, at this point in time, conclude this colloquy. I certainly feel I have had adequate opportunity to make my point. So unless the Senator so desires, we will proceed on with the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, I will make a brief comment in response to the general statement that the Senator made and use my own time. And then the Senator can use whatever time.

Madam President, we were attacked on 9/11. We were attacked by Osama bin Laden. Where is Osama bin Laden today? Since 9/11 we have not captured him. The focus and attention was in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, this administration took us to war in Iraq. At that time, we had al-Qaida effectively by the throat and instead we lost that opportunity and now have ourselves bogged down in Iraq. That happens to be the fact. We have not enhanced the war against terror by being in Iraq. I think we made Iraq a training ground for terrorists.

So I differ with my friend and colleague. I think the job should have been finished in Afghanistan. That is where Osama bin Laden has been. But the idea that the President of the United States—as I illustrated in 15 minutes of direct quotes; and I will not repeat them—brought the United States to war on the basis of the dangers that Saddam Hussein had a nuclear weapon and there was a tie between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaida is basically wrong. That is not the Senator from Massachusetts saying that. That is the 9/11 Commission saying that.

Now, what is so wrong about trying to get the facts on this? The reason to get the facts and the reason it is so important—with the Rockefeller effort and the efforts by my friends, the Sen-

ators from Michigan and California, to get the facts—is because we do not want to repeat that. We have a dangerous situation in Iran. We have a dangerous situation in North Korea. We do not want to duplicate the mistakes that this country took with its leaders. We do not want to duplicate that. That is why this report is so important.

Madam President, I stand by my statement that I think that the war in Iraq was a grave mistake, that the American people were misled, and that there is ultimately not going to be a military solution. There is the quagmire: a military solution to solve the problem in Vietnam, a military solution to try and solve the problem in Iraq. It is not going to work.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I will simply state to my colleague and fellow member of the Senate Armed Services Committee that it is well recognized that certain intelligence that was used by not only our President but the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the President of France—we could go on and on—was universally accepted at that point in time. History has shown that a good deal of that intelligence turned out to be inaccurate.

But there were many reasons for going to war in Iraq, not the least of which our forces were trying to enforce the United Nations resolution prohibiting Iraq from taking certain actions to the north and to the south.

They were actually firing on our aircraft that were trying to patrol and enforce U.N. resolutions. Saddam Hussein ignored consecutive resolutions of the United Nations. That whole structure was before the world, and he was flaunting it.

Most recently, I note that the United Nations Security Council has extended the basis on which operations are now being conducted by the coalition of forces in Iraq today.

With regard to the administration, I commend the administration for putting out, for example, this report called “The Special Inspector General for Iraq and Reconstruction.” It is very truthful with the American people and, indeed, the world on the successes and the lack of success in certain areas. This administration is being accountable for its participation as one of the several nations in the coalition in putting the facts down. But when the Senator says it is all for naught, I say to myself, Iraq is in a struggle to establish its own government. We have just seen the referendum on the constitution. They have adopted the constitution. The constitution is subject to further rework as the next government stands up in the aftermath of the December 15 elections—free elections, free elections that have not taken place in Iraq in several decades. Much has been accomplished to try to stabilize that nation to enable it to select, by the freedom to vote, its own govern-

ment and the degree to which it wishes to join the rest of the nations in exploring the challenges of democracy, particularly in that area of the world.

I salute the men and women of the Armed Forces who have made this possible. Yes, we always hope that diplomacy can solve the disputes between nations. Diplomacy can be no stronger than the will to back it up and enforce the decisions of the diplomats. That has been done bravely by the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States and other coalition forces.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, the definition of a quagmire is a complex or precarious position where disengagement is difficult. That says it, in regard to Iraq. This body understood the reason we went to war with Iraq was because this administration represented that Saddam Hussein had a nuclear weapon or was on the brink of getting nuclear weapons and, secondly, had ties with al-Qaida. Others may draw from another part of history, but I stand by that. Both of those facts are not so. It is important that we understand how we came about using those facts, which we see are not so, to make sure we are not going to make those mistakes in the future.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, parliamentary inquiry as to the status of the Senate at this time.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1042, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1042) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Dorgan amendment No. 2476, to establish a special committee of the Senate to investigate the awarding and carrying out of contracts to conduct activities in Afghanistan and Iraq and to fight the war on terrorism.

Lautenberg amendment No. 2478, to prohibit individuals who knowingly engage in certain violations relating to the handling of classified information from holding a security clearance.

Talent amendment No. 2477, to modify the multiyear procurement authority for C-17 aircraft.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, there is a further order for two votes to