

Driving terrorist safe havens out of eastern and southern Afghanistan is crucial, but not if al-Qaida and Taliban militants continue to find sanctuary in the remote border regions of west Pakistan. The threat these transplanted terrorists pose has become even more real over the last 6 months as the world watched Taliban militants creep closer to Pakistani nuclear facilities.

We must support the Pakistan Government and its newly aggressive military action to take out the terrorists threatening their country and Afghanistan.

The horrors of nuclear-armed terrorists would be put at risk and put at risk freedom-loving people everywhere. This is not a risk we or the world can take. The stakes of turning our backs on this conflict could not be higher. America ignored the fact that Afghanistan became one giant camp for terrorists in the 1990s, and thousands of Americans died on 9/11 as a result. And thousands of our brave troops have died in defense of our Nation since then.

We face a similar threat today, 8 years after 9/11. Al-Qaida has shifted their terrorist sanctuaries from Afghanistan to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, FATA, of Pakistan. The Taliban, the same people who sheltered Osama bin Laden and defied U.S. demands to hand him over, now fight efforts by the international community to bring stability to Afghanistan.

Our U.S. withdrawal, in whole or in part, from Afghanistan now would be a tacit yet unambiguous approval for the return of Taliban control over Afghanistan. In turn, this would lead to the establishment of safe havens for many of the world's most violent and feared terrorists. American abandonment of Afghanistan now could possibly hand over the keys to a nuclear-armed kingdom to violence-loving terrorists.

I returned this past August from Denmark and Greece, two relatively small countries but steadfast allies in their resolve to support the NATO mission and stabilize Afghanistan. Declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to our allies that Americans no longer have the resolve to defeat terrorists. Declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to our allies that simply by waiting us out, violent extremists can triumph over the combined military and economic might of the international community. Finally, declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to the families of those who died on September 11 and the troops who have fought since then in the years since in service to their country that their loved ones died in vain. These are not signals our great Nation should ever send.

Instead, we must declare unequivocally our courage, resolve, and patience to provide needed resources and more troops to allow the smart power strategy of General McChrystal to succeed. This alone is the signal America should send.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

9/11 REMEMBRANCE

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, before I make some comments about our departed colleague, Senator Kennedy, I must comment on the gravity of the remembrance of this day in history several years ago.

There is not a person living who was old enough at the time on that fateful day in 2001 who does not remember exactly where they were when the tragedy occurred and this Nation was struck by terrorists, struck from within.

Our Nation had grown up in its history of always having been protected in the homeland, protected by geography, with two big oceans that kept us insulated from attack from without. Then suddenly we were shocked into the realization that we could be attacked on our own homeland. Of course, what America has done in reaction to that, in perfecting our defenses, in increasing our intelligence apparatus, so that we get the information before the terrorists can carry out their dastardly deeds.

That has been significant in the protection of this Nation and its people. Of course, we remember exactly that fateful day, every one of us. This Senator was only a few yards from this Chamber on the west front of this U.S. Capitol building in a meeting with leadership. We were aware that the Twin Towers had been struck with the first and second planes. Somehow we wanted to continue our meeting, even though our minds couldn't stay on the subject matter of the day, when someone burst in the room—I believe it is S-219—and said the Pentagon had been hit. We leapt to the window overlooking the Mall in the direction of the Pentagon and could see the black smoke rising.

It is interesting the reactions you have at a time such as that. My wife and I had, a few days before, moved into an apartment overlooking the southwest corner of the Pentagon. It is called Pentagon Row. Of course, I leapt to a telephone to try to get a message to her to get out of the apartment and get into the basement garage. Being unsuccessful to reach her, I came back into the room everyone had deserted and out into the hallway, seeing the hallway crowded with people going down the stairs and hearing the Capitol policeman at the bottom of the stairs saying: Get out of the building, run, run, get out of the building. Of course, the report had come in that the fourth airplane was inbound for Washington.

It was a day that brought Senator ROCKEFELLER and me together, as he beckoned to me to get into his car and, as we drove away from the Capitol complex, scrambling with our cell phones, trying to get office staff to tell them to get out of the buildings and

get to a location where they could inform us away from the Capitol complex. Senator ROCKEFELLER and I wound through streets in Washington until we got to a location where we could wait to try to get additional information. Since then, of course, our Capitol police force and the Department of Homeland Security have come through with procedures and instructions that are much more definitive than we had on that day.

I will never forget on that day when Senator ROCKEFELLER and I decided we needed to move away from the location we were—we wanted to get to a place we could get news; we went to his home—hearing not a sound in the sky since all air traffic had been ceased on order of the Secretary of Transportation, but then hearing that silent sky being pierced by the sound of F-15s overflying the Capitol. It was a day that we not only can remember but that we can take great lessons and instruction from to prepare not to let it happen again, one we remember today and those people who sacrificed, those people who were the victims.

REMEMBERING SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, it is equally a solemn subject on which I rise to remember our friend and colleague Ted Kennedy who died at the young age of 77. I say "young age" because it was another one of our colleagues, Senator John Glenn, who flew on a 10-day spaceflight at age 77. Today, 11 years later, he still looks as young as he looked back then. So 77 is way too young an age for cancer to take our friend Ted Kennedy.

From the funeral and the remembrances, we know that he was the youngest of nine children. He had four brothers. He was born in 1932 and elected to the Senate in 1962. He spent 46 years in the Senate, longer than all but two of our colleagues. He loved this institution, and he loved his fellow Senators. Of course, so many pieces of major legislation affecting the well-being of the American people if they don't have his name on it, certainly bear his fingerprints. Many of those pieces of legislation reflect the work of his pen.

He fought tirelessly for the sick, the poor, the disabled, the children, the old. He was the driving force behind efforts to guarantee rights to the disabled, to provide family and medical leave, and to ensure a fair minimum wage. He also remembered individuals, both his colleagues, his staff, and his constituents. He was the first person to call during hard times. Why do you think that yesterday, our most esteemed colleague, Senator BYRD, in his bent-over, physically disabled condition now, was wheeled to this floor in his wheelchair, and his voice rose to the occasion in memorializing his friend. I remember Senator BYRD telling me how thoughtful Senator Kennedy was on a major birthday in his