

of creativity and learning which those who are blessed to have such teachers have experienced. Yet we don't have that commitment.

The President has said: Invest in teachers. Make sure they have a chance to have their skills improved. Hold them accountable for what they do in a classroom. But make sure to bring these young men and women into the teaching profession.

We can turn on the television almost any night and see the exposés about education in America where, unfortunately, some people are in classrooms and they shouldn't be there. The vast majority of teachers are good, hard-working men and women. We can help them improve their skills and keep those who are not good out of the classroom with a commitment in Washington that we just haven't seen during the course of this year.

The last point I will make is on after-school programs. I have been mystified by the fact we are still caught up in a mindset that is, frankly, old fashioned, a mindset that says children start school at the age of 6 and school lets out at 2:30 or 3:00 in the afternoon and we take 3 months off in the summer. This might have made sense at some point in time. It doesn't make sense in today's America. Six years of age is a good age to put a child in a classroom, but 5 is better; 4 may even be better. There might even be learning experiences for those younger who are now in a day-care setting.

Ask any teacher, if they could add a year in education, where would they add it. It isn't at the end of 12th grade but at the beginning, kindergarten or before. The teachers say: Give me a chance to mold that child before they come into the classroom, and I will show you a better person and a better student.

Yet our commitment to preschool programs, our commitment to programs for the earliest ages, just isn't there. We ignore it. We act as if it isn't a reality. We know it is. A younger child in a learning situation is a child more likely to be a good student.

Classrooms adjourning each day at 2:30 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon made sense when Ozzie and Harriet were at home with milk and cookies waiting for the kids, but not in today's America. More parents are working; kids are going home to empty houses and getting in trouble after school.

One might ask, Why doesn't the schoolday reflect the family day where parents might get home at 5:30, 6 o'clock, or after? Some schools adjust to that. Some schools provide that. Some schools need help. We have yet to come up with any suggestion here on Capitol Hill about afterschool programs responsive to the needs of today's working families. I suppose taking summer vacations off was an idea that made sense in my home State of

Illinois. After all, the kids did have to go work on the farm. But out of a State of 12 million people, we only have 75,000 farm families. Those children should be in another learning experience, another supervised experience so they are better students. If they are falling behind in reading and math, let them have remedial work during the summer. If they are good students, give them enrichment courses, teach them a musical instrument, or something new about science. Introduce them to computers. All the options and possibilities are there. Yet when you bring that up on Capitol Hill, you would think you were speaking a foreign language. People just cannot quite understand what we have to do with it.

I think we have a lot to do with it. That this Congress has been so derelict when it comes to the issue of education is a suggestion to me that we just don't get it. We are not listening to American families who identify education as their highest priority. We certainly are not reading history, which tells us education made the 20th century the American century because of our commitment to education.

Make no mistake about it; other countries around the world, in Europe, in parts of Asia, are starting to move forward. These are tomorrow's competitors. These are the people with whom our children will have to be ready to do business and with whom they will have to compete. If we are not prepared, they will pass us by. I don't want to see that happen to my children. I don't want to see that happen to this country.

The honest question we have to ask ourselves is, Does Congress get that message? If you look at the budget debate, it is pretty clear to me we have missed the point completely. We are now entangled in this terrible budget debate with the President. Thank goodness the Republican Party has abandoned this \$750 billion or \$800 billion tax cut for wealthy people. They took that out in August. They were going to go home with it and explain to the American people why this was the real important thing to do for America's future. It fell on its face. It had about as much popularity as the new Coca-Cola. They came back and said: We have given up on that idea. Maybe we will do it next year.

I hope they have walked away from it. But in abandoning that bad idea, why don't they pick up on a good idea like education? Why don't they join us in making certain the education funding bill is one that really is a source of pride rather than a source of embarrassment. At this point, unfortunately, we have seen that bill delayed. There have been absolutely no hearings on it and absolutely no effort being made, no initiative being shown, when it comes to improving education for the next generation.

I think the American people rightly give us that responsibility and ask us to meet it. It is a responsibility that should be shared on a bipartisan basis. The things I have suggested are not radical Democratic ideas. The things I have suggested I think would appeal to families of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—all families who care about the future of their children.

I yield the floor hoping the debate soon will turn to these issues such as education, issues which most American families consider to be one of our highest priorities.

#### DEPLORING THE ACTIONS OF PRESIDENT CLINTON REGARDING GRANTING CLEMENCY TO FALN TERRORISTS—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Will the Chair advise the Senator the order of business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is S.J. Res. 33.

Mr. COVERDELL. This is the resolution by Mr. LOTT, myself, and Mr. BROWNBACK, deploring the actions of the President of the United States regarding the granting of clemency to terrorists called FALN?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is supposed to be the order, yes.

Mr. COVERDELL. I thought it was interesting to make note of the business before the Senate at this moment. With that in mind, I yield up to 5 minutes of our time to the Senator from Kansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I would like to talk about the business that is before the Senate because I think this is critically important. There were a number of allegations made in the last speech that I think deserve to be refuted, but what is presently before us, what has taken place, is something that needs to be addressed before the American public.

I rise in support of the resolution condemning the President's actions in granting clemency to 16 terrorists. I want to be clear what I am talking about: 16 terrorists who were members of the Armed Forces of National Liberation, FALN. The President's condition for releasing these men was that they would be willing to say they would not use violence anymore. This is a standard that I think would easily be met by almost everyone in prison in America today. The condition is a sham. The FBI, the Justice Department, and the Bureau of Prisons all recommended strongly that these terrorists not be released. Yet the President went ahead and released these terrorists.

The sad part about this is this administration claims to understand that terrorism is one of the greatest threats

facing America. And it is. We see that threat towards the United States being posed and acted upon in many places around the world. It is only because of our own abilities that we have been able to stop some of this. Yet some of it has still gotten through.

This act of the administration of releasing these terrorists will have the effect of encouraging terrorism. They are repeatedly telling us they are bringing terrorists to justice and that is a high priority. How is this act of releasing terrorists compatible with fighting terrorism? By his actions, the President is sending a message that, in fact, he does not take terrorism seriously, that it is OK to kill and maim American people. After all, the President may pardon you even when there is no petition of clemency before him.

This encourages terrorism. We should be very clear about that. At a time when terrorism is a great threat to our peace and prosperity, at a time when terrorism has touched everywhere in this Nation, at a time when Americans face terrorist threats all around the world, the last thing we should do is grant clemency to convicted terrorists. I believe Congress should be standing up to tell the President, as well as the Nation, that we strongly condemn pardoning terrorists who have killed and shown no remorse whatsoever. Whatever the reason the President took this action, it is clear the pardon was not based on the merits, and by carrying through with this he severely damaged our leadership in the world fight against terrorism.

The FALN carried out more violence than any other terrorist group in the United States. They pose a direct threat to the safety of American citizens on American soil everywhere. Yes, these convicted terrorists have spent some time in jail, but the acts these people committed were the most heinous and should not seem less so simply because of the passage of time. A fair court system found them guilty and punished them accordingly. Nothing they have done or said since then can justify their unsolicited release.

Making concessions to terrorists is wrong and it is very harmful to us as a country and as a people. In so doing, the President has made a mockery of all the administration's tough talk about terrorism and the need to combat it worldwide. This is an action that should be roundly condemned.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, how much time remains on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia has 6 minutes and 40 seconds.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, ever since the introduction of this resolution which basically put the Senate on record, if passed, we were deploring

the action of the President commuting the sentences of 16 known terrorists, in this timeframe, the White House so far has refused to allow any of its representatives in the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, its own White House, or the Bureau of Prisons to testify before any congressional hearing. It was as late as 9:30 p.m. last evening that the testifier from the Federal Bureau of Investigation called our office to decline to testify. In other words, there is a total blackout at the White House.

The vote that occurred on the House side had 71 Members of the other side of the aisle voting "I am here," refusing to make a statement. This debate in the Senate will have soon been 2 hours long. So far, on the other side there has been only one sentence discussed about this national issue of the President commuting the sentences and releasing 16 known terrorists. One sentence in the entire debate has come from the other side. Mr. President, 71 of their Members in the House simply voted they were in Washington, and the White House has refused to make any comment and refused to allow any of the administration to testify.

Mr. President, this book, "Patterns of Global Terrorism, 1998," is published by the State Department of the United States. It was published in April of this year. On the first page it says:

United States policy with regard to terrorism.

And the first statement is:

Make no concessions to terrorists and strike no deals.

These 16 terrorists have been given the concession of being released from prison, and the entire process was one of dealmaking and negotiations among the White House and representatives of the terrorists and the terrorists.

The question is the incongruity with the administration as well as our Government's policy with regard to terrorism.

The second premise is:

Bring terrorists to justice for their crimes.

We are in the midst of sending 16 of them from prison out into the population, again with no real assurance—in fact, we have already seen some signs that they would not recant terrorist activities.

The President, in a rather tortured effort to explain—that these folks were not the ones who actually dropped the bomb or fired the weapon has already been alluded to by Senator HATCH, chairman of the Judiciary Committee—what they are trying to do is set degrees. Under that theory, bin Laden, responsible for planting the bombs in Kenya and Tanzania, would somehow be in a more favorable position. To put it another way, if you are a successful terrorist, you are going to be in a lot more trouble than an unsuccessful terrorist because you were cap-

tured by the FBI before you set off the bomb.

In this very booklet published by the administration, it gives a definition of terrorism: "The term terrorism means premeditated"—we have concluded that—"politically motivated violence"—we have concluded that was the case—"perpetrated against non-combatants"—and I met the son who was 9 years old when his father was killed when he was simply having lunch in New York as a noncombatant—"by subnational groups or clandestine agents usually intended to influence an audience."

The point I am making is, all 16 whose sentences were commuted fit this definition to a T. They are terrorists. What does not match is the President's violation of the terms of how we deal with such people when it says "make no concessions" and he did, it says "and strike no deals" and he did. We can only hope and pray that law enforcement officers who were involved with this, families who were involved with this, are not now in harm's way, or the judge who sat in the adjudication of these cases and who was threatened to be assassinated by these people as he conducted the trial of the 16.

What a massive incongruity we face. We will shortly vote on this resolution. I very much hope this will be as successful as in the House so that international terrorists, law enforcement officials who put their lives on the line every day, and the victims of these terrorists will understand that the people's branch, the legislative branch of the U.S. Government, thinks these are the rules of the road when you deal with terrorists, that you do not make concessions, that you do not make deals, and that they are apprehended and, if apprehended, they are subsequently harshly dealt with and imprisoned accordingly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER is signaling me that my time is up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Time has expired.

Mr. COVERDELL. That being the case, and no Senator from the other side is here to speak on their version of the issue, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. INHOFE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator withhold his request?

Mr. COVERDELL. I withdraw my request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. INHOFE. I thank the Chair.