was involved in some criminal enterprise to deprive people of the right to vote or to manufacture or manipulate the outcome of elections. I use the word "scandal" to speak of a situation in which only one out of every two eligible Americans is casting his or her vote. And even those who do are not having their votes counted properly; that is of deep concern to me.

Patrick Henry, one of the great voices that gave birth to this Nation, once said that the right to vote is the right upon which all other rights depend. I believe he was correct more than 220 years ago, and even now, as we enter into the 21st century.

We lecture the world all the time on how to conduct free and democratic elections, yet there is a growing body of evidence that suggests we could do a much better job. Independent studies based on last year's results, especially now that the New York Times, Miami Herald, other newspapers, as well as the organizations I have already mentioned, have looked at the elections of last year and have concluded by and large that there are serious problems with the present electoral process.

I would like to address this issue at a greater length later today, but I wanted to raise the matter here before we went into recess over the next hour or two.

Finally, I would like to mention a matter that I think is of tremendous significance and importance—and I should point out to my colleagues here that the President Office of Management and Budget spent about $80 million on this issue as the Senator from Connecticut. I look forward very much, working with him as a member of the Judiciary Committee that has very specific jurisdiction over the Voting Rights Act of 1965, on how we can listen to people across this country, gather as much adequate information as we can and then propose to our colleagues some meaningful ideas, both resources and ideas, on how we can minimize the electoral problems that occurred not just last year but have been occurring over the last number of years.

THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

Mr. DODD. The second subject matter is the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This morning the New York Times as well as others reported that there were serious reservations being expressed by superintendents of schools and educators across the country about this mandate of testing in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. I certainly want to see young people tested. I think it is worthwhile to know how children are doing under the elementary and secondary educational system of the country, but I am getting concerned that we are merely taking the educational temperature of these children without really dealing with the problem that has caused the public to lose faith in our public school system

Every day the numbers indicate there is greater concern about the quality of public education. I think we can do a better job. But I do not need to tell you how testing kids every year, at what cost, is necessarily going to improve the quality of education. So while I am not opposed to testing, I think we ought to think more about what we can do for those children who are failing, what we can do to work with the local communities and States to improve the quality of teachers, the quality of classrooms, the quality of educational materials, wiring schools to take advantage of the explosion in technology and information that is available.

I always find it somewhat mortifying when the Federal Government lectures the country about the quality of education, where we lecture local school districts, States, and local boards about what they ought to be doing. The Federal Government contributes less than one-half of 1 percent of the entire Federal budget dedicated to elementary and secondary education. I find that scandalous, to use the word I used when talking about the election process. The fact that the Federal Government in its resources only contributes one-half of 1 percent of its budget to the elementary and secondary educational needs of America's children; that of every dollar that gets spent on education the Federal Government's one-half of 1 percent amounts to about 6 cents. Mr. President, 94 cents of every education dollar comes mostly from local property taxes and some from the States.

In my view, in the 21st century we ought to become an equal partner with local communities and States: one-third, one-third, one-third, that can reduce property taxes and provide more meaningful resources to communities that do not have the wealth, the support for the kinds of educational opportunities their students should have. No child in America ought to be left behind. The quality of their educational opportunity be determined solely by the wealthy. They happen to have been born. That is just wrong.

If you are born in America, you ought to have an equal opportunity for a good education. It seems to me that the Federal Government ought to do a better job of being supportive, particularly as we write bills that mandate testing, without putting the resources there to allow communities to pay for these additional burdens.

For the last 35 years we did that on special education. We mandated a law that said you had to provide for the special education needs of children. Then we never came up with the money to pay for those costs. The bill we just passed in the Senate now mandates full funding of the 40-percent requirement of the special educational needs of children within 35 years to do it. We have allowed for full funding of title I, but I would like to tell when President Bush is going to tell us what sort of resources the Federal Government is going to commit to these elementary and secondary educational needs.

The President talks about how he wants this done, but I am waiting yet
to hear from the White House. How much money is the administration willing to commit to full funding of Title I and to special education needs? They are telling us that they want to have mandatory testing. They want accountability, but they are unwilling to say whether or not they will commit the necessary resources to achieve those goals.

I hope the administration, as they urge us to get ready to pass this bill in conference, will also heed their own advice and more quickly expedite the commitments made by the President as to what resources will be provided.

It is now only a matter of a few weeks before children and their parents start to prepare to go back to school. We ought not wait much longer to get the job done.

My part of these brief remarks is to urge the administration to step up to the plate and tell us what the resources are. If they are not going to make any at all, then we ought to rethink this bill. Do not tell me the administration will mandate costs on the local community and then not have the resources to pay for it. And do not tell me that Americans will have to watch property taxes go through the ceiling because Uncle Sam tested their children every year from the third to the eighth grade without providing the resources to help communities and parents meet those greater educational goals.

Both on election reform, and on education, I hope we can get something done.

I wish the President would support election reform. I hope he will speak up and tell us what sort of resource commitments he is willing to make to support the elementary and secondary education needs of America’s children.

I appreciate the indulgence of the Chair in listening to these brief remarks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I thank the Senator from Connecticut.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 2:25 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:51 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the President [Mr. CLELAND].

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

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