power. We reject your notion that you can pack the Supreme Court with friendly judges.

Thomas Jefferson was not the last. A President whom I honor and venerate, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in the beginning of his second term came to the White House with this large popular mandate and, in frustration, said: I am sick and tired of the ideas of the New Deal being killed in that Supreme Court. Give me the power as President, Franklin Roosevelt said, and I will replace and add to the membership of that Supreme Court until we get Justices who think like I do.

He came to this Senate, this Chamber, dominated by Members of his own political party, and said: Stand with me. You voted for the New Deal, now stand with me. We are going to make sure the Supreme Court goes along. And his party said no. They said: Franklin Roosevelt, the Constitution is more important than your power as President. We will stand by the Constitution. You are wrong, Mr. President.

But look what is happening today. President Bush, not content to have 95 percent of his judicial nominees approved by this Senate, has now said: This Republican Party is going to change the rules of the Senate, change the constitutional principles that have guided us so that President Bush can have every single judicial nominee approved by the Senate, bar none.

So what will happen in a Senate dominated by the President's party? Will they rise in the tradition of Thomas Jefferson's Senate? Will they rise in the tradition of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Senate? Will they, as the President's party, stand up and say: The Constitution is more important than the power of any President? Sadly, it appears they will not. They are lapdogs as the President is demanding this power. They will come to the Senate with the so-called nuclear option. It is a good name. It is a good name because it signifies the importance and gravity of what they will do.

The first thing they have to do is break the rules of the Senate. If you want to change a Senate rule, you need 67 votes. They do not have 67 votes to give President Bush this unbridled power, so they will break the rules of the Senate with a so-called point of order to change the rules of the Senate and to say that this President, unlike any other President in history, will not have his judicial nominees subject to the rules of the Senate as we know them.

Oh, they argue, this opposition to President Bush's nominees is unprecedented. Nobody has ever used the filibuster on a judicial nominee. That is what they say. But they are wrong. It has happened 11 times. Most recently the Republicans used the filibuster against President Clinton's nominees. They have done it. They have done it because the rules allowed them to do it. And now, in the middle of the game, they want to change the rules and diminish the power of the Senate and attack the principle of checks and balances.

The reason this great democracy has survived longer than any in history is that we have this tension between the branches of Government—the power of the Presidency checked by the power of Congress checked by the power of the judiciary—and this tension among the three branches of Government has given us this democracy that has survived while others have failed. Yet the majority party, the Republican Party in the Senate, would walk away from that fundamental principle, for what? For what? So that this President can have every single judicial nominee without fail? Madam President, 95 percent is not enough? And 205 out of 215 is not enough?

I have stood with my colleagues and voted against some of these nominees. I will do it again. These are men and women far outside the mainstream of American political thought. They have been pushed to the forefront by special interest groups demanding they get lifetime appointment on a court in America to make decisions that will affect everyone—every family, every worker, the air we breathe, and the privacy we revere.

What is the agenda? We hear this agenda. It is spelled out in detail by Congressman TOM DELAY of Texas. He threatens the judiciary: We are going to dismantle them if they don't agree with me, he says. TOM DELAY is going to set the standard for judges in America? This man who was pushing through the Terry Schiavo case, defying 15 years of court decisions, defying the wishes of that poor woman's family? He was so angry when the Federal judges did not agree with him, he said: We will get even with you. That is what this is about.

So judicial nominees will come to the floor who will be approved who will follow the TOM DELAY school of thinking, who will follow something far outside the mainstream of America.

We need to have bipartisanship. We need balance. We need fairness. We need to say to a President of any political party: As powerful as you may be, you are never more powerful than our Constitution. The Constitution, which is the one commonality in the Senate, of all the things we argue about and all the things on which we disagree, we—each and every one of us—stand proudly next to that well, raise our hands, and swear to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States.

To my colleagues and friends who are following this debate, the constitutional crisis we are facing is unnecessary. If the President's own party has the courage that Thomas Jefferson's party had, that Franklin Roosevelt's party had, they would say to the President: You have gone too far. The Constitution is more important than any President. But, sadly, we are on a path to this crisis.

If it occurs—and I hope it does not—it is going to change this body. It is going to change it dramatically. The Senate is so much different from the House. The Senate is successful because each and every day you will hear said over and over, ''I ask unanimous consent.'' Unanimous consent is just as the phrase suggests—any Senator can object. But it seldom occurs because we agree to move forward together—Democrats on this side, Republicans on the other side—move forward with the people's business. But if the Republican majority pushes through this constitutional confrontation, destroys this tradition of the Senate, assaults the principle of checks and balances, then the courtesy, the comity, and the cooperation which makes this such a unique institution is in danger.

I hope that cooler minds will prevail. I am heartened by the fact that Senator JOHN MCCAIN, a leading Republican, has stood up and begged his fellow Republican colleagues: Don't do this. The Senate and its traditions and the Constitution, Senator MCCAIN says, are more important than any President or any party.

I am confident the Judiciary Committee will send this nomination of Priscilla Owen of Texas to the floor. I hope that once it reaches the calendar, cooler minds will prevail and all of us who have sworn to uphold this Constitution will honor it by our actions on the floor of the Senate.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended until 12 noon, with 45 minutes under the control of Senator SPECTER.

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

Mr. DURBIN. 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. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I thank the floor schedulers for reserving time for me this morning. I had hoped to be here at 11:15, but I have been chairing an executive business meeting of the Judiciary Committee where we voted on the nominations of Justice Owen and Justice Brown. Not unexpectedly, it went over the planned 11:15 conclusion, but I do appreciate the allocation of time. I asked for 45 minutes for a presentation, which I am about to make.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I seek recognition today to address the subject of Senators' independence and dissent. As members of political parties,

we owe loyalty to the party that helped get us elected and which enables us to join together to achieve broad policy objectives. Historically, we have found our system of Government functions best with a two-party system. But as part of that historical perspective, we have simultaneously seen loyalty to our Nation take precedence to loyalty to party. At certain junctures of American history, the fate of our system of Government has rested on the ability of Members of this body to transcend party loyalty for the national interest. I believe the Senate currently faces such a challenge between party line voting on filibusters and potential voting on the constitutional, or so-called nuclear option.

I have watched the issue on confirmation of Federal judges fester and become exacerbated as each party has racheted up the ante beginning with the last 2 years of President Reagan's administration when Democrats took control of the Senate and continuing to the present day.

In 1987, upon gaining control of the Senate and the Judiciary Committee, on which I have served since being elected in 1980, the Democrats denied hearings to seven of President Reagan's circuit court nominees and denied floor votes to two additional circuit court nominees. As a result, the confirmation rate for Reagan's circuit nominees fell from 89 percent prior to the Democratic takeover to 65 percent afterwards. While the confirmation rate decreased, the length of time it took to confirm judges increased. From the Carter administration through the first 6 years of the Reagan administration, the length of the confirmation process for both district and circuit court seats consistently hovered at approximately 50 days. For President Reagan's final Congress, after the Democrats took control, the number doubled to an average of 120 days for these nominees to be confirmed.

The pattern of delay and denial continued through 4 years of President George H.W. Bush's administration. President Bush's lower court nominees waited, on average, 100 days to be confirmed, which was about twice as long as had historically been the case. The Democrats also denied committee hearings for more nominees. President Carter had 10 nominees who did not receive hearings. For President Reagan, the number was 30. In the Bush Sr. administration, the number jumped to 58.

When we Republicans won the 1994 election and gained the Senate majority, we exacerbated the pattern of delaying and blocking nominees. Over the course of President Clinton's presidency, the average number of days for the Senate to confirm judicial nominees increased even further to 192 days for district court nominees and 262 days for circuit court nominees. Through blue slips and holds, 70 of President Clinton's nominees were blocked. When it became clear that the Republican-controlled Senate would not allow the nominations to move forward, President Clinton withdrew 12 of those nominations and chose not to renominate 16.

During that time I urged my Republican colleagues on the Judiciary Committee to confirm well-qualified Democratic nominees. For example, I broke ranks with many of my colleagues on the Republican side to speak and vote in favor of the confirmation of Marsha Berzon and Richard Paez, both to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. While many of my Republican colleagues criticized me for voting for Berzon and Paez, I thoroughly reviewed their records and determined that both were qualified for the positions to which they had been nominated. While I did not agree with Ms. Berzon and Mr. Paez on every issue, I realized the importance of working toward solutions when the Senate is at an impasse on a nomination.

After the 2002 elections with control of the Senate returning to Republicans, the Democrats resorted to the filibuster on ten circuit court nominations, which was the most extensive use of the tactic in the Nation's history. The filibusters started with Miguel Estrada, one of the most talented and competent appellate lawyers in the country. The Democrats followed with filibusters against nine other circuit court nominees. During the 108th Congress, there were 20 cloture motions on ten nominations. All 20 failed.

To this unprecedented move, President Bush responded by making for the first time in the Nation's history two recess appointments of nominees who had been successfully filibustered by the Democrats. That impasse was broken when President Bush agreed to refrain from further recess appointments.

Against this background of bitter and angry recriminations with each party serially trumping the other party to ''get even'' or, really, to dominate, the Senate now faces dual threats, one called the filibuster and the other the ''constitutional'' or ''nuclear'' option, which rival the US/USSR confrontation of mutual assured destruction. Both situations are accurately described by the acronym ''MAD'', which was used for the confrontation between our Nation and the Soviet Union.

We Republicans are threatening to employ the ''constitutional'' or ''nuclear'' option to require only a majority vote to end filibusters. The Democrats are threatening to retaliate by stopping the Senate agenda on all matters except national security and homeland defense. Each ascribes to the other the responsibility for ''blowing the place up.''

The gridlock occurs at a time when we expect a U.S. Supreme Court vacancy within the next few months. If a filibuster would leave an 8-person court, we could expect many 4-to-4 votes since the Court now often decides cases with 5-to-4 votes. A Supreme Court tie vote would render the Court dysfunctional, leaving in effect the circuit court decision with many splits among the circuits, so the rule of law would be suspended on many major issues.

On these critical issues with these cataclysmic consequences, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to study the issues and to vote their consciences independent of party dictation. I have not rendered a decision on how I would vote on the constitutional/nuclear option, but instead have been working to break the impasse by confirming or rejecting the previously filibustered nominees by up or down votes.

As Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I selected William Myers as the first of the filibustered judges to be reported out of Committee for Senate floor action. Two Democrats, Senator JOE BIDEN and Senator BEN NELSON, had voted in the 108th Congress to end the filibuster on Mr. Myers, and Senator KEN SALAZAR made a campaign promise to support an end to the Myers filibuster, although he has since equivocated on that commitment. Being only 2 or 3 votes shy of 60, 55 Republicans plus presumably two or three Democrats, I thought Myers had a realistic chance for confirmation.

With any judicial nominee, or any Senators for that matter, opponents can pick at their record. On the totality of his record, as demonstrated at two hearings and the Judiciary Committee Executive session, Myers is qualified for confirmation. Beyond the issue of his own qualifications, his conservative credentials would lend some balance to the Ninth Circuit.

The Democrats have signaled their intent not to filibuster Thomas Griffith or Judge Terrence Boyle which may help to diffuse the situation. In addition, intensive efforts are being made to clear three of President Bush's nominees for the 6th Circuit. If enough of the President's nominees can be confirmed, we may be able to deflate the controversy without a vote on the constitutional/nuclear option. That is what I am trying to do in my capacity as chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

In due course, I will have more to say about the other pending Bush nominees; but for now, I only urge my colleagues to be independent and to examine the nominees' records on the merits without having their votes determined by party loyalty.

The fact is that all, or almost all, Senators want to avoid the crisis. I have had many conversations with my Democrat colleagues about the filibuster of judicial nominees. Many of them have told me that they do not personally believe it is a good idea to filibuster President Bush's judicial nominees. They believe that this unprecedented use of the filibuster does damage to this institution and to the prerogatives of the President. Yet despite their concerns, they gave in to

party loyalty and voted repeatedly to filibuster Federal judges in the last Congress.

Likewise, there are many Republicans in this body who question the wisdom of the constitutional or nuclear option. They recognize that such a step would be a serious blow to the rights of the minority that have always distinguished this body from the House of Representatives. Knowing that the Senate is a body that depends upon collegiality and compromise to pass even the smallest resolution, they worry that the rule change will impair the ability of this institution to function.

The importance of independence was noted on November 3, 1774 in a speech of historical importance to the Electors of Bristol by Edmund Burke, a Member of the British Parliament:

''. . . his (the legislators) unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.''

President John F. Kennedy, while a member of this body, wrote Profiles in Courage which cities the roles of courageous Senators who chose the national good over party loyalty. He summed it up on one of his famous quotations: ''Sometimes party loyalty asks too much.''

As President Kennedy wrote in the introduction to his book:

Of course, both major parties today seek to serve the national interest. They would do so in order to obtain the broadest base of support, if for no nobler reason. But when party and officeholder differ as to how the national interest is to be served, we must place first the responsibility we owe not to our party or even to our constituents but to our individual consciences.

Kennedy further noted, in words which ring as true today as they did decades ago:

Today the challenge of political courage looms larger than ever before. For our everyday life is becoming so saturated with the tremendous power of mass communications that any unpopular or unorthodox course arouses a storm of protests such as John Quincy Adams—under attack in 1807—could never have envisioned. Our political life is becoming so expensive, so mechanized and so dominated by professional politicians and public relations men that the idealist who dreams of independent statesmanship is rudely awakened by the necessities of election and accomplishment.

Continuing, Kennedy wrote:

Of course, it would be much easier if we could all continue to think in traditional political patters—of liberalism and conservatism, as Republicans and Democrats, from the viewpoint of North and South, management and labor, business and consumer or some equally narrow framework. It would be more comfortable to continue to move and vote in platoons, joining whomever of our colleagues are equally enslaved by some current fashion, raging prejudice or popular movement. But today this nation cannot tolerate the luxury of such lazy political habits. Only the strength and progress and peaceful change that come from independent judgment and individual ideas—and even from the unorthodox, and the eccentric—can enable us to surpass that foreign ideology that fears free thought more than it fears hydrogen bombs.

Beyond his stirring words, Kennedy provides us examples. John Quincy Adams' faced such a controversy when English ships seized American ships and conscripted American sailors who could not ''prove'' that they were not British subjects. Adams, a Federalist, was incensed. Ultimately, he voted with President Jefferson and the Republicans to enact an embargo against Great Britain. Yet most other Federalists, including those in Adams' home state of Massachusetts, preferred to make excuses for the British behavior and urge caution. Realizing the political suicide he was committing, Adams remarked to a friend, ''This measure will cost you and me our seats but private interest must not be put in opposition to public good.'' His prediction was right. He lost his seat.

Kennedy recounts further in ''Profiles in Courage,'' how Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a Democrat from the slave-holding state of Missouri, elevated his love of the Union and his belief in manifest destiny over populist notions of secessionist Southern states. Though Benton owned slaves and was one of the few Senators to bring them with him to his Washington home, he refused to speak in favor of or against slavery in emergent states such as California and New Mexico, as they were added to the Union. Benton was known for his fiery rhetoric and independent streak throughout his thirty years in the Senate. In a prescient, foreboding statement, one of Benton's Missouri contemporaries remarked, ''[a]t an early period of [Benton's] existence, while reading Plutarch, he determined that if it should ever become necessary for the good of his country, he would sacrifice his own political existence.'' Senator Benton did exactly that.

Courageous Senators and this institution as a whole resisted great political pressure to reject steps that would have threatened the separation of judicial powers and the independence of the President. These instances were the 1804–1805 impeachment and trial of Associate Justice Samuel Chase and the 1868 impeachment of President Andrew Johnson.

Republicans under Thomas Jefferson sought to have Associate Justice Samuel Chase of the United States Supreme Court impeached in 1804. The outcome of Justice Chase's trial would largely determine whether the judiciary could remain independent or become a subordinate branch of government where justices looked to the legislature for patronage and job security.

It was Justice Chase's penchant for politicking and expressing Federalist views from the bench that got him in trouble.

Justice Chase was tried before the Senate. Aaron Burr, the controversial Vice President who was wanted in two states for his dueling homicide of Alexander Hamilton, presided at the hearing. During closing arguments, Justice Chase's counsel, Luther Martin, a Maryland delegate to the Constitutional Convention, predicted the outcome and noted the wisdom of the Founding Fathers in the constitutional provision giving the Senate the power to try and decide cases of impeachment. There were Senators in the Chase impeachment proceeding who transcended the pressures of their party, and bravely cast votes of ''not guilty'' for Justice Chase, thereby protecting the independence of the U.S. Judiciary.

A similar great example of Senate independence occurred in the impeachment trial of President Andrew Johnson. President Johnson achieved the ire of the Congress, and the public generally, when he suspended the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, in violation of the 10-year Oath-of-Office Act which passed over the President's veto. That legislation prevented the President from removing, without the consent of the Senate, all new officeholders whose appointments require confirmation of that body. Public opinion ran very high against President Johnson.

In ''Profiles in Courage,'' Senator KENNEDY again described the unfolding drama:

To their dismay, at a preliminary Republican caucus, six courageous Republicans indicated that the evidence produced so far was not in their opinion sufficient to convict Johnson . . .

There were public outcries and party outcries against the deviation from their party loyalty. The party said: ''All must stand together!'' All but one Republican Senator announced their opinions. One who would not was Edmond G. Ross of Kansas.

The Radicals were outraged that a Senator from such an anti-Johnson stronghold as Kansas could be doubtful. Indeed, despite public clamor and partisan outcry against him, Senator Ross was resolute in his unwillingness to signal his thoughts in advance of the ultimate vote on the Articles of Impeachment. As the impeachment trial droned on, he remained the only unknown voter among Republican Senators.

Ross ultimately voted not guilty, in defiance of party loyalty. Reflecting on what colored his odd voting pattern, given his disdain for President Johnson, and his near mechanical party loyalty until that single moment, Ross said, in historic words:

In a large sense, the independence of the executive office as a coordinate branch of government was on trial. . . . If . . . the President must step down . . . a disgraced man and a political outcast . . . upon insufficient proofs and from partisan considerations, the office of President would be degraded, cease to be a coordinate branch of the government, and ever after subordinated to the legislative will. It would practically have revolutionized our splendid political fabric into a partisan Congressional autocracy. . . . This government had never faced so insidious a danger . . . control by the worst element of American politics.

Ross went on to say:

If Andrew Johnson were acquitted by a nonpartisan vote . . . America would pass the danger point of partisan rule and that intolerance which so often characterizes the sway of great majorities and makes them dangerous.

Mr. President, I know morning business has expired. But in the absence of any other Senator seeking recognition, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for an additional 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, independence and dissent from the majority view has a great tradition in our country, further exemplified by independent, thoughtful U.S. Supreme Court Justices who formulated important legal principles which were later embraced as the law of the land.

In a series of powerful and famous dissents, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes and Justice Louis Brandeis, articulated a logic so compelling that it became the majority view within a generation. Their examples serve as a reminder of the importance of dissent and independence.

As a law student, I was inspired by Justice Holmes's dissent in Abrams v. United States, when he wrote:

But when men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes can be successfully carried out. That, at any rate, is the theory of our constitution.

The theme of free-thought and independence, so artfully articulated by Justice Holmes, is also the foundation of ''Profiles in Courage.'' I think the essence of that theme was best summarized by then-Senator John Kennedy, when he said:

Foreign ideology . . . fears free thought more than it fears hydrogen bombs.

Free thought is the ultimate road to truth. Free thought is the energy that drives the political machine that leads to good public policy in our society. Free thought, and its companion, freedom of speech and assembly and press, are the core attributes of democracy that are today taking root around the world.

''Free trade in ideas'' cannot flourish when Senators are constrained to follow a political party's edict. When the merits of individual judicial nominees are debated and considered, without the counter-marjoritarian filibuster preventing resolution, only then do we achieve Holmes's ''best test of truth.'' Similarly, if the constitutional/nuclear option is debated and considered without adherence to the party line, we will pursue the tested process to find the truth that is ''the only ground upon which [our] wishes can be successfully carried out.''

The value of independence, expressed in the dissenting opinions of Holmes and Brandeis, called public attention to values which later became the pillars of our democracy. Dissenting in Olmstead v. United States, Justice Brandeis said:

The makers of our Constitution conferred, as against the Government, the right to be let alone—the most comprehensive of rights and the right most valued by civilized men. To protect that right, every unjustifiable intrusion by the Government upon the privacy of the individual, whatever the means employed, must be deemed a violation of the [Constitution].

That view of the most basic ''right to be let alone'' later became the pillar of civil rights in our society in many contexts. It is the foundation of today's debate on the Patriot Act where representatives of the political right and the political left reference that value as the barometer of the balance of governmental power to provide for our Nation's security.

The Holmes/Brandeis independent views, expressed in Supreme Court dissents, later became the law of the land on such important issues as freedom of speech, prohibiting child labor, limiting working hours, and peremptory challenges in criminal cases.

These illustrations of Senatorial and judicial independence demonstrate the value of free thinking in deciding what is best for our Nation's long-range interests. Central to the definition of deliberation is thought. And we pride ourselves on being the world's greatest deliberative body. And thought requires independence—not response to party loyalty or any other form of dictation. The lessons of our best days as a nation should serve as a model today for Senators to vote their consciences on the confirmation of judges and on the constitutional/nuclear option.

If we fail, then I fear this Senate will descend the staircase of political gamesmanship and division. But if we succeed, our Senate will regain its place as the world's preeminent deliberative body.

I thank the Chair and thank my colleagues and yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAHAM). Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JOHN D. NEGROPONTE TO BE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session for the consideration of calendar No. 69, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John D. Negroponte, of New York, to be Director of National Intelligence.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 4 hours of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, and the Democratic time will be equally divided between the Senator from West Virginia, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and the Senator from Oregon, Mr. WYDEN.

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I thank you.

Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, I rise today in strong support of the nomination of Ambassador John D. Negroponte to serve as our Nation's first Director of National Intelligence.

The committee held Ambassador Negroponte's confirmation hearing on Tuesday, April 12, and voted favorably to report his nomination to the full Senate on Thursday, April 14.

Now, the speed with which the committee acted upon this nomination and the nomination of LTG, soon to be four-star general, Michael Hayden, to be the Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence, really underscores the importance the committee, and I believe the Senate, places on continuing and ensuring reform of our Nation's intelligence community and, as a result, our national security.

While our intelligence community has a great number of successes—let me emphasize that—of which intelligence professionals should be justifiably proud—and the problem here is that when we have successes in the intelligence community, many times either the community or those of us who serve on the committee or those who are familiar with those successes cannot say anything about them because it is classified—but the intelligence failures associated with the attacks of 9/11 and the intelligence community's flawed assessments of Iraq's WMD programs underscored the need for fundamental change across the intelligence community.

In my years on the Senate Intelligence Committee, I have met many of these hard-working men and women of the intelligence community who work day in and day out with one goal in mind; that is, to keep this Nation secure and our people safe.

They are held back, however, by a flawed system that does not permit them to work as a community to do their best work. So we need to honor their commitment and their sacrifices by giving them an intelligence community worthy of their efforts and capable of meeting their aspirations and our expectations of them.

So responding to that demonstrated need for reform, Congress really created the position of Director of National Intelligence with the intent of giving one person the responsibility and authority to provide the leadership that the Nation's intelligence apparatus has desperately needed and to exercise command and control across all the elements of the intelligence community.