Mr. President, yesterday Senator John Kerry told the

American people the truth about Iraq, the truth about the past, the

truth about the present, and the truth about the future. President

Bush, Vice President Cheney, and other administration apologists

complain he did not show enough optimism. Senator Kerry decided that

honesty was more important than false optimism.

President Bush and Vice President Cheney have not been honest about

Iraq from the beginning. They have not been honest about Iraq with this

Senate, not with the House, nor with the American people. John Kerry

gave us yesterday what we need: honesty about Iraq.

He was not alone in the last few days. I salute my Republican

colleagues--five of them--for their honesty about the situation in

Iraq. It cannot be easy to tell the American people the truth and to

stand up to an administration of their own party which is not telling

the truth. They are remarkable American patriots who recognize, as

Senator Robert C. Byrd, the great senior Senator from West Virginia,

has reminded us, that we serve with Presidents of the United States,

not under them.

We are elected separately to serve independently and to exercise our

own best judgments about what is best for our respective States and for

our United States.

Listen to what five of our Republican Senators have said recently.

One said that President Bush's rosy pronouncements about the situation

in Iraq Another stated:

A third, upon noting that of the $18.5 billion Congress appropriated

for Iraq's reconstruction a year ago, only $1 billion has been

expended, called this

A fourth Republican Senator stated the other day that he may not vote

for President Bush in November, to which another Republican Senator

replied:

As he is. And we need also a breath of fresh air in the White House,

along with fresh words of truth which we received yesterday from

Senator Kerry.

The response of the Bush White House to these honest assessments by

Senator Kerry and by our Republican Senate colleagues has been to

attack them and blame everyone else. President Truman said when he was

President, With this President, it is

--blame those who opposed this war from the

beginning, as I did; blame those who question his bungling of the

running of Iraq after our courageous Armed Forces won the country in 3

weeks and still die daily because Iraqis will not take responsibility

for their own country. And now he blames his political opponent for

telling the American people the truth about Iraq, the truth that he has

consistently withheld.

I am not clear exactly about what we are supposed to be optimistic.

Certainly not the report of the President's own National Intelligence

Council which, according to an Associated Press story last week,

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed

in the Record at the conclusion of my remarks.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, how are we to view the continuing violence

in Iraq, the murders of American soldiers as they stand guard in a

country that its own citizens are unwilling or unable to guard for

themselves, or the American citizens hired to work there who are being

kidnapped and beheaded? Tell the 138,000 American soldiers who are

courageously serving their country, risking and some losing their

lives, and wondering when are they coming home. I say to those who tell

patriotic dissenters that they are not supporting our troops--the

printable part is, if you want to support our troops, bring them home

alive soon, not in 10 or 20 years, as Senator McCain has recently

predicted.

Make Iraqis protect and defend their own country. That is what people

do in a democracy. That is what people do in any form of stable

national government: They impose law and order in their own cities.

They provide public safety on their own highways. They defend their own

national borders.

Over a year ago, in August of 2003, the Bush administration claimed

that 95 percent of Iraq was peacefully occupied and operating normally.

Now we see daily reports that violence is spreading and becoming more

murderous. The Iraqi Prime Minister claims that

a common cry to rally Americans behind the

fallacy that their sons and daughters must die in Najev and Baghdad so

we will not die in New York and Boston. He says more troops are needed

to win. Following the party line, he says: We need more participation

from other countries.

We needed more participation from other countries 2 years ago when

Congress was stampeded as part of the 2002 midterm election strategy to

vote a blank check for warmaking based on completely false information

from the Bush administration, including the President and the Vice

President themselves.

We needed more participation from other countries when the United

States and Great Britain bilaterally invaded Iraq in 2003. Or when the

operation of that country failed to begin 3 weeks later. We need it

now. Now that President Bush has made a mess of the situation in Iraq,

are there any international volunteers?

How about participation from the people of Iraq against the

supposedly insurgents, 95 percent of whom we are

told are Iraqis who do not like the presence of the United States

there. On paper, we were told over almost a year ago by the Secretary

of Defense that there were 206,000 Iraqi militia and army military

personnel who were being trained or had been trained--206,000 we were

told. Last week, the Secretary of Defense admits that only half of that

number have actually been trained.

We are told that less than $1 billion of the $5 billion that Congress

appropriated 1 year ago for security training has been expended. And

that is why the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee said over the weekend that this is the incompetence of this

administration. The buck stops there.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may have 2 minutes to

complete my remarks.

Mr. President, the buck stops in the White House. The

blame starts there and it ends there. Senator John Kerry is not

responsible

for this war. Congress is culpable to some extent, but is not

responsible for it. President Bush is responsible. Now that things are

going badly and getting worse--and I say that not because it is

pessimism, I say that because it is the truth. John Kerry told the

American people the truth. President Bush should start doing the same.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for

the quorum call be rescinded.

I yield back the remainder of our time.