

There have been a couple of things in the last few weeks that have been disappointing, but, by and large, the commitment by members of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence is to do their work aggressively, effectively, but to leave the partisan labels at the door and to recognize that the issues that we are working on are too important to drag down into a short-term, partisan, political game because, at the end, the country loses.

Here is what Dick Clarke said. The Bush administration decided in late January to do two things: one, vigorously pursue the existing policy, including all of the lethal covert action findings. The point is, while this big review was going on, the lethal findings were still in effect. The second thing the administration decided to do was to initiate a process to look at those issues which had been on the table for a couple of years and get them decided, and that is in August of 2002.

In the spring of 2001, the Bush administration began to change Pakistani policy by a dialogue that said we would be willing to lift sanctions. So we began to offer carrots which made it possible for Pakistanis I think to begin to think that they could go down another path, which was to join us and break away from the Taliban. So that is really how it started.

A few minutes ago, we talked about the victory and the progress we have made in Libya. Back in 2001, the Bush administration, before 9/11, was talking about changing the policy in Pakistan to forge that partnership which then and now has enabled us. I met with the head of the Pakistani intelligence agency just a few weeks ago, right when they were sending a number of troops into their tribal areas, and they had lost a number of Pakistani troops. But who would have thought maybe even 2 or 3 years ago that by 2004 that the Pakistanis would not only be cooperating in our war on terrorism but they would be sending their own troops into these regions to find al Qaeda, to find the leadership of al Qaeda and to help us take out the Taliban and al Qaeda elements that were seeking refuge in Pakistan.

Again, I had a question today about when Condoleezza Rice and the President and this administration had really provided unprecedented support for the subcommittee that I served on in the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence that did a review almost directly after 9/11, provided full support and access to the joint House-Senate inquiry and now to the independent Commission. This is a statement that the Commission made on March 30.

"The Commission welcomes the decision of the President and the Vice-President to meet in one joint private session with all 10 commissioners.

"We also commend the President for his decision to accept the Commission's request for public testimony, under oath, by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Dr. Condoleezza Rice."

Remember, Dr. Rice had already testified to this Commission for 4 hours in private session.

"These decisions represent a significant contribution by the President to the work of the Commission, consistent with our mandate to 'provide a full and complete accounting' of the terrorist attacks of September 11.

"The President has consistently stated a policy of strong support for the Commission and instructed the executive branch to provide unprecedented extraordinary access to the Commission."

This is what the Commission said. "The President has consistently stated a policy of strong support for the Commission and instructed the executive branch to provide unprecedented and extraordinary access to the Commission. His decisions today reflect that policy of strong support, and we welcome them."

The Commission recognizes what is going on and that the President's support has been unprecedented, and we have got to remember that this is not looking back in history and saying, well, what happened during the war on terrorism. We are still fully engaged in the war on terrorism. We are still in the middle of fighting that war, and what is unprecedented about this President's cooperation is that there have already been I think 20 witnesses from the executive branch in front of the Commission.

Now Dr. Condoleezza Rice has already testified in private, will now testify in public, but the public nature of this reviewing the decision-making process at the very time we are still conducting the war, not when it is done, but at the very time, digging into the inner reaches of an administration and asking about how they are conducting policy, how they are making decisions, and it is one thing to do it in private. It is another to do it fully in public.

Someone asked me earlier this week and said in some ways I think the administration has gone almost too far. We are at war and the information is provided in private or secret session to those folks who are entrusted to make the decisions and the recommendations that enable this country to move forward responsibly, aggressively and effectively, but I sometimes worry that there are some in the world today who take comfort and believe that they are being successful in their efforts to defeat us in this war on terrorism when they see the partisanship that we sometimes are engaged in. This issue is too big to move down into partisanship.

The last comment that I wanted to make is today I talked with one of our soldiers today who was back from Iraq. I have met with the family of one of our soldiers who was killed in Iraq. I have met with the family of one of our soldiers who was very badly wounded in an incident. In each of those cases, they have said, make sure that we win

this war on terrorism, that we dedicate the resources to this war on terrorism. But they also said, do not forget the sacrifices of the families that have been asked to sacrifice, the families that have seen a son and husband gone for a year, the family that has seen a father and a husband and a son killed on a battlefield in Iraq and the family of the son and the husband of a soldier who has been badly wounded and will live with that for the rest of his life.

But I think we need to remember all of these folks and the troops that are still serving over there, and I hope that we as a Nation, that we as a Congress, continue to remember these families and these individuals in our prayers.

THE 9/11 COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, this evening I want to discuss the serious accusations that former White House counterterrorism chief Richard Clarke has leveled at President Bush over the last week. I would also like to discuss my concern over the administration's attempts, attempts that have now been joined by several congressional Republicans, to draw attention away from the serious accusations by instead viciously attacking the messenger; and, finally, I come to the floor to highlight inconsistencies in the statements that Condoleezza Rice has made over the last week, inconsistencies that will undoubtedly be addressed when she testifies as early as next week under oath in front of the 9/11 Commission.

Madam Speaker, it is nice to see that after months of stalling the Bush administration has finally made an agreement with the 9/11 Commission to have the President, Vice President and National Security Adviser all appear before the entire 9/11 Commission. The announcement was a complete retreat from the Bush administration's previous belief that Condoleezza Rice should not testify in public.

Last evening, the President went before reporters and said that he had ordered this level of cooperation because, and I quote President Bush here, I consider it necessary to gaining a complete picture of the months and years that preceded the murder of our fellow citizens on September 11, 2001.

Madam Speaker, I think it is great that the Bush administration finally caved in and will allow Condoleezza Rice to testify, but it is somewhat disingenuous for the President to say that he has cooperated with the Commission in the past. In fact, President Bush has stalled the Commission for months on many of their requests.

Up until yesterday, the President said that he would only testify before the Commission's chair and vice chair;

and now President Bush and Vice President CHENEY will testify together but not under oath and only one member of the Commission will be allowed to take notes. Allowing one person in the room to take notes, in my opinion, is no way to fully document critical testimony from the President and the Vice President, and I am also interested in why the President and the Vice President insist on testifying together.

So, Mr. President, thank you for finally caving in to political pressure and allowing Condoleezza Rice to testify, but do not try to spin your way out of this by making it appear that you have been cooperating with the 9/11 Commission from the very beginning, because that is simply not the case.

By delaying, the Bush administration has made it extremely difficult for the 9/11 Commission to finish its work in a timely fashion, and the Commission should not be expected to complete its work until it has heard from all the principals involved in the events leading up to and coming after 9/11.

Public testimony from Condoleezza Rice is perhaps even more important now that we have heard from Richard Clarke, the President's former top counterterrorism adviser. Last week, Richard Clarke raised eyebrows all over the Nation when he appeared on 60 Minutes, released a book critical of the Bush administration's policy on fighting terrorism, and then testified before the 9/11 Commission where he personally apologized to the victims' families and told them that they had failed them or that he had failed them.

Richard Clarke raises some serious questions, questions that Condoleezza Rice should attempt to answer before the 9/11 Commission, and I would like to mention some of those questions, Madam Speaker.

Question number one: Did the Bush administration, as Richard Clarke claims, and I quote, ignore terrorism for months when maybe we could have done something to stop 9/11? You do not have to take Richard Clarke's word for it. President Bush bluntly acknowledged as much during an interview with Bob Woodward for Woodward's book titled *Bush At War*.

Despite repeated warnings of an imminent al Qaeda attack before 9/11 President Bush admitted to Woodward, and I quote again, I did not feel the sense of urgency. That is what the President said. If he did not realize the sense of urgency, one has to really wonder what kind of advice he was receiving from his National Security Adviser and others.

According to Richard Clarke, he tried repeatedly to get the administration to pay serious attention to the issue of terrorism.

On January 24, 2001, just days after President Bush took the oath of office, Richard Clarke wrote an urgent memo to Condoleezza Rice, asking for an urgent Cabinet-level meeting to deal with an impending al Qaeda attack.

Clarke claims this request was never acted upon. Three months later, in place of a Cabinet-level meeting, Richard Clarke was finally able to schedule a meeting with Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz. Clarke said he started the meeting by stating to the Deputy Secretary of Defense that we needed to deal with bin Laden.

□ 2115

And Wolfowitz's response? "No, no, no, we don't have to deal with al Qaeda. Why are we talking about that little guy? We have to talk about Iraqi terrorism against the United States." That's what Wolfowitz said.

Again, meetings like this are critical because people like Wolfowitz, CHENEY, Rumsfeld and Rice were the very people advising the President. If Wolfowitz was describing Osama bin Laden as a little guy to Richard Clarke, one has to assume he was making the same sorts of comments to his boss, Donald Rumsfeld.

Clarke could not believe Wolfowitz's characterization of bin Laden as a little guy. Clarke then responded to Wolfowitz, and again I quote, "Paul, there hasn't been any Iraqi terrorism against the United States in 8 years." Clarke turned to the Deputy Director of the CIA, who agreed with his assessment. Clarke's statements contradict those of the National Security Adviser.

On Sunday night, in an interview on "60 Minutes," Condoleezza Rice said, "The administration took seriously the threat of terrorism before 9/11," in stark contrast to the very comments of her boss, President Bush. And I would like to see Rice's response to a report in *Newsweek* magazine that the administration was trying to deemphasize terrorism as an overall priority. As proof, the report pointed to the fact that only two out of a hundred national security meetings the administration held before 9/11 addressed the terrorist threat.

I look forward to hearing if the National Security Adviser thinks two meetings on the issue of terrorism shows a true dedication on the administration's part to fighting terrorism and to taking terrorist threats seriously.

The National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, also stated during her interview on "60 Minutes," and I quote again, "I don't know that a sense of urgency any greater than the one we had would have caused us to do anything differently. I don't know how we could have done more. I would like very much to know what more we could have done."

The salient answer to this question, Madam Speaker, is a lot more could have been done. First, the administration could have held more than two national security meetings on the issue. Based on the major intelligence spike in the summer of 2001, the administration could have held more meetings with top officials from the CIA and the FBI to make sure the agencies were sharing information.

Earlier this week, 9/11 commissioner Jamie Gorelick said that the lack of focus and meetings meant agencies were not talking to each other and key evidence was overlooked.

Richard Clarke is also very critical of the administration's obsession with Saddam Hussein. Again in her interview on "60 Minutes," Rice claimed that Iraq was put aside immediately after 9/11. But Rice's own claims were refuted, this time by a Washington Post report stating that 6 days after the 9/11 attacks, the President signed a 3-page document directing the Pentagon to begin planning military options for an invasion of Iraq.

Furthermore, CBS News reported in 2002 that 5 hours after the 9/11 attacks, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld was telling his aids to come up with plans for striking Iraq. This is also consistent with Clarke's own statements in which he says that "Rumsfeld told him on September 11 that they needed to bomb Iraq." Clarke writes in his book that, "On September 12, he went home for a brief period of time to eat and take a shower and return to the White House." Clarke writes, and I quote, "I expected to go back to a round of meetings examining what the next attacks could be, what our vulnerabilities were. Instead, I walked into a series of discussions about Iraq. At first, I was incredulous we were talking about something other than getting al Qaeda. Then I realized, with almost a sharp physical pain, that Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz were going to try to take advantage of this national tragedy to promote their agenda on Iraq. Clearly, the administration continued to have its eyes set on going to war with Iraq."

Now, Madam Speaker, I ask: Was the war on terrorism a convenient, yet flawed, justification for going to war against Iraq? That is what Richard Clarke believes. It is also supported by another former high-ranking Bush administration official, Paul O'Neill. The former Treasury Secretary stated in his book that "Vice President CHENEY strongly suggested U.S. intervention in Iraq well before the terrorist attacks of September 11." This is another question Condoleezza Rice should answer in front of the American people.

Madam Speaker, it is clear that President Bush's rationale for war against Iraq was flawed. The Bush administration used two things to justify war with Iraq: first, a connection between Iraq and al Qaeda; and, second, the idea that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

In addition to the new questions raised by Richard Clarke about the Iraq-al Qaeda link, experts have concluded that Iraq did not have weapons that posed an immediate threat to the United States. CIA Director George Tenet recently admitted that the intelligence agencies never told the White House that Iraq posed an imminent threat. And former chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix stated that the Bush administration made up its mind

that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and it was not interested in evidence to the contrary.

Madam Speaker, when the President signed the law creating the commission in November 2002, he urged the panel to, and I quote, "carefully examine all the evidence and follow all the facts wherever they lead." But, clearly, the Bush administration did not mean following it to the President's National Security Adviser. And while the administration charges the panel to follow the facts wherever they may lead, they and some congressional Republicans are attempting to minimize some of those possible facts by attacking the character of Richard Clarke.

Last week, the majority leader in the other Chamber implied that Richard Clarke had perjured himself either during his testimony before the 9/11 Commission last week or during his testimony before the Joint Congressional Intelligence Committee hearing in July 2002, because, according to Senator FRIST, he appears to have told two different stories. However, despite some pretty harsh words for Mr. Clarke, the Senate majority leader could not point to one specific example, but called for all of Clarke's testimony before the House Senate intelligence panel 2 years ago.

Now, this past Sunday, Clarke said he would support the declassification of his testimony before the joint intelligence panels if the administration also declassifies the National Security Adviser's testimony before the 9/11 Commission and the declassification of the January 25, 2001, memo that Clarke sent to Rice laying out a terrorism strategy, a strategy that was not approved until months later.

Madam Speaker, House Democrats really want a full accounting of the events leading up to the September 11 attacks, including the extent to which a preoccupation with Iraq affected efforts to deal with the threat posed by al Qaeda. It is nice to see the White House has finally stopped stonewalling the commission and now says that it will provide the public testimony the commission is requesting. But Americans need to be able to fully evaluate the decisions of government leaders, especially when it comes to the life and death decisions of war and peace.

Madam Speaker, there are others that I would like to yield my time to tonight; but I just wanted to say before we go on that I have been to the floor many times over the last few months talking about the Republican abuse of power and the Bush administration's abuse of power. Yesterday, there was an op-ed column in the New York Times by Paul Krugman that was entitled, "This Isn't America." And it kind of sums up my concern about the abuse of power.

I mention it tonight in the context of Richard Clarke and the 9/11 Commission and the National Security Adviser, but Krugman pretty much sums up how this abuse of power is rampant

with the Bush administration and the Republicans in Washington. And I am not going to read the whole thing, but I just wanted to read a couple of parts of it, where Krugman says, "Last week an opinion piece in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz about the killing of Sheik Ahmed Yassin, said, 'This isn't America; the government did not invent intelligence material nor exaggerate the description of the threat to justify their attack.' So even in Israel, George Bush's America has become a byword for deception and abuse of power. And the administration's reaction to Richard Clarke's 'Against All Enemies' provides more evidence that something is rotten in the State of our government."

Krugman goes on to say that not only in the case of Richard Clarke, but in many other cases there is abuse of power by the administration and the congressional Republicans: "A few examples: according to the Hill, Republican lawmakers threatened to cut off funds for the General Accounting Office unless it dropped its lawsuit against Dick Cheney. The Washington Post says Representative Michael Oxley told lobbyists that 'a congressional probe might ease if it replaced its Democratic lobbyist with a Republican.' Tom DeLay used the Homeland Security Department to track down Democrats trying to prevent redistricting in Texas. And Medicare is spending millions of dollars on misleading ads for the new drug benefit, ads that look like news reports and also serve as commercials for the Bush campaign."

Krugman ends and he says, and I quote, "Where will it end? In his new book, 'Worse Than Watergate,' John Dean of Watergate fame, says 'I've been watching all the elements fall into place for two possible political catastrophes; one that will take the air out of the Bush-Cheney balloon, and the other far more disconcerting that will take the air out of democracy.'"

The reason that many Democrats, including myself, come down here on a regular basis now to talk about the Republican abuse of power is exactly for the reason that John Dean quotes in his book, and that is we are very concerned about the future of democracy and where we are going with these kinds of abuses of power by the Bush administration and the Republican majority.

I see my colleague from California is here, and I probably took up too much, and so I want to yield to her.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding to me and for continuing to speak the truth, and for making sure that our country understands the type of abuses that are taking place here in Washington, D.C. I believe that democracy is at a crossroads, and I think the gentleman has made that very clear tonight. So I want to thank the gentleman for his continuing to speak truth to power, as we say.

Madam Speaker, let me also tonight thank the distinguished chair of the Congressional Black Caucus for his leadership on this and so many other issues as he continues to consistently attempt to wake up America.

We are here tonight, Madam Speaker, to talk about the Bush administration's systematically deceiving the American people. This administration has spun a web of deception that really enshrouds the truth and hides, mind you, reality. Specifically, I want to talk about the administration's foreign policy and how it has based a doctrine of preemptive strikes on a foundation that is really built on falsehoods, lies, and distortions.

But first let me just say it is especially telling and especially tragic that we are here tonight as we mourn nine new victims of this misguided war. Five soldiers and four contractors were killed today. Our thoughts and our prayers go out to their families and to all of those whose loved ones are still at risk.

We mourn these latest deaths as we speak out against the deliberate decisions and the deceptions that took this country to war. This administration did not tell the truth to Congress, to the American people, and to the world about the causes, the costs, and the consequences of the war in Iraq. The deceit started, mind you, well before the war did, and that is no accident. The web of deception was woven in order to create a reason for the war.

The administration told us time and time again that Iraq posed an immediate threat to the United States. In the President's State of the Union address, the Secretary of State's presentation to the United Nations, and in many other statements and speeches the administration told us that Iraq was developing nuclear weapons and it already had vast stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. This was apparently all false.

President Bush said that Saddam Hussein was buying aluminum tubes and African uranium for nuclear weapons. This was false. Vice President CHENEY said we know, and this is a quote, "We know he has been absolutely devoted to trying to acquire nuclear weapons, and we believe he has in fact reconstituted nuclear weapons." This was false.

President Bush said, we gave them a chance to allow the inspectors in and they wouldn't let them in. This was false. As for the weapons of mass destruction, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said, we know where they are. This was false. The administration time and time again tied Saddam Hussein to the terrorist attacks of September 11, and this was downright false.

These statements were, however, part of a larger pattern of distortion that included warping intelligence to fit the administration's vision of the world and then passing on that warped intelligence to the American people and to the world as a fact.

The administration also, mind you, disguised the cost of the war, which of course taxpayers are paying for. When economic adviser Larry Lindsey said in 2002 that war in Iraq could cost between \$100 billion and \$200 billion, well, he was right; but you know what, he was fired.

When asked about the possible consequences of the war, the administration presented a portrait of a country that would be uniformly grateful to its American invaders. This week's *Nation* says, and I quote, "The idiotic and arrogant statements by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and others that policing Iraq would be a simple matter that could be quickly cleaned up by all those flowers they were going to throw."

□ 2130

The many distortions, deceptions and omissions amounted to, as I was actually taught like many of us were taught as a child, lying. I was also taught that this is really wrong. This deception was clearly and deliberately escalated. The very impressive and thought-provoking report by the Carnegie Endowment For International Peace found a very dramatic shift in the fall of 2002 as the administration sought to rally support for its unnecessary war. Let me just read what the Carnegie Foundation indicates:

Administration officials systematically misrepresented the threat from Iraq's WMD and ballistic missile programs, beyond the intelligence failures noted above by, one, treating nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons as a single WMD threat. The conflation of three distinct threats, very different in the danger they pose, distorted the cost-benefit analysis of the war.

Secondly, insisting without evidence, yet treating as a given truth, that Saddam Hussein would give whatever WMD he possessed to terrorists.

Thirdly, routinely dropping caveats, probabilities, and expressions of uncertainty present in intelligence assessments from public statements.

Next, misrepresenting inspectors' findings in ways that turned threats from minor to dire.

The Carnegie Endowment For International Peace is a world-renowned institution. I suggest that if Members have not read this report, they should read it because, in fact, it lays out the facts, the reality and what actually went down prior to this war.

The gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), ranking member of the Committee on Government Reform, has presented a comprehensive examination of the statements and misstatements by the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and the National Security Adviser. The gentleman from California has compiled a database of deception about alleged weapons of mass destruction, alleged ties to al Qaeda and the allegedly urgent threat to the United States posed

by Iraq. That database shows just how far-reaching these distortions were, and they do not stop with Iraq, and they do not stop with foreign policy. But let me just read a couple of the gentleman from California's quotes which have been recorded in this document:

One is from Vice President DICK CHENEY. He said, "We know he's got chemical and biological weapons." But, rather, the truth is the statement failed to acknowledge that the Defense Intelligence Agency's position was, "There is no reliable information on whether Iraq is producing and stockpiling chemical weapons or where Iraq has—or will—establish its chemical warfare agent production facilities."

President Bush: "We've also discovered through intelligence that Iraq has a growing fleet of manned and unmanned aerial vehicles that could be used to disperse chemical or biological weapons across broad areas. We are concerned that Iraq is exploring ways of using these UAVs for missions targeting the United States."

The explanation of this tale is this was misleading because it claimed that Iraq's UAVs were intended and able to spread chemical or biological weapons, including over the United States, but this failed and the President failed to mention that the United States Government agency most knowledgeable about UAVs and their potential applications, the Air Force's National Air and Space Intelligence Center, had the following view: "The U.S. Air Force does not agree that Iraq is developing UAVs primarily intended to be delivery platforms for chemical and biological agents."

Another President Bush quote: "We found the weapons of mass destruction. We found biological laboratories. You remember when Colin Powell stood up in front of the world, and he said, Iraq has got laboratories, mobile labs to build biological weapons. They're illegal. They're against the United Nations resolutions, and we've so far discovered two. And we'll find more weapons as time goes on. But for those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong. We found them."

What this really was, according to the Defense Intelligence Agency, was that these trailers which the President said were to produce biological weapons did not disclose the fact that the engineers at the DIA examined the trailers and concluded that they were most likely to produce hydrogen for artillery weather balloons. That is what the DIA concluded.

We could go on and on tonight about this, but I think the public is beginning to get the picture.

Let us look at Haiti for a minute where the administration claimed it was defending democracy while in fact it was conspiring to undermine and to overthrow the duly elected President of Haiti. That is why we need an independent commission to investigate the

role of the administration in the overthrow of the Aristide government. That is also why we still need a truly independent commission to investigate the use and the misuse of intelligence in the war in Iraq.

Of course, the same deceptions permeate our domestic policies as well. Look at the administration's track record on its domestic policies.

Example. He said that his tax cuts for the rich would create jobs. Instead, we have seen 3 million jobs disappear in this country since President Bush took office. He said the vast majority of those tax cuts would go to those at the bottom end of the economic spectrum. Instead, the top 1 percent of earners reap over a third of the tax benefits by themselves. Only the top 1 percent. The President said that our schools will have greater resources to help meet the goals of Leave No Child Behind. But for the third year in a row the President's budget falls billions of dollars short of fully funding Leave No Child Behind.

The deficit. The President says our budget will run a deficit that will be small and short-term, but the fact is that the 10-year deficit projection by the Congressional Budget Office, assuming extending the tax provisions, is \$4.7 trillion. In just 2 years, there has been an almost \$12 trillion swing in the deficit outlook. The \$5.6 trillion 10-year surplus projected when the President took office has been replaced by deficits as far as the eye can see. For 2004, the President's budget proposes a record deficit of \$521 billion, \$146 billion more than the 2003 deficit, which was also a historic record. Yet the President said on January 7, 2003, "Our budget will run a deficit that will be small and short-term."

We have to really get our administration to begin to understand the value of telling the truth, because in both the domestic and foreign policies of this administration, this administration and the President has deceived the American people about their national security, their economy, their children's education and their future. We should be leading the world, not misleading it. That is exactly what we are doing.

Finally, let me just say one of the biggest farces which the President said and indicated he wanted to do was to unite the country. I believe that this country is more divided tonight than ever.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida). The gentlewoman will suspend.

The Chair would remind the Members not to refer to the President or the Vice President in terms that are personally offensive, such as accusations of deceit.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, may I respond?

Mr. PALLONE. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I am referring to statements of fact and information which has been documented and quotes which have been published already.

I thank the Speaker for reminding us of the rules of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is reminded that Members may not read into debate extraneous material which would be improper if spoken in the Member's own words.

Mr. PALLONE. I just want to thank the gentlewoman for her comments.

I know I have to yield to my other colleague from Maryland, but I just wanted to point out that again, going back to what I said before, and I was referencing this New York Times article about the future of democracy, in order for us to make fair and accurate decisions in the way we vote on the floor, whether it is to go to war in Iraq or it is to provide funding for various programs, we need to have accurate information. I think what the gentlewoman is pointing out is that, whether it is foreign policy or domestic policy, with the kind of deception that we are getting, we cannot rely on the information that is being provided by the administration because many times it is distorted or it is not accurate. That is, I think, the real problem here.

I voted against the war but many of our colleagues, both Democrats and Republican, voted for it because they relied on representations that were being made by the White House that there were weapons of mass destruction, that there was an imminent threat, so many of the things that she pointed out. So, ultimately, they made the wrong decision, many of whom now regret that decision, because they did not get accurate information. They relied on the White House to make a decision that was the wrong decision.

The whole point is that we cannot make the right decisions, we cannot figure out what to do here if we continue to get this inaccurate information from the White House. What ultimately is going to happen is we are not going to believe anything we get. We are just going to have to come find some other source and assume that whatever comes from the White House is not accurate and cannot be relied on. I think the gentlewoman pointed that out so many times.

Ms. LEE. I would just like to say, I think it is very important for us, as the leader of the free world, the greatest superpower in the world, to be credible, to be credible as we move forward in this 21st century in terms of how we view the world in terms of our strategic position, in terms of our quest to have a peaceful world, a secure world and in terms of our efforts to eliminate terrorism.

There is no way we should sweep under the rug the facts. The facts are here, they are published, we know what who said when. I hope that the American people understand that we come to this floor to try to present the facts

because oftentimes the media does not do that. We have it right here, and we are urging people to read what has been said over the last few years.

We have lost over 560 young men and women in the military. Their lives are lost, their families' lives are shattered as a result of this misinformation and this deceit which led us to war.

I believe it is our duty and our responsibility to put these facts out and to make sure that the American people know what was said, what was the basis for this war and what the outcome, unfortunately, has been.

Mr. PALLONE. I mentioned before about this op-ed with Krugman where he was quoting the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, a major publication in Israel. I just want to read that quote again in their editorial where they said, "This isn't America; the government did not invent intelligence material nor exaggerate the description of the threat to justify their attack."

We tend to think of this country and I have always felt it as the country that stands for what is right, what is just, what is honest, and to think that an Israeli newspaper is now saying, we're not like the government of the United States, we don't make up things, we don't lie, we don't exaggerate, as if that is the norm for us, is a pretty sad state of affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to thank the gentleman for his vigilance and for consistently standing up for what is right.

I have often said that I would like to see my children and grandchildren have a better country, inherit a better country than the one that existed on January 18, 1951, when I was born.

I must say that when I listened to my colleagues speak and I look at the very subject that we are talking about tonight, I am very much concerned that they will not inherit a better country. As a matter of fact, the kinds of things that we are talking about tonight, where words of this administration are inaccurate, should give the entire American public chills, because they are the things that lead to the chipping away of this wonderful institution that we call a democracy.

So I thank the gentleman for standing up and I thank all of my colleagues for coming out tonight, certainly the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

I want to just for a moment talk about some of the misconceptions that we have seen and heard here as Members of this great body. First of all, as Members of the Congress, our constituents have vested a unique trust in us to represent their interests to the fullest degree and to make decisions that have a tremendous impact on their daily lives.

□ 2145

Every day we are required to consider legislative proposals, policy solutions, and programmatic activities that shape the future of our Nation. In order to carry out our task for this greatest benefit of the American people, it is absolutely essential that the most accurate and current information be at our disposal. Anything less would force us to abdicate our duties and perform an extreme disservice to the American people.

So, Madam Speaker, I am growing increasingly disturbed and angered by the Bush administration's penchant for being less than truthful with the people's representatives.

One striking example of this tendency towards strategically bending the truth is the rationale provided for the Iraq War. What disturbs me most about the faulty reasoning provided by our rush to war is the fact that not only was our Nation's credibility at stake, but most importantly human lives were at stake. Recent remarks by the Spanish Prime Minister in which he called the United States' occupation of Iraq a fiasco, and those are his words, make it increasingly evident that international goodwill is beginning to turn against the United States.

Madam Speaker, it is clear that one of the very first casualties of this war was international respect for the United States of America. Although terrorists may be jailed or killed on the battlefield, the war against terrorism will be fought and won in the hearts and minds.

By advancing unilateralist policies that isolate the rest of the world without concrete proof of imminent threat, we have endangered not only our national security, but also our national identity.

The Bible says, "Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

Several revelations have come to light as of late that seem to indicate that the administration's reasoning for war was flawed and the information provided to the public as justification for the war was misleading. First, we had Secretary Paul O'Neill, a former member of President Bush's Cabinet, saying that invading Iraq was a top priority of this administration only 10 days after the inauguration of this administration. That is, in January of 2001, long before September 11, the administration had already had its sights on Iraq.

Then to add insult to injury, former U.S. weapons inspector David Kay testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that "we were almost all wrong" as it relates to our prewar intelligence. And Richard Clarke, the President's former counterterrorism adviser, is asserting that even though all credible evidence pointed to al Qaeda as being responsible for September 11, the administration still insisted on finding a link to Iraq.

And now, Madam Speaker, we have this report entitled "Iraq on the Record: The Bush Administration's Public Statements on, Iraq" issued by the special investigations division of the Committee on Government Reform approximately 2 weeks ago and which was referred to by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) just a moment ago. This startling report, which I submit for the RECORD, chronicles over 200 misleading statements about the threat posed by Iraq that were made by this administration.

This chart, which was included within the report, graphs the occurrence and timing of these misleading statements. Madam Speaker, the Members may notice this sharp spike between August, 2002, and October, 2002. I am sure the Members will recall that this happens to be around the same time Congress was considering the resolution authorizing the use of force in Iraq.

Madam Speaker, I am sure that it is far more than a coincidence that just as Congress was debating whether or not force was necessary in Iraq, President Bush, Vice President CHENEY, Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Powell, and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, the administration, made 64 misleading statements in 16 public appearances. Madam Speaker, that amounts to more than two misleading statements per day during the 30-day period between September 8, 2002, and October 8, 2002.

I am sure that some of my colleagues across the aisle will find objection with this information, but in advance let me assure my critics that this report only contains statements that were misleading at the time that they were made. I am not referencing statements that the administration thought to be true at the time, but were proven false in hindsight. I am talking about statements that were not accurate reflections of the views of intelligence officials at the time they were made.

Madam Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I am outraged by this purposeful twisting of the truth, and every American who believes in truth and justice should be outraged also.

Madam Speaker, unfortunately, the argument made for war in Iraq was not the only case wherein the administration has knowingly misled the Congress and the American public. In December of 2003, the administration sent Congress its "National Healthcare Disparities Report." As I am sure the Members are aware, Madam Speaker, the law requires the Department of Health and Human Services to report to Congress on national healthcare quality and national healthcare disparities.

These reports enable us, as legislators, to assess the status of the health care crisis in our Nation and propose new solutions to eliminating those barriers to ensuring quality and affordable health care to every single American.

Madam Speaker, eliminating disparities in treatment and access to health

care is a major priority of the Congressional Black Caucus. Oftentimes people speak of health care disparities as an abstract issue that only exists in the realm of policy and political discussions.

Under the leadership of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN), chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, we have tried to make the issue of health disparities one that people understand and that we are working diligently to improve through our health care disparities legislation. Apparently, Madam Speaker, instead of joining the members of the Congressional Black Caucus and other concerned Members of Congress in our effort to eradicate health disparities, the Bush administration has chosen to delude Members of Congress as to the extent and nature of the problem.

The report that the Department of Health and Human Services provided Congress was absolutely shameful. The Special Investigations Unit of the Committee on Government Reform has found that the Department of Health and Human Services altered conclusions of its scientists on health care disparities in order to gloss over the appearance of a national problem which is literally costing human lives.

A congressional investigation released in January entitled "A Case Study in Politics and Science: Changes to the National Healthcare Disparities Report," which I will submit for the RECORD, made some startling findings which I want to share with the American people tonight, Madam Speaker.

The investigation revealed that the Department of Health and Human Services' scientists "found 'significant inequality' in health care in the United States, called health care disparities 'national problems,' emphasized that these disparities are pervasive in our health care system and found that the disparities carry a significant 'personal and societal price' in its initial report."

However, the final version of the disparities report, that is the version the administration submitted to Congress, contained none, none, of these conclusions and instead minimized the importance and scope of the disparities in health care.

Madam Speaker, not only did the administration mislead all 535 Members of Congress by rewriting a scientific report required by law, but the administration officials were dishonest with me personally when I asked about the changes made to the report.

Dr. Carolyn Clancy, director of the Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, wrote a letter to me that began: "I am writing in partial response to your letter to Secretary Thompson expressing your concern that these changes were made to scientific facts and findings in the National Healthcare Disparities Report." She goes on to say, as we will see on

this chart, the very next sentence of the letter read: "At the outset I want to make it clear that no data or statistics in the report were altered in any way whatsoever."

This is a letter that she sent to me. However, Madam Speaker, if one were to visit the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's Web site right now, they would find another letter from Dr. Clancy which reads: "Over the course of the summer and fall, changes, with which I concurred," meaning she concurred, "were made to the report by a broad array of staff including Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality."

The question becomes, Madam Speaker, which one is the truth? Is this the truth, or is this the truth? No matter what, there is an inconsistency that goes to the heart of a major issue on health care disparities.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I ask how is it that Dr. Clancy can in good conscience tell me that no changes were made to the disparities report but a month later, after public pressure, admit that changes were indeed made?

Madam Speaker, this is about more than my feeling personally insulted by Dr. Clancy. Madam Speaker, this is an insult to African American women who are more than twice as likely to die of cervical cancer than are white women and are more likely to die of breast cancer than women of any other racial or ethnic group. This is an insult to African Americans who are having more strokes at earlier ages, who are more likely to die from them, and who experience worse levels of recovery than other racial groups. This is about the prevalence of high blood pressure within the African American community that ranks among the highest in the world. This is about the administration knowing that all of these problems exist and choosing to do absolutely nothing about it and, furthermore, masking the truth about its existence.

So I could go on and on, but it is so interesting too that on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, President Bush visited an African American church and said, "Today would have been his 75th birthday," and this is President Bush speaking as I conclude. "It's important for our country to honor his life and what he stood for."

Later in the day, the President visited Dr. King's memorial in Atlanta, Georgia, and held a moment of silence at his tomb. All of this was very moving and touching. Yet, Madam Speaker, the very next day the President appointed Judge Charles Pickering over the objection of United States Senators, the Congressional Black Caucus, and all of these civil rights organizations.

I find it rather ironic that 1 day after the photo-op with Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, and after saying that the Nation should honor what Dr. King stood for, that President Bush would have appointed a judicial nominee that was vigorously opposed by nearly every single civil rights group in the entire Nation.

So I would say to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), I thank him for yielding to me. Again, we all have come out. We could be at home resting, but we cannot rest when we see the deceptions that are taking place for we know that those deceptions lead to erosions. It is just like a water leak in one's house, drip, drip, drip; and every single drip, it may take a long time, but eventually something wears away. And we are convinced that we have to stand up. We could not sleep unless we did stand.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida). The Chair would remind all Members not to attribute intentional misrepresentations to the President or Vice President.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I just want to thank the gentleman from Maryland for his statement. I know he is also the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. And, again, I think it is important, whether it is foreign policy or domestic policy, that we point out that we are not getting accurate information from the White House and it makes it very difficult for us to proceed in making policy decisions if we cannot rely on accurate information from the White House.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

□ 2200

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman so much for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I stand here today with such a pride in joining true patriots who are coming to the floor tonight under the leadership of the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the distinguished chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus (Mr. CUMMINGS), and my colleague the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), who has really been a conscience for all of us, that we have to ask the questions.

We stand here as people who love our country. We love our country so much that we fought to be here to represent over 600,000 people, to represent the views of ordinary Americans, and we are here tonight because we are concerned that our country is losing its credibility and its moral leadership around the world; and that our democracy is in jeopardy right now, because democracy depends on the truth.

It depends on the light of day. It depends on discussions being held out in the open, so that people can make up their own minds, so the facts, the real facts, get laid on the table. And to question, yes, even to question the President of the United States, Madam Speaker, about things that have been said, and the Vice President of the United States.

No one in this great democracy is beyond being questioned, and that is the duty of Americans, not just of Members of Congress, but of citizens of the United States, of the media, of the press, to find out the truth.

Madam Speaker, for over 6 months this administration has been fighting tooth and nail against all of the facts being laid out in public before this commission investigating 9/11 and what happened. It is not just the 3,000-plus people that died that day, and it is not just the 570, 580 or 590-plus people now that have died in Iraq and their families that are suffering, presumably because we were fighting terrorism, and some of us question the rationale for that war. But all Americans deserve to know the truth, and this administration over the last 6 months has battled against the commission over access to documents and witnesses.

The panel has issued two subpoenas to the Federal Government for aviation and military records, and twice had to threaten to do the same for access to presidential briefing materials. The panel fought the White House over an extension of its statutory deadline for issuing a report which was originally set for May 27 in order to really do its job. There has been pressure on this commission not to explore fully and readily exactly what happened on 9/11.

Now, fortunately, under tremendous pressure right now, we are going to hear more information, under oath, from the National Security Advisor, who has found it fit to speak on every single broadcast and radio station and television program about this. But now under oath she will appear. I think this is a wise decision, and I am glad that it is going to happen.

But I want to talk for a minute about one of the strategies that is used to silence people who would ask those kinds of questions, who would come up with information that the administration does not like, that runs counter to the administration's version of the truth.

I am not saying that the other versions are always true or more correct, but what I am saying is that anyone who dares to stand up and say something different is slimed by this administration. Let me give you some examples of the ways in which the integrity, the competence, the motives and even the patriotism of those who raise questions is attacked.

The Medicare actuary who came up with the numbers that said that this Medicare bill that passed in the middle of the night, after arm-twisting and holding the record open for 3-plus hours, the actuary who came up with dollar figures that said it really was going to cost about \$140 billion more than the administration said, was warned that he would be fired if he told key lawmakers about a series of Bush administration cost estimates that would have torpedoed, or could have, any Congressional passage of this White House-backed Medicare prescription drug plan.

Richard S. Foster, the Chief Actuary for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, told colleagues last June that he would be fired if he revealed the numbers relating to higher estimates to lawmakers. This is a per-

son who was supposed to give us the truth. That is his job. He is supposed to come up with the facts. For doing so, he was told he would be fired.

Former Secretary of the Treasury Paul O'Neill, 3 days after Paul O'Neill criticized the Bush administration's Iraq policy, the administration, quoting from an Associated Press story, "began an investigation into whether any laws or regulations had been violated by O'Neill." The probe came despite O'Neill having specifically "cleared all of the documents with the Treasury General Counsel's Office."

Of course, the problem ended by fully absolving O'Neill. But, right away, rather than answering the charges that were raised, the administration went after the man and tried to undercut his credibility.

White House Adviser Larry Lindsey was fired when he told a newspaper that an Iraq war could cost \$200 billion.

General Anthony Zinni, fired, a retired Marine general who was Bush's Middle East mediator. He had the audacity to anger the White House when he told a public policy forum in October that "Bush had far more pressing policies than Iraq and suggested there could be a prolonged, difficult aftermath to the war. He was not reappointed as Mideast envoy." The source, and that is a quote, was the Associated Press in July of 2003.

Even troops fighting in Iraq were threatened for telling the truth about combat in Iraq. After soldiers in Iraq raised questions about the Bush administration's deceptive WMD comments, General John Abizaid said no soldiers "are free to say anything disparaging about the Secretary of Defense, or the President of the United States. Whatever action may be taken, whether it is a verbal reprimand or something more stringent, is up to the commanders on the scene." The source, ABC News.

No, we are not even going to let those who are putting their lives on the line publicly raise questions.

The CIA was blamed for telling the truth about bogus Iraq nuclear claims. Despite the CIA having made advance objections to the White House about false Iraq nuclear claims, "President Bush and his National Security Advisor yesterday placed full responsibility on the Central Intelligence Agency for the inclusion in this year's State of the Union Address of questionable allegations that Iraq's Saddam Hussein was trying to buy nuclear weapons."

So much for taking personal responsibility for words that come out of one's own mouth. Let us blame someone else.

And then, of course, there is Richard Clarke.

But even before I get to him, the Secretary of Commerce the other day, in talking about people who are concerned about losing their jobs, because jobs are being exported overseas, said that basically this kind of outsourcing is really a good thing for the economy.

"People who are out of work because of outsourcing, who said, no, they think maybe we ought to try and keep jobs at home, he called them economic isolationists, and he said economic isolationists wave the flag of surrender, rather than the American flag." That is a quote.

So, in other words, people who are out of work because their jobs have gone overseas and have the audacity to complain about our policies that do that are said to wave the flag of surrender and not the American flag.

What does that mean? They are not patriots? These people, whose children every day go to school and say the pledge to the flag while dad or mom is looking for a job?

THE CHALLENGING QUESTION OF JOBS LEAVING AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House.

It is appropriate, I suppose, that we continue with the discussion we are having about jobs. It is an interesting one, it is a challenging one. It is certainly an issue that will be with us for quite some time, certainly during the next several months as we approach the election.

We know that there is a great deal of anxiety in the Nation, there is a great deal of concern about the degree to which the exportation of jobs from the United States, the outsourcing, as it is referred to, has affected our economy, has affected the unemployment statistics and affected Americans in ways that are quite alarming sometimes.

We wonder about exactly how it is that we can treat this issue. Number one, is it for real? The outsourcing of jobs has sometimes been described as a good thing from an economic standpoint. I heard my colleagues on the other side of the aisle talk about that and suggest that someone was being disingenuous in that description.

Well, Madam Speaker, I do not know whether or not the outsourcing of jobs from the United States does in fact cause a net loss in jobs. I have a sneaky feeling it may. I am concerned about the possibility that it does.

We recognize that there is a phenomena, a world economy that challenges us as never before in terms of trying to figure out how exactly to address the issue of jobs, how to protect them.

In the past, and for the last actually 150 or so years, a lot of people have been wedded to the concept of free trade as described by various economists, from Ricardo and Adam Smith, and we adhere, most of us, to the concept that free trade is good in the long run and produces in fact a more viable

economy. That has been the mantra many people have chanted.

I do not hear, even from the other side, however, a resolution to this. I do not hear anybody saying, well, we should not have free trade, that we should establish some sort of economic barrier to free trade, we should establish tariffs.

They can and do rail about the fact that we are maybe losing jobs in this new economy, in this new-world economy, and that it is, of course, therefore the President's fault. No one has in fact, that I know of, come up with a plan that would suggest a protectionist policy be implemented, that in fact we should begin to look at things like tariffs to protect American jobs. That is a hard case to make, and it is one alternative, of course, to the present course of free trade.

We can begin to restrict America's trade policies. We can begin to erect barriers. We can begin to say to other countries that if they do not react in what we would call a fair way to our trade policies that we will in fact impose some sort of penalty, we will raise a tariff barrier.

We can in fact even adopt policies, tax law, that would be designed to prevent companies from or punish companies for offshoring jobs, for moving jobs from the United States to other countries.

□ 2215

Those are policy options. Now, would they stop the offshoring of jobs? Would people then say, okay, because I have to pay an extra tax for doing that, I will not adopt this particular procedure? Well, I do not know. In some cases, it may work; in other cases, it may not.

Because, in reality, the competitive world in which we live is one that does not care whether or not jobs are lost in any particular country. It does not matter. The economy does not have a conscience. The world economy does not look at a net loss of jobs in country A and a net increase in jobs in country B and say, there is something immoral about that. It just says, that is the way it has to work.

This is difficult for any Member of Congress, for any Member, any elected person in the United States to have to deal with, because our natural tendency is to say, here is what we will do to solve that problem. We will stop this. We will not allow jobs to be exported from the United States. We will do things that absolutely ensure that we will always have a very high standard of living and that our jobs will be protected. That is what we would like to do. But, of course, the problem is how to do that.

I assure my colleagues, nothing we heard tonight from the other side is a solution. Nothing. It is simply a series of complaints; and it is demagoguery to stand up on this floor or anywhere else and simply rail against the "loss of jobs" unless one is willing to come

forward and say, here is what we will do to stop that. We will begin to impose protectionist measures. We will say to other countries that we will not allow your goods into our country because you are subsidizing them in your country, and it is unfair. We will punish corporations for sending jobs offshore.

Now, we can do that, we can say that, and we can even actually pass laws to accomplish those goals. But will they stop this phenomenon? Can we do anything to reverse what appears to be an inevitable change in the economic status of America and of America's workers?

I do not come to this floor to tell my colleagues that I have an economic model we can impose that I know will achieve the goal of keeping jobs in America and keeping our standard of living high. But I do have a suggestion that I believe we can look to and that all of us should be able to say, this may work. It is both logical and it is, in fact, the responsible thing to do.

But we will never hear, Madam Speaker, we will never hear our opponents, ever, suggest what I am going to suggest as a way of protecting American jobs, because their purpose is not to protect American jobs. Their purpose is to make political points. Their purpose is to make Americans, who are fearful of their own jobs and those who have lost jobs, vote for them, as opposed to the President or Republicans, just out of the fear. But there is never a solution that they propose, and certainly not the one that I am going to suggest tonight.

Madam Speaker, in this country today there are between 13 million and 15 million people who are here illegally. That is to say, they have come across the border of the United States without our permission. For the most part, they have come for the purpose of taking jobs. We hear this all the time, even from people on our side of the aisle, that the people who are coming here illegally are coming here simply to take the jobs that no one else will take.

Well, I do not know how it is in the districts of my colleagues or anywhere else in the country, but I will tell my colleagues that in my district there are many people who are out of work and who are looking for any job. They will take a job in the high-tech sector from which they were fired because someone came in to work for less money, or their job was outsourced, or they will take a job, many people, who do not have the kinds of skills that would allow them to even think about a job in the high-tech industry, they will take a job as roofers or as drywall hangers or as bricklayers or as, yes, even, believe it or not, people who would clean our houses or cut our lawns. They are people who are in desperate need of a job.

But we are importing millions of people to take those jobs. Why? Because they will take them for less money