

I am going to put on a lawyer's hat just for a little bit. That case came out of Prairie View A&M, Prairie View, Texas, and believe it or not, just a few short months ago, we had to march with 7,000 students and community leaders to make the very point again, because the students in Prairie View, Texas, were being denied the right to vote by the district attorney of that county.

We had to then solicit the assistance of the Secretary of State, the Department of Justice, and the governor of the State of Texas to pronounce the rights of those students, and thereby, the rights of students in Denton, Texas, and those in Corpus and those in San Antonio, maybe in Columbus, Ohio; New York City, to have the right to vote, register to vote in your place of residence.

I do not like the term "permanent residence," and the reason why I do not like that is because it suggests an onerous burden that is not true. If you declare that you are a resident of that community, for that framework, that you are not voting in another location, meaning that you have left the residency of your parents or wherever you live and you have taken up residence, because the distinguished gentleman, someone may move from where they graduate from school and become a resident of New York, but as long as they are not voting in New York and Texas then they have taken up residency in New York.

□ 2320

And they have the right to vote.

This is an election year of the greatest moment, if you will. And that means that we are trying to encourage our young people to participate in the democratic process of elections. And what happened in Prairie View, Texas, in this year on the date of the birthday of Martin Luther King, which was the date of that particular decision, January 15, 1979, was the reason we had to march again January 15, 2004, to declare the rights of those young people to be able to vote.

So I think that the gentleman's plea today, the gentleman's request today is paramount. And all of the Secretaries of State, and it may be the Secretary of State in one State, it may be the Attorney General or it may be the Governor. But what the gentleman is suggesting is that there has to be the pronouncement that if you have taken up residence, if you have an address, if you have left the residency of your past location, family, etc., if you are not voting in two places, which none of us are arguing for. Then you have the right to vote.

Mr. Speaker, I will close on this. Intimidation is real. It has occurred. I am a living witness to listening to students who were intimidated from not only voting but even registering. There is a suggestion that in towns where you might think there is conflict between town and gown that this creates an agi-

tation. I believe if we create an atmosphere that eliminates intimidation, we will find that our students on college campuses will be the best community citizens in various parts of communities that we could ever find.

These are young people who are vital, they are vibrant, and they simply want to participate. Many of them are volunteers, many of them participate in helping in humanitarian efforts in the community. They are good community citizens.

I would simply argue that the gentleman has an excellent point that is being made, and I want to thank the gentleman on behalf of the students of Prairie View A&M, because the gentleman is using them symbolically for the troubles we had in Texas that we had to fix, not by a simple request. And since many of us were physically meeting with that district attorney, it was not just a simple request.

We thanked that district attorney's office for conceding getting an opinion from the Attorney General and from the Secretary of State and from the Governor of the State of Texas. Because I can assure my colleague that no one would want to have every single college town have to have a march of 7,000 people to get their votes.

So I hope what the gentleman has offered today will be heard by many of our colleagues, and that we will check on our college campuses, check on our students and ensure that our election officials are very much aware of this very worthy decision and the gentleman's great leadership on this issue.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for sharing her personal experience with us. It was obviously just something that had to be done.

Let me share so there is no confusion here. The case we were just talking about, the local district attorney threatened to prosecute students for fraud if they voted. I already mentioned this school in Arkansas.

At Florida A&M, during the 2000 general election, 5,000 students were turned away from polling locations at the Historically Black University. Students have also reported receiving two voter registration cards with different polling locations. Others were turned away and told to vote at off-campus polling sites, while more students were informed that they had never been registered.

In Maine, the same kind of situation. The town registrar of Brunswick, Maine, turned students away from the polls by using misleading questions regarding residency. Students were informed if they registered in the county of their college or university, now listen to this, that they would risk losing financial aid, health care, driver's license and/or car registration. The students began campaigning and eventually protested. They gained national media coverage, defeated the legislation with a unanimous vote because they tried to manipulate the legislative process there.

So this is really happening. It is happening in Maine, Arkansas, Texas; and it is probably happening all over the country. Send us an e-mail, let us know, contact your local Secretary of State or whoever in your State is in charge of the voting. This is a very important issue.

We are not saying we want anybody to be able, as the gentlewoman from Texas said, to be able to vote in a couple of different places; but these are students. They have the right to vote. They qualify and they should be able to participate in the political process.

So that wraps it up for the 30-Something 20 minutes this week, Mr. Speaker.

FLIPFLOPS ON IRAQ AND AL QAEDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for the remaining time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I would assume that is eastern time midnight and not time in my district midnight. We could always hope, but I will make the assumption that is eastern time.

Mr. Speaker, before I start into the text of my discussion tonight, I would like to commend the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) for her comment that the U.N. Security Council must pass a resolution that has teeth. That was exactly the position many of the Members on this side of the aisle felt like 1441 should have been, a resolution that had teeth in it. But, actually, it turned out not to be, and that is unfortunate. But her point is well made that the Security Council lacks the ability to enforce things that should be enforced.

Mr. Speaker, I am joined tonight by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER), and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP). We want to talk about Iraq and al Qaeda.

It is one thing when politicians flipflop, and we have an example now. One of the Presidential candidates, Senator KERRY, has shown a willingness to flipflop and play both sides of an issue. But it is especially reprehensible when our media begins to flipflop. As we discuss this issue tonight on Iraq and al Qaeda, we are going to show instances where the media, in 1999, 2000, and beyond, were perfectly content, under the Clinton administration, to acknowledge the ties between al Qaeda and Iraq. Yet under President Bush, they have decided that they will disaffirm that; that instead of the truth, their agenda is more important. They have elected to now say that there is no connection, when the facts clearly show that there has been a strong connection between al Qaeda and Iraq.

In reviewing this, I am reminded of the New York Times scandal where the

writer from the New York Times was just simply making up stories and writing things without facts. CNN produced even an eye witness, a teenage boy, that they declared was talking about how the President had coerced him into denying pressure. When the young man was actually talked to, he explained that, no, the White House had never contacted him at all. The CNN reporter simply made up the story and was allowed to do that by her superiors.

It is this manipulation of the truth, it is this flipflopping on the issues that makes it very difficult for Americans to understand exactly what is happening.

For the first section on tonight's discussion, I would like for the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) to discuss an account that occurred today when Iraqi women visited in this Capitol and visited with Members of Congress. The Iraqi women were being asked, should America have come to Iraq, and was the war the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I would yield to the gentleman to discuss the responses that were given today.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I also thank him for putting this hour together this evening.

I think this is extremely important. Some of these things that we will not ever read of in the newspapers get reported here on the floor of the House because they do not seem to come out anywhere else.

Today, on Capitol Hill, in our Subcommittee on Health Policy, we were joined by about 25 women from the country of Iraq. They had been here for about a week studying various Federal agencies and how democracy works and how the business of our government runs. And, in fact, after our policy meeting today, several of the Members of Congress had one of the Iraqi women go with them for the remainder of the morning. I took one of the participants to the Committee on Science, where we were talking about space exploration.

It was kind of ironic, because we were talking about the bravery involved in space exploration, but these women showed great bravery in coming to this country to learn about democracy, to learn how disparate peoples work together to gain a common good. They took a big chance in doing that. In fact, some of them were too concerned to come out of the briefing room, where there were television cameras, because they did not want their faces filmed, for fear that they or their families would suffer back in Iraq.

□ 2330

Surely these women showed a lot of bravery by coming here today and they shared a lot of stories with us.

There was, of course, some question about can all of the various different groups exist in the country of Iraq. One of the spokeswomen from the group said that truly religious imbalance in

that country is, in fact, propaganda. They are a tightly interwoven and interconnected country, and they have been for years. They said playing politics with ethnicity is wrong, not only in Iraq but in this country, I believe, but certainly that was the message they wanted to give us.

They were generally happy with the new Prime Minister, Dr. Alawi. Several of them said it is too early to tell a lot about that administration, but the consensus of the women was that this is an Iraqi government and, therefore, it is good.

There is a big distinction between what is Iraqi and what comes from abroad, even to the point that the situation in Fallujah, a lot of the problems that have occurred in Fallujah, according to the women, were caused by people who came from abroad, that is, people who came from other countries.

One of the ladies there who was from the city of Fallujah said, "In so many ways Iraq is much more beautiful now. For the first time in years I have the freedom to drive in a car. The situation is getting better daily."

But Fallujah remains the magnet for terrorists and for outsiders seeking to influence the outcome in Iraq. She was very emphatic about Fallujah. She said, "Please finish the job."

I promised that I would relay that information to the Secretary of Defense, so, Mr. Rumsfeld, I hope you are paying attention this evening.

They went on to say, why give them a chance? Why should we give the foreign fighters a chance in Fallujah? It should have been stopped at the beginning. We are only giving them increased determination to do what they came there to do, which is to cause trouble for the country of Iraq. Unfortunately, from Fallujah on to Karbala and Najaf, the terrorists have moved.

One of the city leaders from Karbala was very well spoken and emotional in her talk. She said no one from Karbala was involved in the insurgency in that town. In fact, all of the victims of the fighting, all of the fighters who fell in that siege taken to the hospitals, none had identification on them that identified them as natives of the city of Karbala. They were all from outside the city. Unfortunately, now the city has been destroyed.

She wound up to say that she felt that women are the best ally that civilization has in dealing with extremism. I would agree with her about that. She said that Iraqi women have suffered a lot. Discrimination was common in Iraq for the past many years. There have been over 120 Assyrian villages that are just gone, destroyed. No one knows where the people have gone. Liberation for that individual was really one of the best things that had ever happened.

In response to a question that perhaps this country went into Iraq under false pretenses and perhaps we should not have gone, a woman stood up, and really this brought out a lot of partici-

pation from the ladies in the audience. The first woman stood up and quite accusatively said, "Why did you delay?"

Again, the city leader from the city of Karbala said, "Forty-eight people in my family are gone, and I don't know where they are. I don't know whether they're dead or alive. If they're dead, I don't know where they're buried. Why would you even ask this question?"

Another woman stood up and said, "Chemical warfare was used on my family. So many have been lost. Again, we don't know where they have gone. The liberation should have begun in 1991."

"Liberation was late," another woman said, "and we were left to be tortured."

Another woman told a very touching story of having to hear on the telephone from a relative who had been in prison, had his tongue cut out and his hand cut off and he was telephoning to try to tell them what had happened to him and her story was very, very difficult to listen to, I promise you.

So did we do the right thing in Iraq? History will judge. History will tell. Certainly these women who will do a lot to restore civil society in Iraq, in this group of women today, the answer was a resounding, yes, we did the right thing. Perhaps we took too long to get it done.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentleman from Texas for those comments. Liberating Iraq was the right thing to do, and these women had the courage to come here to the United States Congress and to testify about the evils that have occurred under terrorism, under Saddam Hussein.

I think the compelling question that I heard from people who attended the event was, why did the world take so long? Why did you watch millions tortured and hundreds of thousands die before we came? Forty-eight members of one woman's family just cannot be found. She does not even know where they are buried. And we in this country have a press who is trying to indicate that there was no reason to be there.

I was especially ashamed when former Vice President Al Gore was quoted as saying, "The President convinced the country with a mixture of documents that turned out to be forged and blatantly false assertions that Saddam Hussein was in league with al Qaeda." I am sorry, but Mr. Gore must not have read the comments from the 9/11 Commission Chairman Thomas Kean, the comments made on the News Hour with Jim Lehrer, June 16, this year.

Mr. Kean said, "Yes, there were contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda, a number of them, some of them a little shadowy. They were definitely there."

Richard Clarke was quoted as saying, "There's absolutely no evidence that Iraq was ever supporting al Qaeda. Ever." Mr. Clarke was the head terrorism expert under President Clinton. It appears that he is covering his own trail because, again, the Vice Chairman

of the 9/11 Commission says, "I don't think there's any doubt that there were contacts between Saddam Hussein's government and al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden's people."

Lee Hamilton, the Vice Chairman, also spoke on the News Hour with Jim Lehrer on June 16, 2004. Keep in mind that Mr. Hamilton is a former Democratic Congressman from Indiana who served for 34 years in this institution, and he is the one who is saying, "I don't think there's any doubt that there were contacts between Saddam Hussein's government and al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden's people."

And so we have members of the other party who are out on the stump every day accusing the U.S. and accusing President Bush of manufacturing documents when the 9/11 Commission has been very clear that there does not seem to be any doubt that there was cooperation between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein.

The 9/11 Commission staff statement 15 says, "Bin Laden also explored possible cooperation with Iraq during his time in Sudan, despite his opposition to Hussein's secular regime. A senior Iraqi intelligence officer reportedly made three visits to Sudan, finally meeting with bin Laden in 1994. Bin Laden is said to have requested space to establish training camps as well as assistance in procuring weapons, but Iraq apparently never responded. There have been reports that contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda also occurred after bin Laden had returned to Afghanistan, but they do not appear to have resulted in a collaborative relationship."

We have many, many examples of the cooperation and the attempted cooperation between al Qaeda and bin Laden.

The Butler report on British intelligence affirms many of the same things, just in case there are those who believe that only the U.S. 9/11 Commission is finding the cooperation. The Butler report on British intelligence says, "We have reached the conclusion that, prior to the war, the Iraqi regime, A, had the strategic intention of resuming the pursuit of prohibited weapons; B, in support of that goal was carrying out illicit research and development and procurement activities to seek to sustain its indigenous capabilities; and, C, was developing ballistic missiles with a range longer than that permitted under relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions."

The Butler report continues, "We conclude that on the basis of the intelligence assessments at the time covering both Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the statements on Iraqi attempts to buy uranium from Africa in the government's dossier, and by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, were well-founded. By extension, we conclude also that the statement in President Bush's State of the Union address of 28 January, 2003, where the President stated that the

British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa was well-founded," the Butler Commission concludes.

Before I go on, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. McCOTTER) to address this issue if he would.

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, the timing was impeccable tonight, to have heard the previous speaker from Ohio talking about the 30-something Democratic Caucus.

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As a 38-year-old Republican, I am disappointed his bipartisan effort has not reached this far across the aisle to include some of the rest of us. Especially people my age, we are not baby boomers. We are Generation X. We grew up through the malaise of the Carter years. We grew up watching America internationally impotent in the world. We watched friends, neighbors, family lose their jobs under stagflation.

And then we watched Ronald Reagan's administration come in. We watched America be truly respected throughout the world. We watched free market economies grow and expand to provide opportunities for us as we left our college years, and we were blessed enough to see the fall of Godless communism throughout Eastern Europe.

But then we are also very practical opinion people for another reason, because shortly after that, we got to see our generation quoting Thomas Jefferson and James Madison on the streets of Tiananmen Square being gunned down by yet another totalitarian government, and we realized early on in life that life is a struggle between good and evil and in many ways it is a perpetual one.

My generation also had some difficult lessons to learn too. We were the first ones to realize that a sexual infection which was once curable could be superseded by sexual infections that could kill people; that we would have to continue to work our lives longer and longer with even the remote chance that we would have Social Security because we were the first generation smaller than the one that went in front of us, which was never part of the plan. We have to watch our parents, who are living longer, come to us for help as we try to watch the soaring cost of tuition for our own children behind us.

And perhaps because of the realistic, practical nature of my generation and perhaps something we have gotten from our grandparents, the Greatest Generation, that I think it is time on Iraq to ask some fundamental questions, and I think they are exceedingly fair questions to ask because no one has answered them and no one has bothered to posit any answers to them.

I want to know what the plan is from the minority party. The multilateral mantra has been disproved by the

U.N.'s Oil-for-Food scandal, their inability to stop genocide in the Sudan or in Rwanda prior to that, and their abject anti-Americanism in so many of their member states.

Would we like to see multilateralism work and the reconstruction of Iraq? Absolutely. But I do not think we the American taxpayers should hold our breath until the governmental entity where we pay 22 percent of their core funding decides that they do not dislike us as much as they do.

So multilateralism is also not going to work because the Democratic approach to that has been quite simple. The Democratic Presidential nominee has derided and criticized our allies whose soldiers are fighting and dying next to us in the fields of Iraq as the coalition of the bribed and the coerced, the bought, and the extorted. How do they build an international coalition attacking their allies? Whom are they trying to add? One cannot attack their allies and add their adversaries and call that a true coalition, especially if one is trying to be the Commander in Chief of the United States Armed Forces.

So then we have to ask, what is the plan? We have not heard a plan. We have to ask, on the question of weapons of mass destruction, what constitutes a significant tie with al Qaeda? If one does not believe there were significant enough ties, there were contacts, although the same intelligence which is being derided is also being used to disprove that they were collaborative, which is quite an interesting feat rhetorically. I want to know under what circumstances, what was the threshold the minority party would hold Saddam Hussein to before they would engage in defending the United States of America without a veto from the U.N. When could we unilaterally protect ourselves if necessary?

Ten tons of yellow cake from Niger, which the French Government, the Italian Government, and the British Government still stand by exclusive of the bogus material, the one bogus document. What is the threshold? What is a collaborative link? What is their standard for defending the United States against an external threat from a terrorist-sponsoring state and a terrorist-sheltering state? If they did not like President Bush's, if they do not believe he had enough, then I ask them to tell us what their standard is so as we head into this election we can have a debate on issues, not individuals, because the American people deserve to know what they are going to do to defend this country if they hold public office today and tomorrow and probably for our lifetime in this war on terror. I think those are fair questions to ask.

I think we should also ask the question about the moral equivalency that we used to see between the Soviet Union and the United States and the left in this country. I want to ask the question where did the moral equivalency go? There is more outrage over

Abu Ghraib prison than there is the treatment of American soldiers that are shot and killed by the insurgents and terrorists in Iraq. The actions at Abu Ghraib were horrible, but the purpose behind them was to gather information from people who were shooting at and trying to kill our troops to protect our troops and protect the United States citizens, just as it was at Guantanamo Bay. The goal of the terrorists that are violating every civilized notion of captivity, their goal is to foist terrorism back upon Iraq and back upon the rest of the world.

It is so sad, I would not even settle for moral equivalency from the left these days that would wax nostalgic for it.

Finally, I just find it very difficult to see this debate continue and not to see a plan. I reiterate that. We are sentient human beings. We have the gift of reason if we so choose to use it. And as we head into this troubled time for our country, deeper and deeper we go, the longer and longer it takes us to come to each other with ideas to debate and discuss for the common good that can be objectively analyzed and assessed by the electorate and by each other, the worse off we are going to be.

So in the future I would just ask a simple question of anyone who has any opinion on this, on Iraqi reconstruction, on weapons of mass destruction, on the role of the United Nations in this world. It is nice to have their protestation and opinion, but show me their plan and perhaps we can proceed together.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and appreciate his attention to the key questions in this conversation.

I traveled to Iraq at the end of October and the first part of November with the gentleman from Michigan, and we saw the same things each day at noon for 3 days. Each day at noon and in the evening meal we were in chow halls with 6 and 7 and 800 young men and women from America. I would wander throughout giving New Mexico flag lapel pens to young men and women. The constant question I heard from young men and women there was why do my parents not know the truth about this war and why do they not know the truth about what we are doing here, the good that we are doing in reconstruction? Those were random contacts throughout every chow hall from Kirkuk to Baghdad to Tikrit. There is no explanation why the press refuses to tell the accuracies and instead to tell just one side, often not even telling that side with truth.

To address the concepts of why the press might act in such ways, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, the State of Utah has the honor of having a higher percentage of our members in the Reserve and the National Guard involved in the Mid East conflict than any other State in the Nation, and we bear that statistic with a great deal of pride.

I have attempted to make sure I was there to visit with every group of returning Reservists and Guardsmen from the State of Utah. And almost inevitably, as those individuals were coming back and we had a chance to talk briefly with their families, the message they were telling us is that what they are seeing or their families are seeing about the situation in the Mid East is not the same thing that they experienced as soldiers serving there. One of the great Utahans, Bob Gross, who has just returned from a year as a special senior adviser to the Iraqi ministry of labor and social services, had the same message to say, that what he experienced in his time there in Baghdad was not the same thing as the message that has been given. The question has to be why is this message seeming to be so garbled. Those experiencing the situation in Iraq and those talking to us who have lived there have a different message than what we may be having over the media.

In my respected opinion, part of that problem rests in our understanding of the purpose that we have there in the media. If the Members would go back with me, when I was a legislator in the State of Utah, one year we came to the State with a total new restructuring of the State retirement system.

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I was very excited about this system going in there, because we had come up with a program that would actually enhance the benefits of the individuals on the retirement system and cut the costs to the State at the same time, and I thought we have reached political nirvana. We will be hailed as the conquering heroes. This is going to be the greatest PR coup that could ever happen, because we have done the impossible.

As we started the discussion of that restructuring, I realized it was not being covered by any of the media. Finally, with some courage, I went to one of the senior reporters who covers the legislature and I said why are you not covering anything about our total restructuring of the State retirement system?

He said, "Rod, you know, you are right. It is probably one of the four major issues before this legislature. But let's face facts, it is retirement issues. They are boring. No one wants to read or talk about retirement."

I recognized then and there, he was right. Those issues were boring. They were dull. I also recognized that the purpose of the media is not merely to explain events, it is not to tell the truth solely, it is also to sell papers and to attract viewers. And to do so, the emphasis must be on that which is unusual, on that which is a conflict. No one is ever going to report that 100 people safely crossed the street yesterday. They will report the one person who got hit. That is the reality of the situation.

If we expect all the issues, the truth to come out from the media sources by

themselves, in all respects we are asking them to do something with which they are not capable, because not necessarily of intent, but because of the situation in which they have to be in a competitive world market to sell papers and attract viewers at the same time.

We always talk about Jefferson who said, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have government without newspapers or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

That statement was made before he was ever president, before he spent 12 years actually in Washington, eight as president.

After his experience as president, Jefferson said, "The outright suppression of the press would be no more injurious to the public good than the newspaper's abandoned prostitution to falsehood."

Later also he later said, "The man who never looks into the newspaper is better informed than he who reads them."

Now, I not going to go that far, but I am going to tell you that what I think would be wise to do is look at history as one of the guiding factors in how we view the future and where we are going.

We all know that after World War II, there were American deaths in the effort to stabilize Germany, post-World War II, after the fighting supposedly had ended.

To me the most analogous historical situation is still the Spanish-American War. Then activist Teddy Roosevelt said it was not much of a war, but it was the only one we had. Senator Chandler on the Senate floor said any war with Spain will last between 2 weeks and 90 days, and he was totally accurate, the war lasted 90 days.

As America became giddy with success in the Spanish-American War, with very little bloodshed, we realize then we had the responsibilities of stabilizing the new territory of the Philippines. That stabilization took 6 years. That is where the bitterness was, that is where the deaths took place, that is where the cost was, in an effort for that stabilization, and it did not take place until the capture of the Filipino rebel leader, Emilio Aguinaldo, at which time the now President Teddy Roosevelt declared the stabilization effort successful and the war in the Philippines was over. In fact, the fighting of the insurrection still lasted two more years. But with the capture, then the corner had been turned.

We have done the same thing in Iraq. With the capture of Saddam Hussein, the court hearing of Saddam Hussein, the turning of government control over to the Iraqis themselves, this stabilization effort in Iraq is going forward, and it will be successful.

There are some who say there is no chance whatsoever of actually turning Iraq into a democracy. They said that

same thing after World War II about Japan, another area that had no democratic tradition, that had fought a bitter war. But we were successful in our efforts of reforming that area, changing the system and moving forward.

May I quote with just some words from Mr. Gross, who once again, whose returned and his experience first-hand in Iraq, by saying some people would say, "Rather than fight in Iraq, we should fight terrorism. Well, terrorism has moved to Iraq. It is the center of that war on terrorism. Iraq is the pivotal point. Terrorists had either tacit or direct support from Saddam, and the U.S. and coalition forces have created a tremendous problem for the terrorists. And now the Jordanians and the Syrians and the Saudis will have to rethink their relationship with terrorists. Iraq is the linchpin."

We are moving forward in Iraq. It is important as a key element in this fight against the war on terror. It is possible to create a democracy in Iraq, which will have immense effects on assisting the United States in our relationship in the entire Middle East, and it is one of those things that we are going to have to fight and work through looking at history, not necessarily referring only to the mass media, which has different kinds of agendas of their own.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, I am most impressed by the gentleman from Utah's understanding of the Spanish-American War. In fact, I would only add that there were also front page stories about American troops and captured insurgents in that war as well.

The gentleman brings up a very good point that I would welcome the opportunity to address, as my district has many constituents who are Iraqi and Arab American and, more importantly, many of my friends are.

One of the things we have heard repeatedly throughout this debate is the Iraqi people will not take to democracy, that they have suffered too long under a totalitarian yoke.

Well, what country could you not say that about in this world? Half have suffered under totalitarianism with no history of democracy, including up until the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian people themselves? How many Eastern European countries never knew full freedom, only knew serfdom and feudalism?

So I would like to add to my list of requests for plans one final one: Those people who believe that there are some human beings that cannot take to democracy, I would like your test and your complete list of those who you deem unfit for freedom.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank both the gentlemen from Utah and Michigan, and am always compelled to understand that this institution is inhabited by people with great insights and great skills in communicating them, and they are demonstrating that tonight.

Mr. Speaker, as we conclude our time, I would like to mention that not only do we have the 9/11 Commission that has contradicted both Richard Clarke and former Vice President Al Gore, but also the Butler Report and the Senate Intelligence report which just came out had several conclusions, and I will just briefly go through those, because we have so many things to cover in the last 5 minutes.

But Conclusion 1, Iraq was procuring dual use equipment that had potential nuclear applications, this from the U.S. Senate Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence reporting on the U.S. pre-war intelligence assessment on Iraq.

Also the intelligence reporting did support the conclusion that chemical and biological weapons were within Iraq's technological capability, that Iraq was trying to procure dual-use materials.

Conclusion 91, that the CIA assessment that Iraq had maintained ties with Palestinian terrorist groups was supported by intelligence. The CIA was also reasonable in judging that Iraq appeared to have been reaching out to more effective terrorist groups, such as Hizbollah and Hamas.

Conclusion 92, that the indicators of a possible Iraq-al Qaeda relationship was a reasonable and objective approach to the question.

Conclusion 93 was the CIA reasonably assessed that there were several likely instances of contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda throughout the 1990s.

Conclusion 94 supports it.

Conclusion 95 supports it.

But if we go back to the news media, again looking at the news media's flip-flop on this issue, back in 1999, many in the news media were publicly reporting the ties and contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda.

Newsweek Magazine, the January 11, 1999 issue entitled "Saddam plus bin Laden," which read in part, "Saddam Hussein, who has a long record of supporting terrorism, is trying to rebuild his intelligence network overseas, assets that would allow him to establish a terrorism network. U.S. sources say he is reaching out to Islamic terrorists, including some who may be linked to Osama bin Laden, the wealthy Saudi exile accused of masterminding the bombing of two U.S. embassies in Africa last summer."

That article from Newsweek, January 11, 1999.

ABC News, on January 15, 1999, reported that intelligence sources say bin Laden's long relationship with the Iraqis began as he helped Saddam's fundamentalist government in their efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction. It continues that ABC News has learned in December an Iraqi intelligence chief named Faruq Hijazi, now Iraq's ambassador to Turkey, made a secret trip to Afghanistan to meet with bin Laden. Three intelligence agencies tell ABC News they cannot be certain what was discussed, but almost cer-

tainly they say bin Laden had been told they will be welcome in Baghdad.

NPR reporter Mike Shuster reported in an interview with Vincent Cannistraro, who was the former head of the CIA's counterterrorism center, he says that Iraq's contacts with bin Laden go back some years to at least 1994, according to one U.S. Government source. Hijaz met with him when bin Laden lived in Sudan.

Mr. Speaker, when the news agencies declare these contacts under one President and disaffirm them under another, it makes them appear to have no more credibility than the National Enquirer.

Mr. Speaker, we have got several quotes here from Senators, and I recognize that my time has drawn to a close.

Liberating Iraq was the right thing to do. The war on terror, al Qaeda, have close relationships with Iraq.

We will continue the discussion next week, Mr. Speaker.

CORRECTION TO THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2004, AT PAGE H5617

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3575

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, due to a clerical error, the sponsor of H.R. 3575 inadvertently added my name as cosponsor; and I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3575.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DOGGETT (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today after 1:00 p.m. on account of a death in the family.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today after 4:00 p.m. on account of personal reasons.

Mr. QUINN (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of family medical reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. McDERMOTT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. McDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BLUMENAUER, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.