

that is more responsive. We want to reform government. We want change.

I think there is a philosophical difference between the Democrats and the Republicans. They think government, big government, big buildings, big programs is the hallmark of a great Nation. We Republicans think that great individuals, individuals with freedom and power and hope and opportunity, that is the core and the center of a great Nation.

We want to drag a bureaucracy that is based on 19th-century government into the modern age, drag them kicking and screaming if necessary, because we do not believe big government equals effective government.

There are some core functions our Federal Government should be capable of handling. Defense and disaster response are clearly at the top of the list, and we should not let an outdated system and an overgrown civil service deliver poor service slowly.

In closing, I know that many on the left are going out and slamming our across-the-board spending reductions. They are slamming our budget control ideas. They do not think government has room to cut.

Mr. Speaker, in the 3 years I have been in this Congress, I have sat through oversight hearing after oversight hearing where government agencies have the absolute audacity to tell us that they cannot account for millions of our tax dollars, millions upon billions of dollars, and in the same breath they ask for more funding. Enough.

I want to see reform. I hope this body wants to see reform. I want to see spending reductions, and I want a government that will actually perform its core functions.

Many on the left have been standing in the way of reform. They want to protect the bureaucracy that was built over 40 years of their control. I think it is their monument, and, yes, they will stand here and they will rail against every reform we have ever offered because it is their crowning achievement. It is the monument to themselves and their policies.

But I think it is time for the American people to know that this party and this leadership is focused on the American family. We are focused on families who are strong and productive and free, families who are free, Mr. Speaker, free to dream big dreams, free to have great adventures, to live out those hopes and dreams.

NO PLACE IN THE CIVILIZED WORLD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, the new President of Iran made comments that chillingly confirm the hate, intolerance and militant intent

to destroy Israel and her people that is shared by too many in the Arab world.

Speaking to 4,000 students at a conference called "The World Without Zionism," the Iranian leader declared, "Israel must be wiped off the map."

He went on to say, "Anybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic Nations' fury."

This Congress and the American people and all civilized, freedom-loving people around the world must emphatically and unequivocally denounce these poisonous comments as outrageous incitement to international criminal acts.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues know, we just passed a resolution a little over an hour ago unanimously expressing that sentiment. All who seek international security, stability and respect for the rule of law must collectively and publicly reject these comments of the President of Iran, and not only reject them, but condemn them as well.

The silence in too many of the Arab capitals loudly testifies to the sympathy with which such despicable remarks were received. I am pleased, however, very pleased, that the prominent Palestinian negotiator Mr. Erekat reportedly told the media, "We have recognized the State of Israel. We do not accept the statements of the President of Iran. This is unacceptable." That was said by one of the major Palestinian leaders. I congratulate him for those comments.

It is that spirit that will allow us to pursue peace on the roadmap set forth by President Bush. However, I am compelled to ask, where is the public outrage among other responsible respected leaders in the Arab world?

Mr. Speaker, I have been to Israel 8 times, 3 times in the last 2 years, and on each of those most recent visits, our Israeli allies have expressed increasing concern about Iran's support for terrorism and its continuing effort to develop and acquire nuclear weapons.

The President of Iran's dangerous comments only confirm our worst suspicions and fears about the Iranian government's intentions and malevolence. These remarks must inspire a renewed commitment by the United States and by our allies to do everything within our power to prevent Iran from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Those who rationalize acts of terrorism against Israel should reassess their opinion as to why Israel must be ever vigilant and must take all measures necessary to respond to terrorism and ensure the safety, security and sovereignty of its people and its land.

Mr. Speaker, we were right today to overwhelmingly and unanimously express our outrage at the President of Iran's suggestion that Israel would be wiped off the map. Peace will be possible in the international community only if the international community overwhelmingly, emphatically and without any tempering rejects and severely criticizes such comments when they are made.

APPOINTMENT OF HON. MAC THORNBERRY TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH NOVEMBER 1, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 28, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAC THORNBERRY to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through November 1, 2005.

DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be down here.

This is a pretty sad day in the United States of America with the recent news regarding the Chief of Staff of the Vice President being indicted on five counts of making false statements, perjury, obstruction of justice.

The 30-Something Group has been talking about for quite some time on this floor the culture of corruption that we have seen in this Chamber, on Capitol Hill, and now we have come to find that this is also extended into the executive branch, the Republican one-party rule. Inevitably when one party controls all the levers of government, inevitably it leads to corruption, and today we saw another taste of that.

My friend from Florida is here, and before we get into the corruption and the cronyism that has been going on in the way that this government has just been corrupted, I want to talk for a few minutes about what our friend was saying who was here prior to us.

I want to make this perfectly clear. The Republicans control the House of Representatives. The Republicans control the Senate. The Republicans control the White House. We have a one-party government here in Washington, DC.

I find it humorous and sometimes hysterical that the other side can look over to the Democrats and blame us for all the big spending and all the deficits. They look over here and they point to my friends on the left. We do not have any power. We are not running the government. One-party rule. Take responsibility for your own actions.

My friend who was here prior was talking about all the Democrats want to do is spend. The Republican majority has borrowed and spent this country almost all the way into bankruptcy. Our national debt just went to \$8 trillion.

The Republicans have controlled this House since 1994. They have had the White House since 2000 and the Senate on and off, but it had control of the Senate for the past few years. They have been able to implement their agenda, and they keep saying that we want to raise taxes.

We do not want to raise taxes. We want to reduce spending here, as the rhetoric came from the other side, but we do not want to do it on the backs of the middle class.

We want to reduce corporate welfare to the tune of \$16 billion in the two energy bills. Sixteen billion dollars we voted to subsidize oil companies, and they are coming out with the highest profits that they have had in a long, long time, record profits just in the last quarter.

We want to end corporate welfare to the pharmaceutical companies, \$700 billion in spending on a Medicare prescription drug bill that does nothing to reduce the cost of prescription drugs.

□ 1415

Democrats wanted reimportation from Canada to help reduce the cost. Democrats wanted to give the Secretary of Health and Human Services the ability to negotiate down drug prices by basically going, on behalf of all of the Medicare recipients, to Merck and Pfizer and all of these big drug companies, and basically say, if you want a contract, let us talk price. If we took 10 or 20 percent of the savings of that bill, \$700 billion over the next 10 years, if we saved 10 percent, that is \$70 billion which would pay for Hurricane Katrina. But we could save closer to 20 or 30 percent, which would be \$140 billion of the taxpayers' money that we could save. We do not want to raise taxes.

Now, do we think that we should be giving tax cuts to Bill Gates and Warren Buffett, and at the same time cut Medicaid, which is a health care program for poor kids and poor families? Meanwhile, middle-class America's health care is going up 15-20 percent. My God, we cannot do anything to help average people because we have to take care of the big corporations and keep the corporate welfare going.

Let me say this before we get back to our message. This is very simple to connect the dots. This body taxes the American people. The American people send their money down here. The Republican Congress gives that money, to the tune of \$16 billion in the last few months, to the energy companies. Can you imagine, your tax dollars going to subsidize oil companies. American tax dollars coming down here, and the Republican majority takes it and gives it to the pharmaceutical companies to buy prescription drugs for seniors; great idea, but is it a good policy not to do anything about controlling the costs?

What the Republican majority does is then they go to the shake-down street, which is K Street where all of the lobbyists are. They go and shake down all the lobbyists who they just spent a bunch of tax dollars on, and the lobby-

ists who they shake down fill up the Republican campaign committee coffers to the tune of millions and millions and millions of dollars. Hundreds of millions of dollars is spent lobbying. This is corrupt to the core. This is not the way to govern.

We understand there is money in politics, but to use the hard-working public's money that average people send down here and to give it to corporations is atrocious. Our good friend Cal Thomas, who is one of the most conservative Republican columnists in the country, said in *The Washington Times*, which is not a liberal newspaper, gives his friends in the majority a little suggestion: Do not start with the poor to pay for Hurricane Katrina, start with the rich. He goes on to say, which I tend to forget about, the corporate subsidies to the big agribusinesses, this is Cal Thomas, not the gentlewoman from Florida or me, this is our conservative Republican friend Cal Thomas, 72 percent of farm subsidy money goes to 10 percent of the recipients: the richest farmers, corporations, estates and other entities.

Mr. Speaker, this is ridiculous that we are going to cut lunch programs, food stamps, cut student loans for average people trying to send their kids to school, and yet provide corporate welfare to the top 10 percent richest farm agribusinesses, multinational corporations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here with you again and have an opportunity to have our 30-something Working Group talk about the issues that are important to the average American today in the 21st century. We also want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Democrat leader, for an opportunity to put together this group and have this time on the floor to talk about these important issues.

This is a sad week in the United States of America. This is a week in which we started on Monday with my home State of Florida, my district in south Florida, being hit by a Category 3 hurricane, Hurricane Wilma. Today, 5 days later, we still have 80 percent of the people in my county without power. We have considerable difficulties in getting them ice and water. We have a Governor of my home State who has held up our State as the model for response to and preparation for natural disasters, yet if you went street by street and saw the devastation and asked my constituents and the constituents of Mr. MEEK, if you asked our constituents if they think that this is the response that the model State should have provided, they would be ready to pull out our hair one by one.

I am going back down there tonight, and I am planning to spend the weekend going to distribution sites and talking to my constituents.

We have trucks and generators and lift stations, and lift stations still that

have no power. We have the biggest city in my district, the city of Ft. Lauderdale, which literally is faced with a backup in their sewage system because we did not get generators to them. They are stuck in West Palm Beach. The Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA have not been responsive. I have people older than 85 stuck in high-rise towers with glass blown out of their windows and no elevators working because there is no power. These are people who cannot get themselves down 12 to 25 floors.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. What is the temperature?

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It has cooled down. There was a cold front that pushed Wilma and made her go faster, reached us right after that. It has not been, mercifully, hot. It has been in the upper 60s. But the way our climate is, when that cold front leaves, they could be hot again. The earliest anticipation that my constituents are expected to have power restored completely is November 22. This is from the model State.

That is how we started out. We are talking about FEMA that is still woefully unprepared to respond to natural disasters.

Let me move to the very next day, where we now unfortunately have had our 2,000th casualty in the Iraq war. And today, sadly, we have had the Vice President of the United States' Chief of Staff indicted on five counts, one of which was leaking the name of a covert CIA agent with the express, clearly the intent of advancing the administration's agenda that they were hell-bent on to get us into the Iraq war, because that CIA agent's husband had just come back from Niger and said there was no evidence that weapons of mass destruction were being acquired by Saddam Hussein and his allies in Iraq.

So the most sinister of intentions that the Vice President's Chief of Staff clearly had was to continue to advance the administration's agenda to get us into a war that was ill-advised, that was entered into under false pretenses with misinformation, and now the 2,000th American has died as a result of that.

When is the partisan politics and the people in the administration who are hell-bent on being right, hell-bent on having it their way, when is it going to stop? When are we going to have some bipartisan outreach?

I have been here for 11 months, and it has been incredibly shocking to me that we have folks like the gentlewoman from Tennessee who was willfully lambasting a group of her colleagues on our side of the aisle who have no ability to do the things like she is accusing. When are people like her going to sit down around the negotiating table and agree that we can and should agree on more things than we disagree?

It is so sad the Republican leadership in this country is only concerned about

being right, is only concerned about having it their way. Clearly, as the results of this week show, they will do anything, will do anything including lie to the government, lie to the press and expose an undercover CIA agent's identity in order to have their way and get us into an ill-advised and unfortunate war, which now we have no idea how long we will be in the midst of.

I am raising young children, as are many, many people across this country. I was fortunate and used to be able to say at every Veterans' Day ceremony and Memorial Day ceremony that my generation was the first generation in decades that were able to say thanks to the efforts of our predecessors, of the generations before us, that we did not have to get called to war, that our generation was not thrust in the midst of an ill-advised confrontation. The Vietnam War was the last serious conflict we entered into. Obviously the Gulf War in 1991 was not as widespread and serious and ended quickly. But we cannot say that anymore because the administration has submerged us into chaos.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am reading through the indictments right now. It is really unbelievable, the blatant lies that are in this, that are astounding to me.

Count 5, the perjury count, where they have a series of questions, and the question from the lawyer to Mr. Libby is his specific recollection that he told Cooper about Mr. Wilson's wife working at the CIA, and he attributed that fact to what, reporters?

The answer is yes. Many reporters.

Libby said, "I was very clear to say reporters are telling us that because in my mind I still did not know it as fact. I thought I was. All I had was this information that was coming from reporters."

He continues to lie, saying, Yes, sir. He asked him again, and Libby said, "Reporters are telling us that. I do not know if it was true. I was careful about that because, among other things, I wanted to be clear I did not know Mr. Wilson. I don't know. I think I said I don't know if he has a wife, but this is what we are hearing."

They asked him again, and he said it was a fact what I told the reporters.

All throughout this he testifies to the lawyers that he was told about Mr. Wilson's wife working for the CIA from reporters. In the charge of perjury is that in truth of fact, as Libby well knew when he gave this testimony, it was false in that Libby did not advise Matthew Cooper or other reporters that Libby had heard other reporters talking about Wilson's wife working for the CIA; Libby heard it from the Vice President of the United States.

The Vice President of the United States in this indictment, and there may be a trial, and this may be a question of fact, but in the indictment on page 5, on or about June 12, Libby was advised by the Vice President of the United States that Wilson's wife

worked at the CIA. That is on June 12 of 2003.

The Vice President told Libby in September, July, August, September; 3 or 4 months later, the Vice President is on Meet the Press. Mr. Russert asks him about Joe Wilson going to Africa to check out the uranium deal. The Vice President says, "No, I don't know Joe Wilson. I've never met Joe Wilson."

A question has arisen, on and on he goes about the questions, and Joe Wilson, "I don't know who sent Joe Wilson."

That is not true. The Vice President told Libby that Joe Wilson's wife worked for the CIA in June, and in September he is on Meet the Press saying he does not even know who Joe Wilson is. He is not lying to Tim Russert, he is lying to the American people. You cannot lie to the American people.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I just wonder where the outrage is. I did not hear in the last several hours since the indictment came out calls for an impeachment trial or calls for hearings in the United States Congress.

□ 1430

And just a few years ago, prior to my coming to the United States Congress, there were questions surrounding the previous administration and far less serious than lying to get us into war. I mean, these accusations, and let us remember that they are accusations, but they are very serious accusations, that once the accusations came out in the previous administration which were for personal circumstances, immediately we went into a situation on this House floor where we had impeachment managers, we had a trial, we had a process by which the President of the United States prior to this President was actually impeached on the floor of the House of Representatives for the accusations that were made against him that were far less dire.

Where is that outrage? Where is anyone on the other side who were calling for his head? Why are they not calling for the head of this administration?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I think the silence speaks for itself.

Let us quickly go through this. June 12, the Vice President tells Libby about Joe Wilson's wife. In September the Vice President is on "Meet the Press" with Tim Russert and he says, I do not even know who Joe Wilson is. Can one imagine? We look at him and we believe him.

Here is Scott McClellan on October 3. So June the VP told Libby. In September he lied about it on "Meet the Press." Then in October McClellan says, Those individuals, Karl Rove, Abrams, and Lewis Libby, assured me they were not involved with this.

The lie continues. I mean, these are the same people that told us there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. These are the same people that told us

we would be greeted as liberators. These are the same people who said we could use the oil money for reconstruction. Have they told the truth since they have been in office?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman and the distinguished gentlewoman for their comments.

This is a moment in history today that it seems that we simply pause. This morning we did a good thing. We passed a resolution allowing an American icon to lie in state, Rosa Parks. Now, just a few hours after that vote, we are here on the floor. Really, as I listened to my two distinguished colleagues for this very thoughtful discussion, we are looking at a constitutional breach in the system of government.

I sat as a member of the House Judiciary Committee during the impeachment hearings of President William Jefferson Clinton; and, of course, as many of the Members know, we argued vigorously this issue. We argued that his objections were not a governmental action. That was the distinction that we made on this whole question of whether or not the government itself was being fractured. Today we now have, and, again, one is innocent until proven guilty, a fractured government, five counts against an individual with an ongoing investigation that suggests a number of fractures in the system that go to the very points of this discussion: one, did government officials not tell the truth? Two, did government officials not tell the truth to Members of the United States Congress? Three, on the basis of those non-truths, did the United States Congress take a vote to make a determination ultimately to go to war? And in the course of going to war, did we not see the loss of lives of 2,000 of our brave young men and women and some thousands of injured bodies that now lie in hospitals languishing?

And in the course of this expose that the gentleman has now offered, in holding up the indictment, he has enunciated a chronological schedule that shows that over and over again there was repetitiveness in the government, in this instance, the White House, denying that key staff members knew nothing of the pronouncement that an undercover CIA agent was who she was and who she was related to; and now we are finding out about allegations and now an indictment, which we all know is not a conviction and there is a lesser standard through the grand jury and its level of being able to indict.

But there is an indictment that I assume will now go forward, that there are now suggestions and allegations that not only were there nontruths being told but that they were woven into the infrastructure of the closest levels of government, including the

President of the United States of America.

I will simply say this: those very difficult days of sending this body through an impeachment proceeding brought us almost to the brink of governmental collapse. The American people were concerned. The world was concerned. This institutional body was concerned. Those of us who had such great respect for this body being respected for when it moved, it moved on truth and standing. I would argue to this day that the impeachment proceedings went beyond the jurisdiction of this body because we used a non-governmental act for a governmental action, which was impeachment.

In this instance I am going to leave with this question: What will this body now do to accept our, if you will, institutional responsibility to ask the questions, whether the Constitution has been breached and whether or not, in fact, there are fractures in government now that our investigatory hearings need to begin in order to heal or to reform those fractures?

I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida and the gentleman from Ohio, certainly States that have had firsthand constitutional breaches as we have looked at elections of 2000 and 2004, for their presentation on the floor and allowing me to come over from my office watching them during this moment in history that requires our study and our consideration.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments. It continues just to be unbelievable. Count four, the perjury count, it is unreal.

Again, we said on June 12 the Vice President told Scooter Libby about Joe Wilson's wife working for the CIA and then Libby is talking about a conversation he had with Tim Russert on July 10, which is a month later, and he is explaining the conversation, and it went something like this:

Russert said, Did you know that Ambassador Wilson's wife works at the CIA? And I was a little taken aback by that. I remember being taken aback by it. And I said—he may have said a little more, but that is what he said. And I said, no, I don't know that. And I said, no, I don't know that intentionally because I didn't want him to take anything I was saying as in any way confirming what he said because at that point in time I did not recall that I had ever known and I thought this is something that he was telling me that I was first learning.

That is on July 10. But the indictment says one month before, the Vice President of the United States told Scooter Libby that Joe Wilson's wife worked for the CIA. A lie. As we put our hand on the Bible and put one up to God, and these are the same people who told us that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. These are the same people who told us we were going to use the oil money for reconstruction, 200, 300 billion American tax dol-

lars later. The same people that told us we would be greeted as liberators. They lied to the grand jury. They lied to Tim Russert. They lied to the American people.

They passed a prescription drug bill. They told Congress it was \$400 billion. It was \$700 billion. We found out 3 months later after we voted for it. I mean, they can lie to the Democrats, but who lies to Tim Russert? One cannot lie to Tim Russert. He is the best.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, what has become clear as of today is that the culture of corruption in the party and this administration and the leadership in this institution has become institutionalized. It runs deep.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is a culture.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It is a culture of corruption. A culture is one that is deep-seated, one that is the product of an accumulation within groups of people. The administration, various members of the leadership here in our institution, from top to bottom, the people running this country are under suspicion. And we have what I have referred to as the three Cs: the culture of corruption, the cronyism, and the question of competence.

Because now, as of today, there is no question that these are people that are not competent to run our government. They are not competent to respond to natural disasters. Look at Katrina and her aftermath. Look at Wilma and her aftermath, which is still ongoing. If they are not competent to respond to natural disasters, what are we going to do when we are hit with a man-made disaster, with a terrorist act?

I have talked to Members on both sides of the aisle this week who have privately worried out loud that they are not sure what would happen in their own community if they were hit with either a natural or a man-made disaster because there is deep-seated worry and concern about this administration's ability to take care of the American people. And never mind their ability. They are clearly focused only on themselves and their ability to accomplish their own goals and to heck with what anyone else thinks.

Clearly, they were willing to take the biggest step that any leader can take of a nation, and that is to send his or her citizens to war.

Let us just go over what some other people think, and like the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) has said, this is not Mr. RYAN's opinion; this is not Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ's opinion. What I am about to tell my colleagues is Ed Gillespie's opinion, the chairman of the Republican National Committee. It is not only the President's father, whom we can talk about what he said his opinion was when somebody reveals the identity of a covert agent. We are talking about on September 30, 2003, Ed

Gillespie, who is the chairman of the Republican National Committee, during an appearance on MSNBC's "Hardball."

So we are talking Chris Matthews, who said, "I think if the allegation is true to reveal the identity of an undercover CIA operative, it's abhorrent and it should be a crime and it is a crime."

Hardball's host, Chris Matthews, went on to ask Chairman Gillespie, "It would be worse than Watergate, wouldn't it?"

Gillespie's response: "It's—yeah. I suppose in terms of the real-world implications of it, it's not just politics."

That is absolutely right; it is not just politics. It is not just accusations that were of a personal nature like the previous President of the United States. We are talking about someone who plunged us into war and now we have had the 2,000th casualty of that war, because he is so focused on being right that he will clearly do anything and authorize his cronies to do anything and say anything to accomplish their objectives, even cause the deaths of our citizens.

I had an opportunity to go visit our troops that have come back from the Iraq war at Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital right here in Washington, D.C. and I spoke to a young man whose legs were blown off, who will never be able to walk on his own legs again, whose life has been forever impacted because we have an administration that was hell bent on being right and was willing to do anything to make sure that their agenda was met. Never mind basic human decency.

We all raise our children, and I raise my children, to understand what right from wrong is, to know that we have to tell the truth, to know that we need to do right by people. And in my faith's tradition, we have an important stress on taking care of one another in our community and giving back. We have the spirit of what is called "tikkun olam." And there is absolutely no hint of any of that in this administration or, quite frankly, among the leadership in this institution.

□ 1445

Because to a person, the accusations, and I will respectfully say again that these are accusations and that no one has been found guilty of anything or has been accused of anything as of yet, but whether it is the accusations against our former leader from this institution, or all the way up to the Vice President's Chief of Staff and the accusations made against him today in the indictment handed down, we are talking about decisions they made so they could accomplish their own political goals.

That is just heinous, and I want to know when the hearings are going to be called. I want to know where the outrage is. I want to know why the press conference was not held to schedule the special committee, the bipartisan committee that should be

brought together to do an investigation. I want to know where the outrage is. I want to know why we are not having impeachment hearings. I am waiting to hear that, because it is a little bit more important, when you send people to war just to accomplish your own goals, than when you lie about personal circumstances, totally and completely different. It is just disgusting.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Reclaiming my time, we do not want to make light of it, but let us just think of what President Clinton had to deal with in his impeachment. That is private behavior. If he committed perjury, that is wrong, and we are all against it.

You are talking about outing a CIA agent. You are talking about lying to FBI agents. This is the Chief of Staff of the Vice President of the United States, not some intern. This is one of the architects of the war.

Now, we all know that all the nonsense that was told to us before the war was not true, and now you are willing to lie to a Federal grand jury? You are willing to lie to FBI agents? You are willing to lie to Tim Russert? You sure as heck are going to be willing to lie to the American people, a couple of folks in Ohio that work in a steel mill and just trying to make ends meet. That is nothing, to lie to them, if you are willing to go to jail or prison to lie.

And we know through the indictment that the Vice President told Libby on June 12, so the Vice President knew in June. Then he goes on Tim Russert in September and says, "I don't know Joe Wilson." He says, "I don't know Joe Wilson." You told Libby 3 or 4 months before you not only knew him, you knew his wife worked for the CIA.

Now, we have Mr. Gillespie, who is going to be the Chair of our Independent Katrina Commission, here is what Karl Rove said. "Did you have any knowledge or did you leak the name of the CIA agent to the press?" "No." That was in September, I think, right after Cheney was on Meet the Press.

We do not know exactly what the situation that Karl Rove is in is. I may speculate for a second. But you cannot tell me that Karl Rove, who manages every single solitary detail of everything that happens in the executive branch and the White House and the West Wing, you are going to tell me that Scooter Libby, the Chief of Staff of the Vice President knew this, but Karl Rove did not?

It is going to be interesting over the course of the next few weeks and months to find out exactly what Karl Rove did know. I think this goes right to what we have been talking about over the past year, 2 years, since we started doing our 30-something Group, that the Republicans continue to pick their party over what is best for the country.

Now, we are all Americans here. You cannot out a CIA agent, you just cannot do it. You just cannot lie a country

into war. It is just wrong, for all these obvious reasons. And you just should not take public tax dollars and give them to the oil companies, like we are doing.

We gave \$16 billion through the two energy bills we passed and corporate welfare to the oil industry. Now, all you have to do is go to the gas pump and realize that that is not a good idea, or read the paper, where the oil companies have some of the largest profits in the history of oil companies in the last quarter. We are giving them your public tax dollars, the people you represent and I represent that work hard and see that big number at the top of their check, and then the much littler number that you actually get, because money comes down here, and the Republican Congress takes it and gives it to the oil company, and then goes to the oil company out on "Shake Down Street," K Street, just a cab ride away, shakes down K Street, and K Street fills up the Republican coffers with money, and the cycle continues.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. If the gentleman will yield further, I wish my constituents could go to the gas station, but right now they cannot because none of the gas stations have any power. There are people in my district sitting in the dark 5 days after the storm hit them, supposedly the model State for disaster preparedness and aftermath response.

We have a Governor of my State who is refusing, after being asked several times this week, refusing to use the state of emergency to have the tankers with gas, instead of filling their contracts, which they can get premium top dollar for the gas in those tankers, he is refusing to order those tankers to deliver gas to meet the essential services that we need, to meet the needs of the generators in my cities and in the cities across south Florida of my colleagues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). He is refusing to reorder the priorities of these gas tankers owned by the gas companies, the oil companies, and make sure that they can provide gas to the generators so that the lift stations can be turned on so the sewage is not backing up. We have to boil water or put chlorine in it or buy it from the few supermarkets that actually have powered themselves with a generator.

So we do not have any gas stations that are up and running on their own without any generators. Unfortunately, the oil companies have not in most cases purchased generators to be there and ready for the gas stations to use in the event of an actual disaster.

So, what we are talking about here is how deep this culture of corruption and cronyism and incompetence runs. If you could say it is an isolated instance

and you have a rogue staff person who just became so focused on taking care of his boss that he decided he was going to say anything to accomplish his boss's goal, then you could say, you know what, you get rid of that cancer, and, okay, the cancer is cut out, and then the body is whole and well again.

But, unfortunately, this is an administration that is so infested with cancer, this is a party up and down the halls and walls of government that is so infested with cancer that it is impossible to cut it out completely. It runs that deep.

Next year what the American people are going to have to ask themselves is if they want this to continue. Do they want to continue to go in this direction? Do they want to continue traveling down this path, being dragged down this path, having another 1,000 soldiers die in a war that was not only ill-advised, but we were led into through deception, and then not only through deception, but through deliberate acts of deception to ensure that they would be able to drag us into war?

Then, on top of that, let us talk about some of the other things that they are willing to do and be hell-bent on in accomplishing their goals. Talk about what happens right here just in the last few months since I have been a Member of Congress.

Basically the Republicans here have created a democracy-free zone. We talk about the pride that we have in our democracy, and how participatory this institution is, and how we are all elected in our own right, and we all have the same rights and privileges, we have the same number of about 633,000 people that sent us here.

Yet it is pretty clear that we do not all have the same ability to cast our vote and have it stand and mean something and cast it freely and willingly, because the Members on the other side of the aisle have not been allowed to cast their votes by their leadership and leave that as their opinion standing all by itself because they get their arms twisted off.

We have votes like the energy vote that we had a couple of weeks ago that was called as a 5-minute vote and was held open for 40 minutes, 40 minutes, because we were killing that bill, because it was a terrible bill that was not going to do anything to reduce gas prices, that was not going to improve our energy situation that we are in such dire straits in in this country. It was going to put more money in the pockets of the oil company executives and the oil companies' profit margin.

So what they did was hold that vote open so they could twist enough of their Members' arms and work the aisles so that they could get their Members to switch. And we watched it. The board is right up above us here, our names are in lights, there is a red and green button, and you saw a whole bunch of red buttons on their side of the aisle that over the 40 minutes were switched to green.

Now, I came here with some conviction, and I came here with some backbone, and I am certainly not going to let anybody chisel my backbone away just in the name of my party. I just wonder where the backbone is? Why are they willing to just cave? Do they not have convictions? Do they not understand that you have to represent your constituents? Do not they understand that they have to represent their constituents, not the oil companies? Do they not understand they have to represent their seniors so they can get low-cost prescription drugs and not put more money in the pockets of the pharmaceutical companies?

That Medicare prescription drug bill passed before I got here. How long was the vote held open; 3 hours on a 15-minute vote to do the exact same thing? That bill prohibited the government from negotiating prices, just like the Veterans Administration has that ability, negotiating prices with the pharmaceutical industry to make sure that our constituents, our seniors, could have low-cost prescription drugs, who are right now having to choose between medicine and meals.

This is what we are talking about when we talk about an institutionalized culture of corruption, because you do not see the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) working the aisles, twisting our arms off to change our votes from red to green or green to red. We get permission to stand and vote our conviction.

I can tell you all the way back to March, when I had a very strong opinion about the Terri Schiavo case, some Members on the floor disagreed with me, but nobody was coming here, nobody was pounding on me asking me not to do that, "Do not stand up, Debbie. Do not stand up for what you believe in." I was allowed, even though I am a freshman and had only been here 10 weeks, I was encouraged by our leadership to stand up for what I believe in. It is just the saddest thing that that does not exist on their side of the aisle.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, that is what we are asking the American people for, for an opportunity to take this country in a new direction; to change what is going on here, and stop not only the corruption that we find here, but establish a system of government that does not put a political party before the interests of the country.

When you look at what happened through FEMA with Hurricane Katrina, the top 8 to 10 people in FEMA were political cronies. They were political hacks. "Brownie," the man in charge of FEMA, was a lawyer for horses, someone who owns horses, or a horse's attorney. I am not exactly sure what he was. He had the right college roommate, so he got appointed to FEMA.

Listen, we understand that you make political appointments, but if you ap-

point somebody who is incompetent, you put them as an ambassador to a country that has a lot of beaches; send them over there, have a nice house, drink a lot of nice wine, have a good time, make nice with whatever country that you are representing or trying to schmooze. You do not put that person in charge of FEMA.

My friend who was here earlier said we wanted to make FEMA bigger and more bureaucratic, and the old scare tactics, like we are not old-school Democrats. We want efficient, flexible, nimble government that works. If it means a little bit more money, maybe it does, and maybe it needs to be spent. But where is the accountability? What it needs more than anything else is competent leadership.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I am glad the gentleman brought up FEMA, because obviously that is a pretty hot issue down my way right now. Let us let people know what we were talking about the other night, because Brownie, the former Mr. Michael Brown, the former Under Secretary for FEMA, most people think that he is gone. Most people think he is no longer involved in FEMA's decision-making activities.

He is still being paid \$148,000 a year as an adviser, because the Secretary of Homeland Security Mr. Chertoff just extended his contract for another 30 days. They kept him on supposedly to continue to advise them on how to deal with the aftermath of Katrina.

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Mr. RYAN of Ohio. So you are saying, Mr. Speaker, I want to get this clear here, for the Members of the Chamber, you are telling me that Brownie, the guy that President Bush went down and said you are doing a good job, Brownie, when he really was not doing a good job at all, really was not doing much of anything, you are saying he is still on the payroll?

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. He is still on the payroll being paid a \$148,000-a-year contract for another 30 days.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. But the Democrats are the ones that waste the money. We are the ones that do not know how to handle government. Come on.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. We have two more storms that have hit us since Katrina, Rita and Wilma; and it is not like they have fixed it. It is not like Brownie has gotten it right now and we have seen the fruits of continuing his contract. Now we have people who are sitting in the dark in my two counties that I represent, Broward County and Miami-Dade County. We have lift stations that are off, all 2,000 lift stations in my county have no power. The sewage is backing up. People have to boil water, but they cannot boil water because they do not have any power, or they have to add chlorine to their water. The ice and water trucks that were touted as being pre-

positioned prior to the storm, they were lost, they could not find them because they relied on cell phones for communication.

Now, hello. How tall are cell phone towers? I would think that if you have a cell phone tower getting hit by 120-mile-an-hour winds that perhaps you would anticipate that they would be damaged and you would not be able to use them.

Where was the planning? I could nitpick every little detail; but, obviously, in the aftermath of a storm, there are going to be kinks, there are going to be problems. I do not want to be specifically critical of the response to this storm; I want to be more generally critical, because they have learned nothing. We have had the two additional storms following Katrina, and they have learned nothing. Sixty days have gone by. They have not fixed it. They have not made adjustments. Why?

We have people who are sitting in harm's way who have suffered damage, and they continue the contract of the man who was clearly declared as incompetent and removed from being in charge of Katrina, but not removed from the payroll, and the stated purpose was so they could continue to get advice from him. A person who was not qualified for the job to start with, because his previous experience was being head of the Arabian Horse Association.

You are absolutely right, Mr. RYAN. In terms of cronyism, that was the ultimate. You had a guy get a job because he was the college roommate of an ally of the President's and put in charge of the agency that has to be the command center for every agency in the government and directing their response to the aftermath of a hurricane, or any natural disaster. What happens is, if you put an unqualified person in that position, you are going to end up having the result that we saw in the aftermath of Katrina and the result that we have now seen in the aftermath of Wilma.

Now we have Secretary Paulison, Acting Secretary Paulison, who is in place now. He is a constituent of mine, he does have the qualifications, he does know what he is doing; but Brownie is still on the payroll, and FEMA is now in the Department of Homeland Security. It is no longer an independent agency that answers directly to the President, that has the ability to direct things on their own. They have to run it up the food chain to the head of Homeland Security.

When you put obstacles in the path of a decision-maker, it makes it harder to make the decision. And in the aftermath of a storm, you cannot have obstacles. Obstacles harm people. I am hoping that at some point someone in the administration decides that it is more important to take care of people than to accomplish their own agenda and their own goals.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. That is it. Putting the party that you belong to

should not come first. The Republican Party should not come over the interests of the country. All we are saying is that the Republican majority has had control of this Chamber since 1994. They control the Senate, and they control the White House. They pull all the levers of government. Whether it is emergency management, failure; poverty rates, up; tuition rates, doubled; health care costs, up 15 to 20 percent a year. The Republicans take public tax dollars and give it away in corporate welfare. Mr. Speaker, \$16 billion in public tax money went to the oil companies and the energy companies and subsidies, and \$700 billion in the medicare prescription drug bill.

Now, the Democratic Party wants to lead, and we want to lead and put the interests of the country before what is necessarily best for the Democratic Party. And here is a great example:

In 1993, when we were running huge deficits, the Democratic-controlled House, the Democratic-controlled Senate, and President Clinton passed a balanced budget bill that led, without one Republican vote, that led to the greatest economic expansion in the history of the United States of America. And it was not popular and it was not fun, and many Democrats lost their seats over it. But you know what? You have got to balance your budget. And someone, more than one person was a statesman to make that decision. You put the interests of the country before your own personal political interests and that of your party. That is what we want to do. That is what the Democrats want to do. We want to take this country into another direction and change what is going on here.

Let me tell you what we will do when we are in charge. One is, we will redo the prescription drug bill. We will go and we will allow for reimportation of prescription drugs from Canada that will drive down the costs which will save the taxpayer billions of dollars over the next few years. We will go back and we will put in the medicare prescription drug bill a provision that allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate on behalf of the medicare recipients and on behalf of the taxpayer to Merck and Pfizer, and they will negotiate down the cost of drugs. Some people project that savings could be 20 to 30 percent. Twenty to 30 percent of \$700 billion is 140 to \$210 billion. We would take those savings and we would invest it into the American people.

We would also take the \$16 billion that we have given to oil companies and we will add that into the mix. Now, notice I did not say one time we want to raise taxes. We will take that money and we will invest it into programs that will lead to economic growth.

One, we will have a plan that will create a million engineers and scientists in the next 10 years. We are getting our clock cleaned by China and India. Last year China graduated 600,000 engineers, India graduated

350,000, the U.S. graduated 70,000. Half the foreign-born will eventually move back to their home country. The Democrats have a proposal to take those savings and invest it into education. We will reduce the cost of college tuition by investing that money. We will make sure that there is a clinic and a nurse in every single school in the country so that our kids are healthy, because if we do not have healthy students, we cannot have educated students, and if we do not have educated students, we cannot have a strong economy, and that is the bottom line.

The Democrats will invest in magnetic levitation trains, the hottest train technology going right now. There is only one in the world. It is in Shanghai. I was on it when I was over in China. Mr. Speaker, 270 miles an hour we are going down the pike, and I am holding a cup of coffee and it did not spill. It is the latest train technology, it is a jobs program, it is good for the environment, and it reduces our dependence on foreign oil.

The Democrats will take the savings from that money and we will invest it into preventive health care. We will make sure that we are doing for the American people what we are doing for the Iraqis, and that is allow them to go to a clinic when they have a cold instead of walking into an emergency room with pneumonia.

Mr. Speaker, we want to spend less money in the end, but it means putting it up front first for prevention. And we will start an Apollo program for an alternative energy source, so that these engineers and scientists that we create will be able to eventually reduce our dependence on foreign oil so that not one more American life has to be lost defending our right to go and get oil so that we can drive SUVs.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is so right. As we close out, I just want to reiterate that this is about competence. It is about who do you trust. It is going to be next year asking the American people to give us the opportunity to take this country in a new direction, to end the culture of corruption, to end the cronyism, to invest the kind of resources that we need to make sure that the middle class can be thriving and vibrant, and to make sure that we have a disaster response system in place that is responsive, that meets the needs of people, and that does not leave them twisting in the wind as my constituents are right now, who are without gas and without water, where a hospital in my own district is not able to continue to take care of people because their employees do not have enough gas to get to work. Those are basic needs.

We want to thank the Democratic leader for giving us an opportunity to come on this floor tonight and for creating the 30-something Working Group. I know Mr. RYAN wants to give people the Web site where they can contact us.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) who is down in Florida with his constituents. Send us an e-mail to 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov. Send us an e-mail, let us know your thoughts. We want to take this country in a new direction, change the way we are going, and put the country before the party.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I want to let my constituents know that I am coming home tonight and looking forward to having the opportunity of helping them to get through the aftermath of Hurricane Wilma.

PROGRESS IN THE WAR ON TERROR

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the great deal of progress being made on our global war on terror. While there is no quick path to victory, it is absolutely necessary for us to maintain our resolve. Terrorists have long waged war against the United States, well before the September 11 attacks. Americans were bombed in Lebanon in 1983, at the World Trade Center in 1993, at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1996, at the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, and on board the USS *Cole* in 2000.

Over the years, these terrorists have attacked and attacked and attacked, thinking they could kill innocent Americans without paying a price. I am proud of President Bush and our troops for standing up to these murderers and showing them we will not sit back and tolerate this behavior.

Conditions in the Middle East are improving. Despite the terrorists' plans to disrupt democracy in Iraq, millions of Iraqi people embraced democracy by turning out to vote for a new Constitution. In addition, the Iraqi security forces are taking a much more prominent role in defending their country.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that Americans will continue to support our troops. They are doing the right thing because they are making the world a safer place.

A NEW DIRECTION FOR U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, a nation that cannot defend its borders against an illegal invasion is a nation without national sovereignty.

Madam Speaker, rhetoric rules the day when it comes to immigration. A lot of people with self-promoting agendas do a lot of talking. They have hidden motives that range from political