

declared an end to major combat operations in May of 2003.

We need to face the fact that the situation in Iraq is not improving, nor will it improve as long as our troops remain there. Because the presence of over 160,000 soldiers in Iraq and on Iraqi soil is the main catalyst fueling Iraq's insurgency. The time is long overdue for the U.S. to change course in Iraq and bring our troops home.

To transition from war to peace, we recommend that your administration immediately make four pivotal policy changes in Iraq. First: engage in greater multilateral cooperation with our allies. Second: pursue diplomatic non-military initiatives. Third: prepare for a robust post-conflict reconciliation process. And, fourth: withdraw the U.S. armed Forces. Multilateral cooperation.

The United States must engage the international community, including the U.N. and NATO, to establish a multinational interim security force for Iraq. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the United Nations, for example, is well suited for this task.

Diplomatic nonmilitary initiatives. The U.S. must pursue a diplomatic offensive, shifting its role from that of Iraq's military occupier to its reconstruction partner. This means giving Iraq back to the Iraqi people, working with them to rebuild their economic and physical infrastructure and creating Iraqi jobs.

The U.S. must also engage the United Nations to oversee Iraq's economic and humanitarian needs, renounce any desire to control Iraqi oil, and ensure that the United States does not maintain lasting military bases in Iraq.

Post-conflict reconciliation. Establish an international peace commission to oversee Iraq's post-war reconciliations. This group would include members of the global community who have experience in international peace-building and conflict resolution and would be tasked with coordinating peace talks between Iraq's various factions.

Withdrawal of the U.S. Armed Forces. The cost of the war in Iraq, both human and financial, has been staggering. Tragically, the American and Iraqi lives lost and the billions of dollars spent have failed to actually make our country safer from the threat of international terrorism. To end the war in Iraq, save lives, and prevent the U.S. from spiraling even further into debt, the U.S. must withdraw its Armed Forces now.

Mr. President, after Iraq holds its December parliamentary elections, the country's leaders will be responsible for charting Iraq's course. The international community, including the United States, can then provide non-militaristic support to ensure the sufficiency of Iraq.

We look forward to your response to our recommendations, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss them with you further. Mr. Speaker, I

will send this letter to the President in the coming days. Not only is it long overdue from the Bush administration to end the war in Iraq; it is long overdue for this body, the Congress of America, to do our part in ending the war in Iraq.

I urge all of my colleagues to lend their signatures to this timely, important letter.

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

(Mr. BURGESS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. LEWIS of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. MCCAUL of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### HURRICANE WILMA VICTIMS NEED HELP IN SOUTH FLORIDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon all across south Florida, there are thousands of people whose homes have been condemned. They have been condemned following a category 3 hurricane called Hurricane Wilma.

Subsequently in the last few days, it has been pouring rain. I went door to door in my district over the weekend and met hundreds of men and women in their 80s and 90s stuck in their apartments with no power. At one point, I came upon a 93-year-old woman in her kitchen with her 90-year-old next-door neighbor who were looking with despair at an MRE, trying to figure out how to get it open, put it together, and get it heating so that they could have the first hot food, something resembling hot food, that they had had in 5 days.

I literally had to help them with the print on the instructions that was this big, try to figure out how to put that

meal together without burning themselves, because as soon as you put the water in the meal, it starts to immediately heat up.

This was not an isolated incident. In the 2 days after that, those women and the other senior citizens that I represent in the Sunrise Lakes Condominium were told that they needed to leave their apartments because after the rain, the leaking through their condominium roof was so bad that their apartments were uninhabitable.

They are now in an elementary school with no shower, with a make-shift shower that was put together with two porta-potties shoved next to each other and plastic sheeting taped up with a hose stuck over the top so that they could bathe. We are talking about men and women in their upper 80s and 90s.

Hurricane Wilma has caused tremendous suffering in south Florida, and there has not been enough national attention on the plight of my constituents and the constituents of my south Florida colleagues. We need to make sure that we are able to provide the help and assistance that they so desperately need.

There is need across this country, and next week we are going to add insult to injury and apply a manmade disaster in the form of the budget reconciliation, which is Washington-speak for budget cuts. There are going to be proposed housing cuts, Medicare cuts, food stamps, school lunches. Between Katrina and Wilma, and all of the suffering going on across this country, now is not the time to add more harm and do more damage to people who are badly in need.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do right by Americans, not pull the rug out from under them. I urge my colleagues to make sure that we provide the badly needed assistance, both to victims of Hurricane Katrina on the gulf coast and to victims of Katrina from south Florida.

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

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### 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 back here on the House floor on behalf of the 30-Something Working Group. We have been coming to the floor, Mr. Speaker, now for a couple of years weekly; and over the past several months we have turned it into a nightly, and sometimes bi-nightly, event, where we come down

here and we talk about what is going on in the Nation's capital.

We do not only talk about what is going on with regard to people who are our age, within the 30-Something Working Group, although the original mission of our group was to explain and to lay out the facts for people who are in our generation, in their 30s with families, and how the decisions that are being made here affect that group of people.

Since then, we have broadened this really to touch on all of the issues, because it seemed as we got further and further into the budget cuts, the tax program that the Republicans have, the war, the inability to address the natural disasters, we have broadened our mission to deal with all of these issues, because all of these issues hit home to not only people who are in their 30s but people across the country.

□ 1145

We have come to find that the decisions over the past several years that we have been here, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) and I are on our third year. The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is a freshman member. But over the past several years we have seen up close and certainly personal the absolute failure of the Republican party and their ability to govern, the total and complete incompetence.

This is not a party issue. The only reason we have to talk about parties is because the Republicans control the House. They control the Senate. They control the White House. And when you are running \$500 billion deficits a year, you are spending \$1.5 billion a week in Iraq, creating a welfare state there, you are cutting taxes on people who make billions of dollars a year here in the U.S., you take public tax money and you give it, to the tune of \$16 billion in the last few months, this Congress has taken taxes from average, middle-class people. You sent it down here, Mr. Speaker. The average people sent it down here.

And this Republican Congress and Republican Senate and Republican President give that tax money, \$16 billion worth, to the oil industry. The most profitable industry in the world right now is the oil industry, and public tax money is going to subsidize the oil industry.

Then our friends in the Republican party go down the "shake-down street," K Street, where all the lobbyists are. Anyone who has been to Washington, you go to K Street, that is where the big major lobby firms are. The Republicans then, after giving the public tax money in subsidies to the oil companies, they go out to "shake-down street" and they shake down the lobbyists for money. So the lobbyists then give the money to the Republican party so they can spend it on their campaigns. And we have a big hole here because the only group missing in this equation is the American people, the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK).

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Let me share something very quick, because I want to make sure that Members, staff, everyone understands what is going on, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is hitting the nail right on the head, hitting it with the hammer right on the head like a good carpenter.

I can tell you what is happening now in Washington, D.C., is unprecedented in history of the United States of America. Let me say it again. What is happening now in the United States as it relates to its governance, I am not saying the everyday Americans, because folks are waking up and going to work every day. Small businesses are going to open their stores to be able to bring about the kind of commerce they need in their local communities. Kids are waking up, going to school to hopefully educate themselves. But as it relates to governance we are falling short.

We are robbing, a couple of years ago we could say future generations, I would say we are robbing Americans in the present. So when these kinds of activities that we are talking about taking place under light and under camera, then I am very concerned about what is going on in the back halls of Congress.

Now I am going to tell you right now, it is not the Meek report. It is not the Ryan report. It not the Wasserman Schultz report. This is what is happening in our country right now. We have fiscal responsibility used as some sort of whim word or some sort of punchline. It is not being used in a way that it should be used.

It is not saying to billionaires, no, we cannot give you another tax break because we have a war going on, as a matter of fact, two. We have three natural disasters that have hit our country in an unprecedented way. We have Medicare that some here in this Congress on the majority side want to cut. So we have to say no to the special interests.

Also, I am going to tell you, and I just want to make sure that folks understand what we are talking about. It is unprecedented as it relates to a lack of governance in the history of the country.

Now I am just going to point out just a few things here, and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), you can continue or we can move on to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ). But I can tell you this, USA Today, I did not print this. The gentleman did not print this. "Outing of a CIA agent."

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. One of our third-party validators.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. One of our third-party validators.

"Outing of CIA agent. Louisiana can't pay Katrina and Rita bills." But, meanwhile, folks are running around cutting the very programs that help

folks in Louisiana and Mississippi and other affected areas, in South Florida as it relates to Wilma and others, cutting programs that will help the very people that State is trying to use.

The Washington Times, let me take this little promo off here. Washington Times, a conservative paper here in Washington, D.C. It talks about issues that are coming before the Congress, and it talks about the other issues that are taking place in Capitol Hill, maybe not on the front page but within the paper talking about indictments and hearings.

The Washington Post, a big front-page picture. Not about some sort of program or some sort of way that we are helping middle-class families, not talking about bringing the costs down of gas or heating oil or anything like that. No, it talks about the fact that the popularity, 58 percent in a poll questioned the integrity of the President of the United States.

Now I am not one to question the integrity of the President of the United States, but I can tell you this: That it is interesting that individuals can out or in said indictment, out CIA agents and then forget about it. Oh, like I said last night, I was going to get a cup of coffee, and I walked over—I cannot remember when I outed the CIA agent.

The bottom line is something is very wrong as it relates to what is going on in this country, as it relates to governance.

The New York Times, the same. You can pick up a paper, the Members when they fly back to their districts, since we finished our business for this week, they can pick up the papers and find the same thing. We cannot explain ourselves or spin ourselves out of this situation. This Congress is rated below, 35, 31 percent. Who is counting at this particular time? But I can tell you something is very wrong.

We have to rise up and provide the leadership. That is why we come to this floor. We challenge the majority side to stand up and govern. And the reason why we have this kind of atmosphere in Washington is because we have not called these individuals out on the carpet. Need it be executive branch, Federal agencies, those that are taking the American people's tax dollars and doing what they may.

\$14 billion yesterday in the Budget Committee and a hike in fees in students loans, in student assistance at a time when we are talking about providing jobs. So I am just going to say that we need to be alarmed by some of this. We need to be able to let folks know that we are about changing this kind of atmosphere here in Washington, D.C.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. The gentleman is absolutely right.

The gentleman talked about, he started his last couple of minutes talking about the precedent-setting activity in this administration. To take that a step further, let us talk about just how precedent setting this administration is.

They are certainly precedent setting in terms of ethical lapses, in terms of corruption and cronyism and the lack of confidence.

You have literally, with the indictment of Mr. Libby on Friday, the first White House official to be indicted in 130 years. Now, throughout our lifetime, throughout our lifetime and the lifetime of our generation here in the 30-Something Working Group, you go through probably our earliest memory of our administration would be Nixon. We were young kids during the Nixon administration, but obviously that was a pretty significant scandal.

Then you move forward. Nothing too terrible in the Ford administration. People obviously had some deep concerns or over Mr. Carter administration but nothing ethical to speak of. Obviously, with Iran Contra and the Reagan administration and the number of officials who were investigated and subpoenaed there were deep concerns, but no one indicted from the White House.

The same thing with President Clinton. No indictments of people in the White House. Definitely some questions, but now we reach the Bush administration.

Does the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) have the chart with him from the other day where we can put it up and show people and the Speaker what the President said during his campaign? Is that with us?

As we are getting it, if you recall, the President when he was a candidate for President talked about how he was going to transform the standards of ethics of the White House and that anyone working in his administration was going to be held to the highest of standards. That it was not just going to be whether they have actually broke the law, but the standard, and here it is.

President Bush's promise that he made as a candidate that, "In my administration we will ask not only what is legal but what is right. Not just what the lawyers allow but what the public deserves."

Well, I do not know, I guess prevarication is just a common practice. It is just part of their culture, part of their culture of corruption and cronyism and incompetence.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. A double standard for people working in their administration.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Right. I guess they believe they can say anything they want to. They do not have to follow it, and there would be no consequences. But, see, unfortunately for them, fortunately for the American people, the American people get it now. They are on to them.

Let us talk about the Washington Post poll, and I know we will have an opportunity to put this up in poster form probably next week, but one of the questions that the Washington Post/ABC News poll asked was, Please tell me whether the following state-

ment applies to Bush or not: He is honest and trustworthy. In May of 2004, 53 percent of the American people answered that question yes and 45 percent said no. Now 40 percent think he is honest and trustworthy, and 58 percent say he is not.

I think that is in part because you can tell a lot about a person by the people they surround themselves with. Right now, let us look at who is surrounding the President of the United States or who previously was surrounding him.

You have Mr. Libby, who was indicted on Friday; and, of course, it is not confirmed unless and until he is convicted. He is not guilty of a crime yet. But he was indicted. The first official in the White House in 130 years. The President said if somebody committed a crime they will no longer work in his administration.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) I know will probably talk a few minutes about the difference in the shifting sands of the President's statements. But you have Mr. Rove who increasingly it has become clear, as clear as a bell, that he absolutely was directly involved in outing a covert CIA agent, directly involved, yet he is still in the White House with the highest security clearance, access to the most top secret information.

It is easy to see why 58 percent of the American people do not think the President is honest and trustworthy. Because if you take it a step further, the same Washington Post/ABC News poll says it has been reported that another subject of the investigation has been Karl Rove, who has been a close advisor to Bush.

The question was, Given what you have heard or read, do you think Rove did anything wrong in connection with this case or not? If yes, do you think he did something unethical but not illegal or did you think that he did something illegal? Forty-nine percent of the American people answered that question that he did something wrong for sure. Of the 49 percent, 26 percent believe he did something illegal and 23 percent think he did something unethical. Forty-nine percent of people asked believe that Karl Rove did something either illegal or unethical, and 59 percent of the people believe that he should resign from the White House.

Now, is President Bush so incompetent that he is not able to cope without Mr. Rove by his side? I do not know. Generally, I expect that, I know I surround myself with a number of competent people. You make sure you put together a team of people that does not rise and fall on one person and their knowledge and ability to assist you.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I can tell the gentlewoman that, as it relates to national security, protection of our homeland and as it pertains to this case, you have the question of a CIA clandestine agent whose job was charged with finding out more or

tracking down possible chemical weapons that can be used, weapons of mass destruction that can be used against the United States of America.

□ 1200

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are in the minority, and that means that the majority, which is the Republican majority, has the responsibility of governance, has the responsibility because they have the committee chairmanships. They have the Speakership. They have all of the leadership, and I will say at least I am not even going to talk about the Speakership or the leadership. I am going to talk about the committee chairpersons that have the responsibility to protect and have direct oversight over the Federal Government, making sure that we keep children, women, men, everyday Americans, safe.

What are we doing as Democrats? What we have done, not only have we put light on what is wrong as it relates to outing CIA agents, but also, there was a letter written today by four of our ranking members. A ranking member, I want to make sure I explain, that is the highest ranking Democratic Member on the said committees of jurisdiction or concern over a particular issue, in this case, security clearance.

This letter went to the associate director of division of security, and it is questioning Mr. Rove's security clearance. This did not come from the chairmen of the committees, did not come from any person of power on the majority side. This came from the minority side, on the Democratic side; and it is done by very fine Members, the ranking member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Mr. JOHN DINGELL; the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, Ranking Member DAVID OBEY; also, Defense appropriations, veteran, marine, Mr. JOHN MURTHA from Pennsylvania; and also the Armed Services ranking member that we serve with, Mr. IKE SKELTON of the Armed Services Committee. They questioned the security clearance of Mr. Rove.

What the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) just finished saying is the fact that no one is that important when it is a question of outing a CIA agent and others for political gain. So that is what we are doing right now.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the point that I think that we have been trying to make here in the 30-something group. You cannot put your political party above the interests of the country; and if you out a CIA agent because it may benefit your political party, you are wrong. You are wrong. You cannot do that because it weakens the country; and you did not just out her. You outed every contact she has made in the last 20 years. You outed the front company in Boston that the CIA had. They had a front company. They talked about her being at the Belgium University. So any

American now at the University of Belgium is now suspect if they have any contacts.

This has ramifications well beyond what the average person could even understand, well beyond what we could even understand, because this woman was working on behalf of the United States of America and the one quote that sticks with me is the one CIA operative that said, outing a CIA agent is the moral equivalent of outing a military unit in a forward area. So in Baghdad, they are over there, it would be like Karl Rove or Scooter Libby saying to the insurgency in Iraq, the Marines are coming right over there in about a half an hour; that is where they are coming. That would be unacceptable.

But in the covert world, that is exactly what Karl Rove and Scooter Libby and all the minions over in the executive branch did. It was a coordinated effort to out this woman because they did not like what her husband was saying about the war, and that is wrong. That is wrong.

If you do not believe us, because we love our third-party validators, this is Melissa who was a 14-year covert CIA agent. She says, We are talking about lies and we are talking about capabilities. We do our work, we risk our lives, we risk lives of our agents in order to protect our country; and when something like this happens, it cuts to the very core of what we do. We are not being undermined by the North Koreans. We are not being undermined by the Russians. We are being undermined by officials in our own government. That I find galling.

Could you imagine being a CIA operative somewhere in the world right now and you think, do they got my back in D.C.? Do they got my back? Or are you afraid that if I get caught up in the wrong political debate, somehow I may get outed by my own government?

That is what this is all about, and to have the kind of deceit and lies take place out of the executive branch, let us just look at this.

Official A in the indictment, now we are not making this up. This is right out of the indictment for Scooter Libby. Official A, which the administration has admitted is Karl Rove, on July 10 of 2003, the middle of the summer, Official A, which is Karl Rove, advised Scooter Libby of a conversation that he had earlier that week with Bob Novak, the columnist, in which Wilson's wife was discussed as a CIA employee involved in Wilson's trip. Libby was advised by Official A, by Karl Rove, that Novak would be writing a story about Wilson's wife.

So Karl Rove told Scooter Libby in July of 2003 that Novak was going to be writing a story.

Now, September of 2003, a couple of months later, Karl Rove says to ABC News to the question Andrea Owen asked, Did you ever have any knowledge of the CIA agent or did you leak the name of the CIA agent to the press?

Any knowledge or did you leak it. Karl Rove said no. He lied to the American people. He did not lie to Andrea Owen. He lied to the American people. We know from the indictment he told Scooter Libby Novak was going to write about it, and 2 months later he says he does not know anything about it.

Then he does a CNN interview just July of this year; and he says, I will repeat what I said to ABC News when this whole thing broke some number of months ago. I did not know her name, and I did not leak her name.

Well, if you go back to the indictment, Official A, who is Karl Rove, advised Libby of the conversation that Novak would be writing a story about Wilson's wife. He lied. Now, he is in the White House making decisions on behalf of the United States of America.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Highest security clearance.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. We cannot have it, unacceptable behavior, unbecoming of a White House official.

Then I am going to wrap this up. I am going to go right through this so we can get everybody involved here.

Then not only did Karl Rove and Libby lie to the American people, they lied to Scott McClellan, because he came out 2 months after the indictment and said what everyone already knew, and McClellan says, Those individuals, Rove, Libby, Abrams, assured me they were not involved with this. Another lie.

Now we have to change our language a bit to respect the rules of the House and respect the office which we are about to discuss.

This is out of the indictment. On or about June 12, 2003, that same summer that we were just talking about, Libby was advised by the Vice President of the United States that Wilson's wife worked at the CIA in the counterproliferation division. Libby understood that the Vice President had learned this information from the CIA.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, just a second. I just want to make sure you identify who Mr. Libby is.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Scooter Libby was the chief of staff of the Vice President of the United States who has been indicted under five counts: two counts of making false statements, two counts of perjury and one count of obstruction of justice. So the Vice President on June 12 told Mr. Libby about Joe Wilson's wife. Then 2 months later, in September, the Vice President is on Tim Russert. Okay.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Sunday news show.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. The big time, the prime time.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. "Meet the Press," syndicated affiliates, one of the most respected journalists in Washington, D.C.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Tim Russert, son of Big Russ, Buffalo, Ohio, John Carroll graduate.

Mr. Russert says to the Vice President, this is 2 months after the Vice

President told Libby about Joe Wilson's wife. Russert says, Joe Wilson says he came back from Niger and said that, in fact, he could not find any documentation that in fact Niger had sent uranium to Iraq or engaged in that activity and reported it back to the proper channels.

Question: Were you briefed on his findings in February-March of 2003?

Vice President CHENEY: No, I do not know Joe Wilson. I have never met Joe Wilson.

Now, talk about what is the meaning of "is" is. I mean, give me a break.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Black and white.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Two months earlier, the VP told Scooter Libby about Joe Wilson's wife; and then he says 2 months later, to Tim Russert, I do not know Joe Wilson.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. How do we know that? From the notes of the chief of staff of the Vice President of the United States that said the Vice President told him in the indictment. I mean, that is not what we are saying.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is not us.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. You talk about third-party validators, but if I may for a moment, the reason why the alleged activities that have been identified in this indictment and alleged activities that are in the stacks of these papers today, just today, this is not papers from the week or the month or over the past year. That is just today, and I cannot even hold up the number of papers. We could not even bring them all down here to the floor. There are just too many. Mr. Speaker, I do not know how it would look if I rolled in a cart of the newspapers that are reporting what we are saying.

I can tell you this, it even comes back here to this Congress. The fact that we are not carrying out our oversight responsibilities and we are not calling this administration into check and balance as it relates to oversight, this is the reason why this activity is going on.

I just want to share some frustration here with trying to get information from the majority side of what happened in the Clinton administration as it relates to subpoenas and what has happened in the Bush administration as it relates to subpoenas because, Mr. Speaker, I do not just want to come to the floor and say there were a plethora, a number of subpoenas that went to the Clinton administration for far less, for far less, and now we have the outing of CIA agents. We have the possibility of some hanky-panky with the intelligence that was given to the Congress of the United States. We have the possibility of other questionable activities out of this White House and from this administration, and there are not any committee chairmen that are running around saying we are going to subpoena this person, we are going to put them under oath, and they are going to come before this Congress and they are going to respond.

Let me just mention something here. September 16 of this year, I put one of my best staff people on this. I was standing there and I told him, I said, listen, I want you to make a request to the Congressional Research Service, which is the service that we use here in the Congress to give us the facts that we need to know as it relates to putting together legislation coming to the floor, sharing with the Members, with the American people, and I want you to find out how many subpoenas were issued from not the Senate but the House of Representatives during the 8 years of the Clinton administration versus the going-on-now 5 years of the Bush administration from this Congress.

That was September 16. He makes a request. We call over to the Congressional Research Service. God bless them. I like them. Okay. These are the nicest people, Mr. Speaker, that are involved in this whole atmosphere here in Washington, D.C. They are over at the Library of Congress. Some of these folks have been there 30-plus years. Some of them are very young, bright, intelligent folks. I mean, all of them are. They are the nicest people. They come over and they brief us. They shudder. They are concerned, because they said, whoa, you are asking for something and we have to go over there and ask them, okay, the very same government that we are dealing with here.

They go over, and I continue to call because usually it takes one or two days to get this kind of information. We call back between the 9th and the 16th. The Congressional Research Service spoke to the office of general counsel and was told the records are not complete.

Now, let me tell you something. The records are not complete of what? Wait. The subpoenas were given out. Obviously, the House general counsel had to have something to do with the subpoenas being issued.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You mean to tell me they did not keep track? They do not have a file?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. It gets better. Let me just tell you. Because it is so detailed between September 19 and September 29, the Congressional Research Service spoke to four House committees and was given the following response.

□ 1215

This is when you talk about the Potomac two step here. Someone is asking for records. Oh, my God. Well, people would assume here in the Congress that records is one of the things that we do so we know what we have done in the past, so that either we can do better in the future or not make the same mistake in the future. But here is the response: The committee does not have records. That was the first one. The other one: Committee does not have records of previous Congresses.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Wait. They do not keep records of previous Congresses?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. So we do not know what is going on under this majority.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. The next one is: The committee is not sure they have those records. They could be archived. And the fourth one: The committee does not have records for previous years, and previous records may be at the National Archives.

Now I am going to put the majority on notice right now. If those subpoenas, which I believe were sent out and issued under the Clinton administration, are in this Capitol, and I do not know of any subpoenas, but if they are out there, and I am going to give them the benefit of the doubt, if they are in this building, somebody better get an intern and run them over to the National Archives because we are on our way over there.

This issue of covering up this whole thing, this thing of I got your back if you have mine, enough of it. People want change. We are trying to bring about that change, and we are being stymied. We are being locked out of information.

One Member said, this is the people's House. I question that at this time. I question that because I think, and I am coming in for a landing here, I think there are some people that are very, very worried about the facts we are bringing to light to the American people and to Members of Congress, letting them know that we know what is going on in the back halls of Congress.

Right now, like I said before, as it relates to governance, the country is going through some hard times; and there are some folks on the majority side that are not willing to govern on behalf of the very Americans that sent us here to represent them.

In this House, we have to be elected. Not one Member of this House has been appointed. In the Senate, you can be appointed by a Governor if someone leaves early in their term. But in the House there has to be a special election. So whether it is Democrat or Republican, you are elected. There is one Independent. By virtue of the fact we have been elected to come here, we have been federalized to make sure we stand up on behalf of everyday Americans.

So the hypocrisy that is going on in the House as relates to oversight, I am saying this on behalf of CIA agents right now worrying about whether their government is going to out them, and I am saying this on behalf of national security, which I serve on two committees which deal with this very issue.

Our integrity and how other countries see us and how individuals that want to go into the clandestine service, that want to serve in the CIA, I want them, I want the best and brightest to come, but I do not want them to think or anyone in the State Department to think if they get on the opposite side of an administration that they will go after their wife.

We have not even talked about that. Because Ambassador Wilson had something to say outside of what was on the script of the White House, and they could not get him because he is a person that dotted his I's and crossed his T's, they decided to go after his wife. We are going to go after your wife.

To women in this country, you need to be concerned about that. Someone cannot get to your husband, but they are going to come after you. We need to disabuse ourselves of that.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Well, you bet your sweet bippy they are worried. They are worried you are asking for those documents. Because there are those on the other side of the aisle that would try to lead people to believe that we are just a bunch of malcontent Democrats who are standing on the floor complaining about something inconsequential. It is just the same old, same old. Not true.

Look at the reasoning and the motivation that was behind the outing of a covert CIA agent and of the planning and machinations that were going on in the White House to conceal and deceive the American people about what their plans were. It was all about making sure that they could have their way in going to war in Iraq. That is what it all boiled down to. And the consequences of that motivation are that now we have more than 2,000 American soldiers, men and women, who are dead, who lost their lives because this administration was hell-bent on being right, facts be damned.

It made no difference to them that all the evidence mounting showed that they were wrong, that there were no weapons of mass destruction. It was obvious there was no other reason to go into Iraq other than the President and his people decided we should, long before September 11. With all the documentation that has come out now pointing to the fact that, soon after the President was elected in 2000, it had been decided that they were going to go to war in Iraq, and what they have been doing for the last few years leading up to our entering Iraq and since then is assembling the facts around their decision.

Then subsequent to our entry into Iraq and it being discovered there were no weapons of mass destruction, in part because Joe Wilson went there to Niger and demonstrated factually that that was not the case, subsequently they have had to prevaricate. They have had to lie, because, oops, it was shown that not only were they wrong but they were deceitful.

Can you think of any more heinous an act than deceiving the American people and the world on the ultimate sacrifice that Americans are asked to make for their country?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If the gentlewoman would yield, that is a tremendous point. They have deceived and misled the American people. Then, when the Democrats want to change things and try to take things in a new

direction, people say, well, we were all dealing with the same intelligence. So we say, well, let us go and look at the intelligence. When we say let us try to fix this problem together in a bipartisan way, because there is so much at stake here, we get stymied.

Senator REID had to shut the Senate down the other day on behalf of the American people so that we could get a good, solid overview of the intelligence. We are not saying this just to say it.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. They have no respect for the American people. They have no respect for the American people. When you are willing to do anything and say anything to have your way, regardless of the consequences, that demonstrates that you have no respect for the people that you represent, for the people that sent you to Washington to do right by them.

As elected officials, the three of us and all our colleagues here who serve in this Chamber, who have stood for office, most of us many times, what we are doing when we go and put our name on that ballot and ask people to support us, we are asking them to put their faith and their trust in us. We are telling them that we respect their opinion, that we will honor their opinion.

People in America do not expect to always agree with what we do here. I know there are people in my district who sometimes agree with me and sometimes they do not agree with me. But what they have told me, and I know each of my colleagues have heard this same thing, they have told me, Debbie, I do not always agree with you, but at least I know you are up there fighting for what you believe in. I know that you have the utmost integrity. I know I can put my faith and trust in you and that you are always going to look me in the eye and tell me exactly how things are and tell me the truth.

There is no one in America that the President can look in the eye and say he has told them the truth. Because, although he specifically has not been accused of anything illegal, he specifically has not been accused of anything illegal, you are a reflection of the people you surround yourself with. And, essentially, by allowing Karl Rove to remain in the White House and by hanging on to his staff that have been accused of unethical behavior—

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). The Chair must remind all Members that remarks in debate may not engage in personal offense toward the President by accusation or insinuation of wrongdoing.

The gentlewoman may proceed.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Forgive me, Mr. Speaker, but there are times when this is so outrageous and the conduct that is going on in this administration is so outrageous that it is difficult to contain myself and it is difficult to keep that outrage bottled up inside.

Because that is what we have been asking for weeks now. Where is the outrage? Where is the outrage from the Republican leadership in this Chamber? They certainly had plenty of outrage during the previous administration.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If the gentlewoman will yield, this is not personal. Let us be absolutely clear about this. This is business. This is about the business of the American people.

When we have the Chief of Staff of the Vice President lie to a Grand Jury on two counts and of perjury, two counts of false statements to Federal agents and of obstruction of justice; when we have the Deputy Chief of Staff of the President lie to the American people on two separate occasions; when we have the Vice President of the United States knowingly make a comment to Scooter Libby that he knows about the ambassador's wife and then goes on Meet the Press and says he does not know, this is not about Democrat and Republican, this is about the future of the country.

This country is going in the wrong direction, and every ounce of energy in the White House is geared towards covering up the outing of a CIA agent. So this is not personal. This is about the 700,000 people we each represent and the 300 million people that are in this country. It is about the wage gap, the gap between rich and poor, the increased number of poor people in our society and the lack of an adequate response to the greatest natural disaster in the history of the country. That is about executing our constitutional obligation, our constitutional responsibility.

This is this is not personal, Mr. Speaker. This is not personal. This is about us as elected representatives in the United States Congress, who swear to uphold the Constitution, wanting to take the country in a new direction, wanting to change the way business is done down here and to get rid of the corruption and the cronyism and the incompetent leadership. That is what this whole thing is about. It is not personal.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If the gentleman will yield, I can tell you why this is not personal. It is not personal for this Congress and it is not personal for the leadership, but it is personal to the American people. We have taxpayer dollars we are trying to nickel and dime. We want to nickel and dime Medicare, we want to nickel and dime Medicaid, we want to nickel and dime free and reduced lunches for poor people here in this country, and then we want to get excited about possibly saying something about someone in power?

We respect the rules of this House. We appreciate the integrity that is in the rules of this House. We do not want to abuse the rules of this House. But as it relates to the majority leadership and the majority on the other side and the majority in the Senate and as it relates to the White House, I want them

to live by the same rules that everyday Americans have to live by.

I want it to be personal for them just like it is personal for the person that can only afford to put \$10 in their gas tank because they do not even know what it means to have their gas tank full because gas prices are so high.

I want the folks that get driven around this place, that are being chauffeured around here in cars that do not know what it means not to put a debit card into a gas pump but only be able to get \$15 out, I want them to feel it just as personally.

I want them to feel personally what the mother who has to think about whether her son, who is living in the heart of America, and she may very well be in a trailer park, and because I was federalized, I represent her, too. I want them to feel personally the decision she is going to have to make when the budget is passed by this Republican majority controlled Congress cutting free and reduced lunches. That is personal. That is personal.

So I could care less about the folks of power and influence and what they say and how they do it. We are going to stay within the rules. We are going to stay within the rules, but I want to make sure that folks understand that we have individuals out in this country that are suffering, white, black, Native American, Hispanic.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Asian.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. And Asian. They are suffering, and we have to give them voice. We have to give them voice, sure, when we start outing CIA agents, when we start seeing the majority side looking the other way. Even though they know what is going, they are not going to look because their friends are there and they do not want to do that.

In the Clinton administration, Democrats called the administration officials out on things that they were doing that was wrong.

□ 1230

That is our responsibility in the Constitution of these United States.

So when the gentleman from Ohio speaks of not putting party over country, I think that if we were to look at what we do now and what we have done in the past, we have always put country over party. The everyday Republican does not want his government operated by what the national GOP leadership says that it should be, that we need to do that and do this, but they are messing with the lives of everyday Americans. They do not endorse that.

So the problem here in this House is that we are sharing that information with the American people. We are not over at the Democratic National Committee sitting there sharing it with Democrats only. We are here sharing it with the American people; and we are letting the Members of this House, the majority and the minority, know that we all must go see the wizard and get some courage and some heart and

stand up to some of these very few individuals that are in the minority on the majority side that are running and pulling the sticks behind the curtains on behalf of the American people. Now, that is personal.

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

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, what it boils down to is that here in the House the rules hem us in, and we have to talk around a lot of what we might like to say more directly, but the American people elected us to speak truth to power. I mean, that is the bottom line. We could not have more power in the White House than there is right now, and they exercise every bit of it. They exercise every bit of it, regardless of the consequences, regardless of the plight of the people whose decisions they affect. There are so many examples of how what we are doing on this floor allows us to reveal that truth.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) has a chart right there that will help us ferret out a little bit of that truth.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, our friend from Florida was talking about what is going on and how personal this is.

I mean, we have an obligation here. What is going on today is the Republican majority has created a welfare state. They have created a welfare state. They have created a welfare state here in the United States, but the welfare state is for a very small group, corporations. Sixteen billion dollars in the last few months of corporate welfare went to the oil companies, the most profitable quarters they have had in decades; and public tax money was given to the tune of \$16 billion to subsidize them. Pharmaceutical companies have gotten over \$100 billion in average people's tax money, sent down here. The Republican majority gave it to the pharmaceutical companies. So we have a welfare state in the United States of America.

But we also are creating a welfare state in Iraq. While we are cutting free and reduced lunch and Medicaid and Medicare, health care programs for United States citizens, we have opened up 110 primary health care centers in Iraq. We have educated 2,000 health officials. Three point two million kids in Iraq have been vaccinated. We have rehabbed 2,717 schools and trained 36,000 teachers.

Now maybe we should be doing this because we invaded the country and bombed the heck out of it. So maybe we should be doing it. But when they are giving billions to the wealthiest corporations in the country and they are cutting free and reduced lunch for kids and they are doubling the cost of college tuition and raising the fees for student loans to the tune of \$5,000 over the life of the loan, they are doing what is best for the Republican Party and they are doing the absolute worst

thing they could possibly do for the United States of America.

And let me tell the my colleagues why, Mr. Speaker. The Chinese government in the country of China produced 600,000 engineers last year. We produced 70,000, half of those engineers foreign born. How are we going to stimulate our economy, create new jobs, innovate the new technologies that are needed to be innovated so that we could keep on the cutting edge of a vibrant global economy if we are not investing into the very people who are going to create that wealth? We cannot ask poor, unhealthy, uneducated kids to go into the workforce and create wealth for us. But yet we are making the investment in Iraq and we are giving away billions in tax dollars to the oil companies and to the pharmaceutical companies.

That system is corrupt. That is a corrupt system. Corrupt. And the way it is being administered and the way government is being administered is at a level of incompetence that we have never really ever seen. With the war, the execution of the aftermath of the war, the rehab, the nation building, complete incompetence on behalf of the guys who wear the suits and ties. Complete incompetence.

The response to Katrina, the highest level of incompetence possible because they put people in charge of FEMA who were political cronies, and the level of cronyism in this administration is really higher than we have really ever seen. And they are not cronies because they know the administration. They are cronies because they get the job and they are not competent.

We all know if one gets a political job and they get to hire people that they are going to hire people they know because this is a business about loyalty. But we also have to hire people who are competent. And Mr. Brown, Brownie, ran an Arabian horse show or something like that, and then he is in charge of FEMA, the point person for emergencies in the United States?

Now this could have very well been a terrorist attack. There could have been explosives. There could have been bombs on the levees instead of a Category 4 hurricane. And our response would have had to have been the same, and it was not a good response. It was not an adequate response.

So the level of incompetency here is unreal. It is a corrupt system that takes care of corporations and ignores every other American. I just want to tell my colleagues it would be nice if someone on the other side, if someone in the Republican Party, would just stand up and take responsibility. We get lectured all the time about personal responsibility. Please someone stand up and take responsibility, because they are weakening the country. They are weakening the country. And we have a constitutional obligation to try to offer solutions.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. No.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield as I prepare to take responsibility?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. No, you guys have the floor all the time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I will take responsibility, and I am looking forward to it in just a couple of minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding to me.

I simply would like to say that when it comes to the issue of taking responsibility, we clearly are going to respond to the kinds of outrageous things that we have been hearing for the last few minutes about the state of the U.S. economy, about where we are headed as a Nation and about the kinds of challenges that we have and, quite frankly, about our desire to work in a bipartisan way to address these issues. So I am proud to take responsibility for these very important things.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, will the gentleman be willing to support an independent commission for Katrina, a bipartisan commission?

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding to me.

Let me just say right now we are very proud of the fact that we have put into place a committee that the Speaker of the House has established which has been interviewing, in fact, among others, Mike Brown, the gentleman just mentioned by my friend.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). The gentleman from Ohio controls the time.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we want a commitment from the gentleman, if he is willing to take responsibility, to establish with us a bipartisan committee like the 9/11 Commission to oversee Katrina in which Democrats and Republicans both would agree and both have equal power in the commission like the 9/11 Commission.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, that is basically what has happened with the establishment of the committee which was put into place which was modeled after the committees that have looked at the October Surprise, that have looked at Iran-Contra, other issues that have come forward. We tried to put together a bicameral committee that was focused on it.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I appreciate that, but the bottom line is this, my good friend from California: Your committee is controlled by the majority party. It

is not a bipartisan equal commission like the 9/11 Commission. The 9/11 Commission was the most successful commission we have had in trying to address a major terrorist attack in the United States. Let us put a bipartisan commission together and look at Katrina.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, let me just say to my friend that I believe that what we should do is we should take our constitutional responsibility, our constitutionally mandated responsibility according to Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, for oversight of the executive branch. We should pursue that as vigorously as we possibly can.

And I will say to my friend, that if, in fact, after doing that, having Democrats and Republicans work in a bipartisan way on the commission that the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) is chairing, if we do not see the kind of information that we knew, if we do not see the kind of scrutiny that we all believe should be applied in looking at the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, I will support the gentleman's motion of putting together that bipartisan commission.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Reclaiming my time, you are leaving all of the decision-making power in the hands of the 11 Republican Members.

Mr. DREIER. Let me just say, no, we are not doing that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio controls the time.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the way the committee is set up right now, there are 11 Republicans and there are 9 Democrats on the committee. The Democratic Party cannot subpoena a witness without the support of the Republican Party. We cannot subpoena the documents. We cannot get the kind of information that we need without the approval of the majority party, and you are asking the American people to trust the Republican Party, the same people that appointed Brownie to run FEMA, and he is still on the payroll.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DREIER. I am happy to respond to that by saying very simply that it is not the work of the Republicans or the Democrats. It is the work of the committee. It is up to the committee to make a determination as to whether or not someone was subpoenaed.

Now you have referred to him, using the same terminology that the President referred to Michael Brown as, which I understand is "Brownie." Did he or did he not appear before that bipartisan committee that was established by Speaker HASTERT?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, he did. But the same party that is overseeing him has left

this man on the payroll making \$148,000 a year.

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

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the gentleman from California, you are the chairman of the Rules Committee. You spend as much time restricting the Democrats' ability to offer amendments and act in a bipartisan fashion and provide input to the policies that are forced through this Congress than anyone else in this Chamber. There is absolutely no bipartisan effort made here.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding to me.

Let me just say that that is completely untrue. Of the amendments that have been made in order in this Congress, 161 of the amendments reported out of the Rules Committee have been either Democratic amendments or bipartisan amendments; 143 of the amendments have been Republican amendments. More amendments have been made in order that were either bipartisan or offered by Democrats than Republicans. So it is a specious argument that my friend has made.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we are getting into some procedural stuff here, but the Republican Party does not need to offer amendments because they get everything they want into the bill during the committee process. They offer it. They do not need to offer amendments.

□ 1245

#### THE FAVORABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN AMERICA

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I have taken this Special Order out to talk about a number of very specific issues, and I would like to begin by referencing an article that I read earlier this week in Agence France, the publication, and that article had to do with the issue of outsourcing.

Mr. Speaker, a year ago at this time we had people in the mainstream media, we had commentators all over the United States referring to the issue of outsourcing. There was a sense somehow that Americans were losing their jobs en masse. Why? Because their jobs were all going to Mexico, their jobs were all going to other countries in Latin America, their jobs were all going to China, their jobs were going to India, their jobs were going to Pakistan; and we have continued to hear

time and time again that the issue of outsourcing is one which is wiping out and devastating the U.S. economy.

Well, this article to which I have referred was reporting the fact that outsourcing, outsourcing, has actually created a net increase in jobs here in the United States. This report found that offshore outsourcing resulted in the creation of more than 419,000 jobs, compared to the 162,000 technology jobs that have been displaced from the United States. So when people look at the fact that, yes, some jobs have gone overseas, they forget to look at the fact that we have had a surge in job creation that is in fact a by-product of so-called outsourcing. The chief economist at Global Insight said no one is denying that there are job losses, but the net effect is that you create more jobs than you lose.

So I think it is a very important point, Mr. Speaker. My friends who were just talking on the other side of the aisle are among those who cry the loudest when they refer to this issue of outsourcing. Again, we are not saying there has not been some displacement. Change is inevitable. But one of the arguments I like to make on this, Mr. Speaker, is that the United States of America is providing the global leadership that we need when it comes not only militarily and geopolitically, but economically; and if we do not shape that global economy, the United States of America will be shaped by it.

So when we have hand-wringing over outsourcing, we, of course, are saddened that anyone would possibly see the shift of a job. But as the chief economist at Global Insight said, no one is denying that there are job losses, but the net effect is that you create more jobs. That report concluded that the net benefit to the U.S. gross domestic product from outsourcing and a stronger economy was over \$68 billion in 2005 alone, \$68 billion. By 2010, this net effect will rise to over \$147 billion.

Now, I am pointing to this issue, Mr. Speaker, because of the fact that I have listened to these arguments that are being made by my friends on the other side of the aisle that the United States of America is going to hell in a handbasket, is basically what they are arguing, and that the United States economy is devastated, we are not competitive, we are not creating jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder what kind of world I am living in when elected representatives of the American people can come to that kind of conclusion. It is absolutely preposterous. It is outrageous that anyone could come to a conclusion like that.

Why? A week ago today, Mr. Speaker, a week ago today we got the report that the U.S. economy in the last quarter grew at a rate of 3.8 percent, 3.8 percent GDP growth. That is a very impressive figure, a very impressive figure by any standard. But it is an incredible figure when you look at what it was up against.

One of the worst days in our Nation's history will have been just 2 months