

Thus, the progress achieved thus far by the Iraqi people toward establishing a true democratic government, just a few years after the termination of his regime, is nothing short of miraculous.

Within this past year alone, the people of Iraq have not only held free elections and approved a new Iraqi constitution this past October, but they are diligently preparing for nationwide elections on December 15.

Today, the Iraqi people remain engaged in a political process aimed at creating a unified and democratic Iraq, to the envy of the neighboring countries such as Iran and Syria, and to the chagrin of those tyrannical regimes.

In particular, the women of Iraq who, under the Hussein regime were routinely subject to public execution, under the pretext of fighting prostitution and widespread rape and abuse, are now fully participating in the nation's political life.

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to visit Iraq as part of a historic all-female congressional delegation, during which we met with women from all sectors and educational backgrounds. They now have a voice in charting the path for their country's future and in helping to ensure that this course is toward a vibrant and prosperous Iraqi nation.

Likewise, in Afghanistan, U.S. efforts have also contributed to significant positive changes in the lives of women in Afghanistan where the Taliban's brutality and blatant disregard for the lives and well-being of the Afghan people impacted all the people of that country.

The shroud of misery placed upon the people of Afghanistan when the Taliban captured Kabul in 1996 was removed in 2002 by the United States with the help of our allies and the Afghan people themselves.

As a nation whose recent history has been marked more by war than by peace, more by upheaval than by progress, Afghanistan's transition to democracy has also been nothing short of miraculous.

In a state of effective war for most of the last quarter century, Afghanistan was allowed to fester for most of the 1990s, ultimately hosting al Qaeda and enduring the extremist Taliban regime.

In liberating the Afghan people, we brought an end to the deplorable human rights violations under the Taliban regime, which included the barbaric practices of beatings, tortures, rapes, executions that were carried out by Taliban's Department of Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice.

□ 2000

Today, the Afghan people are determined to take steps to ensure Afghanistan's survival as a free and democratic nation. We are on the road to victory, and the selfless dedication of our men and women in uniform should always be congratulated.

AHMAD CHALABI

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, somebody ought to call the cops. Today I am not talking about collusion, corruption and cronyism and the leaking of sensitive classified information that has irreparably damaged the national security of the United States. No, I am not talking about Scooter Libby or Karl Rove, though their involvement in outing a female CIA agent to silence her husband's criticisms of the President's Iraq policy deserves closer scrutiny.

No, I am talking about another shadowy character and administration ally, someone whose deception played a large role in leading the United States into war in Iraq. I am talking about Ahmad Chalabi. Mr. Chalabi is the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq's newly constituted government. But Mr. Chalabi also is a convicted bank swindler who, we now know, fed the Bush administration false intelligence about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction and capabilities and Iraq's ties to terrorism.

Many Americans remember Mr. Chalabi as a man who convinced Vice President CHENEY that the United States would be greeted as a great liberator in Iraq. Some have even said it was Mr. Chalabi who promoted the false story about Iraq's attempted purchase of nuclear material in Niger. Chalabi fed false stories about Iraq's weapons capabilities to New York Times reporter Judith Miller, a story that the Times was later forced to publicly discount.

Mr. Chalabi, who supplied information to the White House Iraq working group, a mysterious cabal, as Colin Powell's former chief of staff recently said, that hijacked U.S. foreign policy and hyped the case for war in Iraq. The bottom line is that Mr. Chalabi played a central role in the orchestrated deception leading to the invasion of Iraq.

After the administration discovered that Mr. Chalabi provided false intelligence, instead of investigating, the Department of Defense attempted to prop Mr. Chalabi up as a candidate of choice in the post-war Iraq.

Keep in mind what Mr. Chalabi did next. He was suspected of leaking classified information about U.S. intelligence capabilities to Iran. He was suspected of telling the Iranians that we had broken the code by which we were learning information about their activities.

Seventeen months ago, then National Security Adviser Rice promised an FBI inquiry into who leaked information to Iran. Seventeen months ago, and yet nothing has happened. Despite the fact that Mr. Chalabi was a prime suspect, the FBI has never interviewed him. In fact, the Wall Street Journal quotes the FBI as having said they have little active interest in this matter. Little

active interest in a person who is leaking intelligence material to Iran in the middle of the war in Iraq?

Just this week the administration invited this criminal to meet with the Secretary of State and maybe even Vice President CHENEY in the West Wing to discuss his candidacy for the Iraq presidency in this December's election. I would be curious to learn from the President what role granting a U.S. entry visa to a man suspected of spying for Iran plays in the administration's terrorism strategy.

Mr. Chalabi's actions are an insult to every American, especially those serving in our Nation's Armed Forces, and his high-level visit to the United States is an additional affront. Chalabi's crimes cannot go unanswered. He belongs in jail for his misdeeds. Instead, he gets a White House photo-op.

As the Senate concludes its investigation into the administration's use of false and misleading intelligence to make the case for war, no such inquiry would be complete without Mr. Chalabi's testimony under oath. While he is sashaying around the streets of Washington, D.C., the Senate Intelligence Committee and the House Intelligence Committee may want to issue a subpoena for his presence. He has offered to testify, but no intelligence agency of the United States has interviewed him, nor has the FBI, as we learned today.

He should be detained in this country until he gives that testimony. I know I speak for all Americans when I say that our idea of democracy is not propping up a bank swindler, kidnapper and extortionist whose lies and deceptions contributed to the 14,000 U.S. soldiers injured and over 2,000 killed in action and is an intractable quagmire with no end in sight. Americans deserve the truth about the Bush administration's manipulation of intelligence to justify this tragic war.

Calling the cops to arrest Mr. Chalabi, while he is here, so he can be interrogated, would be a good beginning to understand how extensive the manipulation, how false the evidence was, that caused the President to take us to war and which was championed by the Vice President and the President and the cabal to try to justify to the American citizens the reason for this war.

Mr. Speaker, call the cops. Mr. Chalabi should not be allowed to run free on the streets of this Nation's capital.

[From The Wall Street Journal, November 7, 2005]

TOP SECRET: STATUS OF CHALABI INQUIRY
(By Scot J. Paltrow)

As Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Chalabi arrives this week in Washington for talks, there is little sign of progress in a Federal investigation of allegations that he once leaked U.S. intelligence secrets to Iran.

More than 17 months after then-National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice publicly promised a full criminal inquiry, the Federal

Bureau of Investigation hasn't interviewed Mr. Chalabi himself or many current and former U.S. government officials thought likely to have information related to the matter, according to lawyers for several of these individuals and others close to the case.

The investigation of Mr. Chalabi, who had been a confidant of senior Defense Department officials before the war in Iraq, remains in the hands of the FBI, with little active interest from local federal prosecutors or the Justice Department, these people said. There also has been no grand-jury involvement in the case.

The investigation centers on allegations that one or more U.S. officials in early 2004 leaked intelligence to Mr. Chalabi, including the fact that the U.S. had broken a crucial Iranian code, and that Mr. Chalabi in turn had passed the information to the Baghdad station chief of Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security. The assertions about Mr. Chalabi's involvement came after U.S. intelligence agencies intercepted a cable from the station chief back home to Iran, detailing what the chief claimed was a conversation with Mr. Chalabi about the broken code.

Former intelligence officials said such a leak could have caused serious damage to U.S. national security. The broken code had enabled U.S. intelligence agencies to monitor covert cable traffic among Iranian operatives around the world. The encrypted cable traffic was a main source of information on Iranian operations inside Iraq. The leak also threatened U.S. efforts to monitor any Iranian steps to develop nuclear weapons. And there was concern that the disclosure could prompt other countries to upgrade their encryption, making it more difficult for the U.S. to spy on them.

Mr. Chalabi has strongly denied the allegations. He once was a close Bush administration ally and a key proponent of the Iraqi invasion, though he has more recently appeared to fall from American favor. Before the war, during his long period as a prominent Iraqi exile, he also cultivated close ties to the government in Iran, which was his ally in opposing former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. Just this weekend, Mr. Chalabi made a trip to Tehran to visit Iranian government leaders.

The handling of the Chalabi investigation so far stands in contrast to the aggressive inquiry conducted by special counsel Patrick Fitzgerald into the leaking of intelligence agent Valerie Plame's name, which led to the indictment of I. Lewis Libby, Vice President Cheney's former chief of staff.

Questions about the progress of the Chalabi investigation also follow the FBI's disclosure last week that it had closed an investigation into forged documents purporting to show Iraq had sought uranium ore from Niger. The Niger claim set off an intense intelligence debate, which was at the center of the leaking of the intelligence agent's identity.

Whitley Bruner, a former longtime undercover Central Intelligence Agency official in the Middle East who has followed Mr. Chalabi's career closely since 1991, said that, in contrast to Mr. Fitzgerald's investigation, the Chalabi leak inquiry "just sort of disappeared."

FBI spokesman John Miller strongly denied that the Chalabi investigation has languished. "This is currently an open investigation and an active investigation," he said, adding that "numerous current and former government employees have been interviewed."

Mr. Miller said that, because the investigation is an active one, he couldn't discuss specific individuals nor comment on how the in-

quiry is being conducted. A Justice Department spokesman declined to comment.

Mr. Chalabi's lawyer, Boston attorney John J.E. Markham II, said neither the FBI nor Justice Department ever responded to an offer to have Mr. Chalabi come to Washington to answer law enforcement questions and aid in the investigation. Mr. Markham made available a copy of a letter he said he had sent on June 2, 2004, to then-Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert Mueller. It categorically denied that Mr. Chalabi had leaked any U.S. intelligence. And it stated "Dr. Chalabi is willing and ready to come to Washington, D.C. to be interviewed fully by law-enforcement agents on this subject and to answer all questions on this subject fully and without reservation."

Mr. Markham, a former Federal prosecutor, said that, ordinarily in a leak investigation, "the first thing you would do would be to get the tippee," the person to whom the information was leaked, "in there and say 'Who talked to you?'" But, he said, "That never happened."

The FBI's Mr. Miller said he wouldn't comment on Mr. Chalabi but said the FBI, in general, interviews witnesses when an investigation indicates it is best to do so, not necessarily at the beginning of an inquiry. He added, "The fact that this person or that person has or hasn't been interviewed yet is just not material to whether there's an active investigation."

One likely focus of FBI inquiries would be a small group of people in the Pentagon and White House who had frequent contact with Mr. Chalabi and also probably knew the closely guarded secret of the broken code. Interviews indicate that many of these individuals haven't been questioned by the FBI.

Among the officials with whom Mr. Chalabi at one time had close ties, for instance, was Douglas J. Feith, who until earlier this year was an undersecretary of defense and headed the Pentagon's powerful office of policy and planning. In an interview, Mr. Feith said he has never been questioned by the FBI or federal prosecutors in connection with the investigation and that if others had been, he was unaware of it.

Lawrence Di Rita, spokesman for Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, said in an emailed response to questions that he had no knowledge of the FBI or federal prosecutors having questioned current or former Defense Department officials. "I don't know anything about a [Department of Justice] investigation in this matter," Mr. Di Rita said.

Mr. Chalabi had been considered a trusted ally by influential figures within the administration, but last spring those ties appeared to have ruptured. On May 20 of last year, Iraqi police backed by U.S. troops raided Mr. Chalabi's headquarters, searching for evidence of corruption and leaked American intelligence.

Since then, however, the Bush administration has become more open to dealing with Mr. Chalabi again, spurred on by his rise in the current Iraqi government, the possibility that he might become prime minister and his current control over, among other things, Iraqi oil production.

Mr. Chalabi's visit to Washington this week is his first since the leak allegations. He is scheduled to meet with Treasury Secretary John Snow and with Ms. Rice, now secretary of state. He also is to give a speech to the conservative American Enterprise Institute.

Senate Democrats have been pressing for an investigation into the role Mr. Chalabi played in drumming up support for a war to depose Mr. Hussein. They also are critical of Mr. Chalabi because of alleged corruption; in 1992, he was convicted in absentia by a Jor-

danian court of having embezzled \$288 million from a bank at which he was managing director. He has strongly denied the corruption allegations.

Spokesmen for both Mr. Snow and Ms. Rice said they were meeting with Mr. Chalabi, despite past events, because he is a powerful government figure in Iraq. State Department Iraq adviser James Jeffery said Mr. Chalabi "is deputy prime minister of a critically important country at a critically important time, he was democratically elected, and it's on that basis that we see him."

IRAQ

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Madam Speaker, in roughly 1 month, general elections will be held in Iraq. I would like to comment on my perceptions as to what I have seen as I visited there on three different occasions and talked to many of our soldiers. Soldiers often comment on the fact that there are really two wars, apparently, going on in Iraq. There is a war that they see on CNN, and they watch cable television regularly. Then there is the war that they are actually fighting.

Apparently, in their minds, at least, there is some discrepancy between the two versions. They have asked me to come back on occasion and talk about what they see happening over there.

First of all, in the area of education, 746 schools have been renovated, and these projects have all been completed; 36,000 teachers have been trained since the war started; attendance in the schools is up by 80 percent, and most of these increases are young women, who are attending school for the first time.

In the area of health care, 17 new hospitals have been built; 3.2 million children under the age of 5 have been vaccinated for the first time, 97 percent of all children have been vaccinated; 700,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated; and 142 new clinics are currently under construction or have been completed. It is certainly not perfect, but it is an improvement.

As far as the economy is concerned, many small businesses and entrepreneurial activities are springing up. As you fly over Baghdad at tree-top level, you see satellite dishes on practically every building. They were not there under Saddam. Newspapers are springing up. Many news outlets that were not there are present today. There are 1 million more automobiles in Iraq today than under Saddam, and Iraqi income, of course, has increased as well.

As far as a political process, as many people know, the elections for a constitutional assembly were held last January, and the turnout exceeded expectations. The constitution was written in August. The constitution was approved about 2 weeks ago, October 15, with a 78 percent approval rating. A new government will be elected December 15, and the Sunnis have been kind of a wild card here. They boycotted in