

in the north, and I have been around the Mosul area as well, these projects are all things that American taxpayer dollars have invested to upgrade the infrastructure that is there. That includes water, sewers, hospitals, roads, all kind of structure that are designed to add some stability to the country of Iraq that in the last 38 years, aside from coalition forces and the dollars that have been committed into the country since the liberation, had not made significant progress.

Now there is progress being made in the country. There is more progress that needs to be made before our troops can come home victorious, to quote the gentlewoman from Tennessee some moments ago.

I will submit that we have to stick with this task. We do not have an alternative except to succeed, and we are on the path of success. It is a long, hard slog, as the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Rumsfeld, has pointed out. He has been realistic and upfront and candid in his positions that he has taken. I think he has taken on a yeoman's task to reorganize our military at the same time we are involved in a conflict overseas. But the alternative is not acceptable, and that would be not to reorganize our military at a time when we need to be lighter, quicker, faster and still stronger than we were before.

I have met with the Secretary of the Army who has laid out this plan for me, and I am impressed with the level of organization and level of discipline that they have provided. And I am impressed that Secretary Rumsfeld has gone down this path and has seen the vision and directed that it take place in the reorganization of our military.

I am not surprised though, Mr. Speaker, that some of the generals who were steeped in the old way of thinking and who maybe have a little different approach might be a little disgruntled. We have about six generals that have spoken up. That means there are some 9,000 who have not spoken against the Secretary of Defense. I think it was untimely of them to do so. It did not help this cause for them. I think that if they had stepped back and taken a look at it from the perspective of the long-term best interest of America, they might not have taken these issues to the public because their voice echoes across through satellite TV, picked up by Al Jazeera, spread through the ears of al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden and Zarqawi and Zawahiri and al-Sadr who is maybe on the side of the government of Iraq and doing business there. It does not help to send the message of dissent.

If you have a message of dissent, take it to the White House. They will close the door on the Roosevelt Room or perhaps in the Oval Office and you can have your say and it will be considered. But to have your say and say it to our enemy at the same time you might convey that disagreement to the President of the United States through the media is not a constructive way to

fight a war. If this goes on, it will be one of the reasons why democracies have a difficult time in succeeding.

I point out that the country I live in is a constitutional republic, and I am glad it is. I look forward to the day our military comes home victorious. I do not know how soon that might be. But I would point out that the previous administration sent troops to Kosovo and gave a time frame at which time they would be deployed back to the United States, and that time frame was 1 year. It has been well over 10 years since those troops were deployed to Kosovo, and we still have troops there.

I am not raising an issue about that except to say we cannot give a drop-dead deadline for our troops to leave Iraq. That empowers the enemy and allows the enemy to prepare for the day when they can emerge from their holes in the ground, having accumulated their military supplies, and then descend upon the less-equipped people that are there defending the country.

That idea that has taken place in a resolution over in the other body, joined in by the junior Senator from Iowa, is the wrong idea at the wrong place at the wrong time. The right idea and the right message is we will be there, Iraq, as long as you need us. We are going to encourage you to get out of the nest and fly. You are doing a good job so far under difficult circumstances and your fighting spirit is there. The judicial branch is there. Saddam Hussein needs to be tried. You need to get done with the trial. You need to accumulate a record for the Iraqi people so they understand the history that is going on within the country of Iraq. The era of Saddam Hussein must be recorded. When it is recorded, it will be fine with me if justice is served and an appropriate punishment should he be found guilty is made consistent with Iraqi law. And I am advised that there is only one penalty that is provided for an individual who might be found guilty of crimes against humanity and that punishment is death. I believe that is too gentle a penalty for someone who may have committed crimes of that magnitude, but it is the one that they have and it is all that we would have in this country as well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this body to stand with our military, to stand with their mission, make the point that you cannot be for our military and against their mission. We cannot ask people to put their lives on the line and say you should not be doing this, I am against your mission, but I support you. I will send you some warm socks and an MRE and something cold to drink. I am for you, troops, but you shouldn't be there. That is wrong.

If you are not for the mission, you are not for the troops. You cannot ask them to put their lives on the line for you and be opposed to their mission. They are one and the same. You support the troops and you support their mission all together, not separately.

You do not get to choose one or the other. It is a fallacy in the argument.

I stand with the troops and the mission. I am committed to seeing this thing through to the end. We owe that to our brave soldiers and Marines who have given their lives for the freedom of the Iraqi people, for the safety and security of the American people, that have taken the fight to the enemy globally overseas, who all of them volunteered to go over there. All of them volunteered to face the enemy. They knew they were taking a risk. God bless them for it, Mr. Speaker, and God bless our soldiers and our Marines in their effort, and God bless the United States of America.

OUR NATION'S SECURITY

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, the single most important function of the Congress is to ensure our Nation's security. Since the time of the Revolutionary War when the Continental Congress directed the efforts of our fledgling Nation to free itself from British rule, the legislative branch has made the security of our Nation a priority.

Bipartisanship has been at the center of America's national security policymaking for much of our history.

□ 1900

In standing behind our Armed Forces and standing up for our diplomatic priorities, in supporting the Intelligence Community, and in supporting the President in times of crisis, Congress has often spoken with one voice. This unanimity was never stronger than the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

When President Bush addressed Congress and the Nation on September 20, there were no Democrats or Republicans in this Chamber. There were only Americans. That unity extended around the world to friends and foes alike.

In London, 2 days after the attacks, Queen Elizabeth ordered the Coldstream Guards to play the Star Spangled Banner at the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace, the first time a foreign anthem had been played at that ceremony.

In Paris, the newspaper *Le Monde* ran an editorial on September 12 that was entitled simply, "We Are All Americans."

In the wake of the attacks, NATO invoked for the first time in its history, article 5 of the NATO charter, declaring an attack on the United States to be an attack on the alliance.

As American military assets rushed towards Afghanistan in preparation for the invasion that would topple the

Taliban regime, NATO Airborne Warning and Control System, AWACs aircraft patrolled American skies in round-the-clock patrol to protect us.

Four and a half years later, this national and international unity seems quaint. Here at home, our country is now bitterly divided. Our States are red or they are blue. Our communities are divided too. Americans don't even get their news from the same place anymore. Many Republicans only watch Fox, and many Democrats will only watch, well, anything else.

Overseas, we are isolated. Where America was seen as a victim in the wake of 9/11, in the capitals of even some of our closest allies we are now too often viewed as an aggressor. American troops are fighting and dying in Iraq while many of our closest friends sit on the sidelines refusing to provide even promised economic support.

The policies of the current administration and majority in Congress have not only squandered domestic unity and international goodwill; they have poorly managed the war on terror and failed to adequately improve our security here at home. Even as we spend \$1 billion a week in Iraq, basic security at home remains underfunded. And as we shall hear from my friend and colleague, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, Afghanistan is in danger of slipping back into the grip of the Taliban.

In the days after September 11, the President vowed to capture Osama bin Laden, dead or alive, and that we would smoke al Qaeda out of their caves. Tragically, Mr. Speaker, Osama is still very much alive, and the inability of the pre-eminent super-power to capture him is as dangerous as it is emblematic of the need for a new strategy in the war on terror.

Tonight I have a message for the American people: the Democrats have a plan to win the war on terror. Our plan is tough, it is smart, and it is comprehensive. This plan is part of an overall effort to reconfigure America's security for the 21st century, a plan that we call Real Security.

Several weeks ago, Members of our party from both the House and the Senate unveiled a comprehensive blueprint to better protect America and to restore our Nation's position of international leadership. Our plan, Real Security, was devised with the assistance of a broad range of experts, former military officers, retired diplomats, law enforcement personnel, homeland security experts, and others who helped identify key areas where current policies have failed and where new ones were needed.

In a series of six Special Order hours in the evening, my colleagues and I have been sharing with the American people our vision for a more secure America. The plan has five pillars, and each of our Special Order hours has been addressing them in turn.

The first is building a military for the 21st century. The second is winning

the war on terrorism. The third is securing our homeland. The fourth is a way forward in Iraq. And the fifth is achieving energy independence for America.

Two weeks ago, we discussed the first pillar of our plan, building a military for the 21st century. This would involve rebuilding a state-of-the-art military, making sure that we have the world's best equipment and training, providing accurate intelligence and a strategy for success, providing a GI bill of rights for the 21st century, and strengthening the National Guard.

In future weeks we will address Homeland Security. In the wake of 9/11, there have been numerous commissions and investigations at the Federal, State, and local levels as well as a multitude of private studies. All of them have pointed to the broad systemic and other flaws in our homeland security programs.

Almost 2 years ago, the independent bipartisan 9/11 Commission published its report, but most of its recommendations have yet to be implemented.

The Homeland Security plan will implement the 9/11 Commission recommendations. We will screen all containers and cargo. We will safeguard nuclear and chemical plants. We will prohibit the outsourcing at ports, airports and mass transportation to foreign interests. We will train and equip first responders, and we will invest in public health to safeguard Americans.

We will also be discussing a new course in Iraq that will ensure that 2006 is a year of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with the Iraqis assuming primary responsibility for securing and governing their country with a responsible redeployment of U.S. forces. Democrats will insist that Iraqis make the political compromises necessary to unite their country and defeat the insurgency, promote regional diplomacy, and strongly encourage our allies in other nations to play a constructive role.

Our security will remain threatened as long as we remain dependent on Middle Eastern oil. The fifth pillar and the one with the most far-reaching ramifications for our country and the world is to achieve energy independence for America by 2020. This will involve eliminating reliance on Middle Eastern oil, increasing the production of alternative fuels in America, promoting hybrid and flex fuel vehicle technologies, and manufacturing and enhancing the energy efficiency and conservation incentives.

The pillar of Real Security that we are going to address tonight is in many ways at the center of all of these issues. Since 9/11, the war on terrorism, specifically radical Islamic terrorism, has affected our entire conduct of national security policy. Unfortunately, there is a clear consensus among most experts that we need a new strategy to win the war on terror.

Tonight, I would like to introduce you to our plan. When Democrats are

in charge, we will finish the job by eliminating Osama bin Laden, by destroying terrorist networks like al Qaeda, by finishing work in Afghanistan and ending the threat posed by the Taliban. We will double the size of our Special Forces, increase our human intelligence capabilities, and ensure our intelligence is free from political pressure. We will eliminate terrorist breeding grounds by combating the economic, social, and political conditions that allow extremism to thrive; lead international efforts to uphold and defend human rights; and renew longstanding alliances that have advanced our national security objectives.

We will secure by 2010 loose nuclear materials that terrorists could use to build nuclear weapons or dirty bombs. And we will redouble efforts to stop nuclear weapons development in Iran and North Korea.

Our first priority is to eliminate Osama bin Laden and destroy al Qaeda and its other terrorist networks. Who would have imagined on September 11 that after more than 4½ years, the man responsible, the mastermind of the greatest single loss of American life in a single attack, Osama bin Laden, would still be at large? And now, in fact, al Qaeda has morphed into a worldwide amalgam of discrete cells that are even more difficult to track down.

Under Real Security, Democrats will use all of the tools at our disposal, military, intelligence, diplomatic, legal, to fight terrorism. To destroy al Qaeda and other terrorists on the ground, we will double the size of our Special Forces.

Special Forces were instrumental in working with local Afghan forces to drive the Taliban from Afghanistan, and they are uniquely suited to counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations. Unfortunately, many of the Special Forces units that were working to build a new Afghanistan were diverted to Iraq and replaced with less versatile troops.

Building a military for the 21st century begins with an acknowledgment that we are in a new era that has a set of challenges and threats distinct from those we faced during the Cold War. In this new world, we need a military that is highly mobile, self-sustaining, and capable of operating in small units.

On the one hand, our ability to use air power has extended our global reach and allows us to engage enemies without large numbers of ground troops being employed, as was the case in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

On the other hand, the war on terror, ongoing operations in Iraq, and the increasing need for American forces to play a stabilizing role as peacekeepers and peace enforcers demands the sustained commitment of American forces. Special Forces units are mobile, lethal, adaptable, and trained to work with indigenous forces, a key to winning against insurgencies and terrorists who are expert at portraying

Americans as infidels bent on destroying Islam, undermining local societies and local customs and culture.

But even the best military cannot obtain its objectives without good, sound intelligence. In many respects, 9/11 was a failure of intelligence. Agencies that should have been sharing information with each other could not or would not, and tantalizing, vital threads were left unconnected. This failure was followed by the deplorable failure of our intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction in which dissenting voices within the intelligence community were stifled, and group think took hold and steered analysis.

The U.S. intelligence community is made up of some of America's brightest minds and most dedicated servants, but these talented individuals are working harder and harder just to maintain a status quo that is increasingly irrelevant to the new challenges presented by weapons of mass destruction.

America's enemies today are different from those we faced during the Cold War and pose far more complex threats to our national and international security. We have more numerous and diverse intelligence targets today, with dozens of national and hundreds of non-state entities able to strike a devastating blow to our territory and our economic interests.

Furthermore, the weapons that pose the greatest dangers to our strategic and economic interests are difficult to detect and even harder to counteract. Both the 9/11 Commission and the Silbermann-Robb Commission advocated sweeping reforms of the intelligence community to streamline procedures and facilitate better flows of information and analysis. Both commissions identified resistance to change as the greatest obstacle to better intelligence for senior policymakers.

What we need is an intelligence community that is flexible, able to respond quickly and effectively to an ever-shifting environment and to the rapid pace of today's technological changes. The dispatch of Porter Goss as CIA director indicates that these changes at the agency have still not been undertaken. The coordination we need is still not present in our intelligence community.

The Intelligence Reform Bill that Congress passed in 2004 created a new Director of National Intelligence, but gave the office only ambiguous authorities to carry out its broad responsibilities. The challenges faced by the DNI are myriad, building better human intelligence networks, improving the quality of analysis produced by the 15 agencies under its control and rebuilding the morale of a community that has been badly shaken by 9/11, by Iraq and which continues to this day.

Even as the DNI, the Director of National Intelligence, struggles to control numerous organizations with separate missions and cultures, he needs to preserve a diversity of analysis and a

community-wide culture that encourages structured debate among agencies and analysts over the interpretation of information while cooperating in a common purpose with a shared strategic vision.

□ 1915

For too long, the demands for current intelligence have presented the intelligence community from adopting a broader strategic perspective. Such an approach is essential for developing long-term plans, for penetrating today's difficult targets, and identifying political and social trends, shaping tomorrow's threats.

Perhaps the most important piece of our plan is a commitment to eliminate terrorist breeding grounds. Terrorists who attacked this country on September 11 emerged from a part of the world where oppression often finds its outlet in jihadi extremism and hatred of the West, especially the United States.

After the 9/11 attack, the President and other senior administration officials vowed to "drain the swamp" that birthed al Qaeda and other radical Islamists. Despite this boast, the administration has done little to combat the social, economic and political conditions that allow extremism to thrive.

Under Real Security, Democrats will fight terrorism, not only militarily, but also by leading international efforts to eradicate poverty, universalize education and provide economic opportunity for those who now provide such a fertile ground for the recruitment of suicide bombers.

We will also renew the long-standing alliances that have advanced our national security objectives for more than a century. We will encourage the growth of civil society, democracy and free-market economics in the Middle East. Extremism thrives and spreads in countries where brittle, autocratic regimes jealously guard wealth and political power while the vast majority of its citizens languish in poverty.

For example, despite the Arab's world vast oil wealth and its rich cultural history, the region has languished in large part because its leaders refuse to enact the liberalization necessary to release the power of hundreds of millions of people. We will use the power of diplomacy and economic aid much more consistently and effectively to bring about real meaningful change that allows for the growth of political, secular institutions. As we have seen in too many cases in recent years, millions of Arabs face the choice between secular, authoritarianism and theocratic rule by religious extremists.

Strong diplomatic relations are essential to America's security. As Madeleine Albright, who served as Secretary of State under President Clinton, has said, diplomacy is our first line of defense. During the last several years, we have failed to use this essential tool of American power wisely, and it has cost us dearly. Democrats will

again make human rights central to our conduct of national security, living up to our values, even as we make ourselves safer.

In a few minutes, I will address in specific terms the threat posed by loose nuclear materials and the lethargy at which we are trying to secure those materials.

But before I do, I want to introduce my friend and colleague, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN of Maryland, to share his thoughts on the dangers posed, in particular in Afghanistan, but also his thoughts on intelligence reform and on the Democrats' Real Security Plan.

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Well, let me thank my colleague from California (Mr. SCHIFF) on his leadership on national security issues and helping to lay out the Democratic national security plan, and thank him for taking us back to 9/11/2001 and the new security challenges that posed for our country, indeed for many others around the world, and reminding all of us that at that time the American people rallied behind the President and the Congress and said we need to take action against al Qaeda, we need to take action against the Taliban.

This body, the United States Congress, was united, Republicans and Democrats alike, in taking that action, toppling the Taliban government, and working to try and root out al Qaeda and find Osama bin Laden. Indeed, as Mr. SCHIFF mentioned, the international community rallied behind us as well.

So let us go back to that point in time and see what has been done. If you look at the recent trip that President Bush took to Afghanistan and India, Pakistan last March, it was a reminder to all of us that was probably, number one, the closest he will ever get to the man who masterminded those attacks on September 11th, on the United States, Osama bin Laden, who is believed to be hiding in Pakistan along the very rugged Afghanistan-Pakistan border. It was a reminder that we have not accomplished our mission of destroying Bin Laden and al Qaeda.

We all recall back in May of 2003 aboard the aircraft carrier, the USS *Lincoln*, when the President unveiled a big banner that said, "Mission accomplished."

Well, before that time, before the unveiling of that banner, there had been 138 American troops who died in Iraq, 542 wounded. Since declaring "Mission accomplished" aboard the aircraft carrier, there have been 2,405 American troops dead and over 17,000 wounded. As we all know, the situation in Iraq continues to be a very difficult one.

But certainly that "Mission accomplished" banner could not have applied to the main objective we had after September 11, 2001, to destroy the al Qaeda network and capture, destroy the person at the top of that network, Osama

bin Laden, and fulfilling that mission. Preventing a resurgence of the Taliban will depend on the actions that we take today and in the months ahead in Afghanistan. This is no time for us to be reducing our commitment in Afghanistan.

At the very time the President was in Afghanistan last March, the Director of U.S. Defense Intelligence, General Michael Maples, was testifying before the Congress, and he testified that the Taliban insurgency is growing and will increase this spring, presenting a greater threat to the Afghan central government's expansion of authority than at any point since late 2001.

Under these circumstances, the plan, the current plan in place to replace 2,500 U.S. troops in southern Afghanistan later this summer with contingents of Canadian, Dutch, British, Romanian and Australian troops should be considered. We welcome having those additional troops there, but given the intensifying Taliban insurgency, we should consider whether or not those new forces should augment and supplement the forces we have there and not replace them. Replacing them could send exactly the wrong signal to the people of Afghanistan and to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. Now, it is hard to ignore the fact that the Taliban has stepped up its operations recently.

Last year, attacks by the Taliban and other anti-government troops jumped by 20 percent, according to the Defense Intelligence Agency. Suicide bombings increased almost fourfold, and strikes with improvised explosive devices, which is a tactic imported from Iraq, doubled last year.

The main battlegrounds in this insurgency are in the provinces of Qandahar, Oruzgan, Helmand and Zabol, the Pashtun areas that form the Taliban stronghold in southern Afghanistan. And as recently as January 10 of this year, Mullah Mohammad Omar, who was the Taliban leader, who was born in southern Afghanistan and forged a very close tie with Bin Laden, rejected a call to reconcile with the new government of President Hamid Karzai and publicly exhorted his followers to fight.

It appears from all indications that his followers have been listening. The Assistant Administrator of USAID told Congress earlier this year about the deaths that have been taking place in many of the provinces and the attacks, school teachers killed. As a result, 200 schools in Qandahar and 165 support schools in the province of Helmand closed for security reasons, and on and on. February was a deadly month, and March and April.

In May, earlier this month, The New York Times wrote an article, headline, Taliban Threat Is Said to Grow in Afghan South. I am just going to read a few excerpts. The Taliban and al Qaeda are everywhere, a shopkeeper told the commander of American forces in Afghanistan. He said it is all right in the city, but if you go outside the city,

they are everywhere, and the people have to support them. They have no choice.

The article goes on to note that the fact that American troops are pulling out of southern Afghanistan in the coming months and handing matters over to NATO peacekeepers, who have repeatedly stated they are not going to fight terrorists, has given a lift to the insurgents and increased the fears of Afghans.

I think it is very important that we not send a signal that we are reducing our commitment to the people of Afghanistan and to the fight against al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. But stopping that action is going to require forceful action, stopping that violence and stopping the Taliban attacks.

Until now, the NATO forces have been stationed in relatively quiet areas. Their role has been primarily limited to peacekeeping rather than combat operations, and there are real questions about whether they will be able to engage the Taliban as aggressively as U.S. forces there.

It is also likely that the withdrawal of these 2,500 U.S. forces from Afghanistan will weaken our ability to put pressure on the Pakistan government to cooperate with us in trying to track down al Qaeda elements in Pakistan. We know that Pakistan Interservices Intelligence Agency has historically had a very cosy relationship with the Taliban. Many in the Afghan government, if you talk to them, doubt Pakistan's commitment to denying the sanctuary to Taliban fighters along the Afghan-Pakistan border. So we should be careful about the signals that we send.

Afghanistan's stability depends on strengthening the central government, developing the economy and limiting the booming opium trade there. Progress on these fronts requires that the Taliban be neutralized and security improved.

It has been said now from a number of Afghan leaders that the anticipated withdrawal of some of the U.S. forces has already caused some local leaders to hedge their bets with respect to the Taliban and figure if we are not going to be protected by U.S. forces, maybe we ought to bet on the Taliban being the future here. That is a very, very dangerous thing indeed.

It is important for us to remember that the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in the chaos that followed the Soviet Union's withdrawal from that country, and the subsequent U.S. disengagement and lack of interest in the region.

With the Bush administration and much of political Washington focused on Iraq, many Afghan leaders worry whether the reduction in our forces there signals a lack of commitment and a signal that we will again lose sight of Afghanistan. We do so at our peril because we need to remember, as my colleague reminded us, that the September 11 attacks, September 11,

2001, did not come from Iraq. They were from Afghanistan. That raises a very serious question about how we came to be in Iraq and raises the question of failure of intelligence.

I think it is important to note that whether or not you were for taking military action in Iraq or against military action in Iraq, we all should be in favor of getting the intelligence information right. It is especially important in this time when we are trying to disrupt terrorist networks.

The fact of the matter is the President told the American people we were taking action in Iraq for two reasons. He said, there are weapons of mass destruction there, and he said that there was a connection between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. Well, we know now that both of those statements proved false. It is important, going forward, that we get the intelligence right.

One of the essential components of the Constitution of our country is a system of checks and balances, making it clear that every branch of government has an obligation to take the responsible actions within its own sphere. Unfortunately, this Congress, especially this United States House of Representatives, has failed to exercise that responsibility. Instead of being a check on the executive branch, we have been a blank check for this administration. Instead of being a balance, we have been a rubber stamp.

The result of that failure of oversight has been to allow the mistakes and failures of this administration in the area of intelligence gathering to continue, because if you don't pay attention to failure, if you look aside from failure, if you ignore failure, you are going to get more failure.

One of the greatest failures, of course, has been the failure of this Congress to hold the administration accountable for its failures to gather intelligence information and for its abuse of the use of intelligence.

Now, every administration, Republican or Democrat, is entitled to have its own policies. But they are not entitled to their own facts. Facts are stubborn things.

In the war on terror it is critical that we gather good intelligence information. We need to base our policy on the facts, not decide to make up the facts based on our policy.

Now, we should all agree that we don't want to put our troops in harm's way because we don't have adequate intelligence. We shouldn't sort of make up the facts in a way that leads to those consequences.

But in the lead-up to the war in Iraq, many in the administration ignored those professional voices within the executive branch, the civil servants, who had been there for years, have years of experience, who got it right.

□ 1930

For example, the professionals in the Bureau of Intelligence Research at the State Department and the professionals at the Department of Energy

said these aluminum tubes were not evidence of a nuclear weapons program in Iraq; they were evidence of a rockets program. Yet their information, their input, was relegated to a footnote, because people did not want to see beyond the world as they wanted to see it to justify their own policy decisions.

Those intelligence failures have consequences. Not just immediate consequences for our military and our Armed Forces; they also undermine our credibility around the world and are coming back to haunt us.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, we all remember when he went before the United Nations. He had his charts; he had his displays. He said to the world, Iraq is developing weapons of mass destruction, in fact, has weapons of mass destruction. They did not. Secretary Powell has acknowledged that was one of the low points of his career.

Contrast that to the Cuban missile crisis, when our ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, showed the world satellite photos that the Soviets were putting missiles in Cuba. The Soviets had been denying it, but they couldn't deny it in the face of those facts and that evidence. It was a high point for credibility at the U.N. Our display there was a low point.

The problem is not just that we look bad. The problem is it is hard to make back lost credibility. As we go to the U.N., as we go to international partners around the world now and talk about the situation in Iran, we talk about the situation in North Korea, we talk about the situation and threats elsewhere in the world, people remember what we said before, and even the President, President Bush, has acknowledged that we face increased skepticism as a result of our failures of intelligence. Those have serious, serious consequences.

There is a lot more that can be done in the intelligence area, and I think tonight we should talk about some of the missteps that were made and how we intend to correct those missteps going forward. But I think we should all agree, Republicans and Democrats alike, that getting the intelligence information right is essential to our national security. We need to allow the professionals with the experience to call the facts as they see them, not how any administration would like to see them to justify a certain policy.

I yield back to my colleague from California as we continue this discussion about how we think that this Congress can do a much better job of enhancing the national security of this country.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for all of his leadership on these issues and the superb work he has done to improve the Nation's security.

You mentioned the growing problems and growing threats we are experiencing with IEDs, with suicide bombings in Afghanistan. I have had a chance to visit our troops there a couple of times.

I was very struck by what one of the soldiers I talked with said during my first visit. He said, You know, we all feel we are in the third front of a two front war, Iraq being the first, then the war on terror, and Afghanistan being the forgotten war. We have Americans fighting and dying there, unfortunately, all the time. For those that are on the ground, Afghanistan is very much the first front. Given the origin of the attacks of 9/11, it really is the first front in the war on terror. Given the presence of Osama bin Laden somewhere in the mountainous regions between Afghanistan and Pakistan, that is the central front on the war on terror.

I want to touch on some of the last two planks of our war on terror plan, and then I would like to come back to some of the comments you made on the lack of oversight in this body, because I think your remarks are right on the money, and it is really an institutional abdication of this Congress not to do its job of oversight.

Under Real Security, we will confront the prospect, the specter, the danger of nuclear terrorism by greatly accelerating the pace at which we are securing nuclear material that can be used to make a nuclear weapon or a dirty bomb, by eliminating loose nuclear material by 2010. We will also redouble our efforts to stop nuclear weapons development in Iran and North Korea.

While Democrats understand that no option can be taken off the table, we are committed to muscular diplomacy as the best option for curbing Pyongyang and Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

Osama bin Laden once termed the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction a religious duty. Intelligence officials have warned that al Qaeda and other radical Islamists are committed to obtaining a nuclear weapon and using it against the United States.

A number of experts feel if we fail to change course, an act of nuclear terrorism is only a matter of time. They are equally united in the conviction that we can avert such an attack by taking a series of steps to prevent nuclear material from falling into the hands of terrorists.

The President has repeatedly called the prospect of a nuclear attack by terrorists the greatest national security threat facing the United States. However, the administration's lackluster efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD demonstrate a failure of leadership. In fact, the 9/11 Commission Public Discourse Project gave the administration a D grade in this area on its December 2005 report card.

The Democratic Real Security plan commits to an aggressive effort to secure by 2010 loose nuclear material that terrorists could use to build nuclear bombs or dirty bombs. The Democratic approach to prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD is tough and smart. It uses our resources and know-

how to make weapons material and capabilities secure and to deter countries from building weapons in the first place.

In many cases, we know where there are nuclear and chemical facilities and materials that aren't adequately protected. Around the world, there are hundreds of tons of weapons grade nuclear material without the level of security we have established for our own nuclear material. This material is spread across hundreds of sites in dozens of countries. We must lock down these materials before they fall into the wrong hands.

But we are moving very slowly. At current rates of progress, it could take us decades to secure materials that could be used in a nuclear attack, a nuclear terrorist attack on the United States. We can do better. To do anything less is grossly negligent with our Nation's future.

A comprehensive strategy to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction has several parts. It involves securing nuclear material around the world to a gold standard and actually removing nuclear material from the most vulnerable sites. It involves detecting and defeating efforts to smuggle nuclear material and technologies. It involves strengthening the international community's efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

To protect Americans as fully as we can, we must work in a global partnership to keep these weapons away from terrorists and governments that would use them against us. The United States can't be everywhere, can't catch every violation or pay for every inspection. Illegal weapons networks now span the globe, and our partnerships to stop them must be equally global. We need other nations to help do this hard, expensive work and help communicate the benefits of playing by the rules and the consequences when the rules are broken.

We need our allies to share in the burden of global security. To get our allies' support, Democrats will press to include the security of nuclear material in the agenda and diplomatic efforts at the very highest levels. Without the necessary leadership, cooperation negotiated by mid-level bureaucrats will be limited to the slow pace of the last decade.

In addition, Democrats will work with the international atomic watchdog group, the IAEA, to develop comprehensive gold standards for the security of nuclear material and assure that other nations have the ability and will to implement these standards. The international community has demonstrated its support for this approach through U.N. resolution 2004. It will require American leadership to translate this vision into action.

Here in our government, Democrats will demand interagency cooperation and program innovation to accelerate progress on combating loose nukes.

There are several Federal programs working to secure nuclear material that do not interact well with each other. Further coordination will improve the best use of resources and the sharing of best practices.

The President has not charged the Federal bureaucracy with creating fresh and innovative programs to secure nuclear material, and business as usual or modest increases in funding to limited programs will not reach the goal of securing all bomb-making material by 2010.

We must also move quickly to secure the global supply chain. Millions of containers move around the world every year containing the goods that we need. However, they are also an easy target for terrorists to smuggle WMD material. Under the Real Security plan, every container shipped to the United States will be scanned at the point of origin.

Despite the urgency of this global threat, the administration and majority have not taken action commensurate with the threat. On more than one occasion, legislation has been introduced by Democrats to provide real security, but has been blocked.

An amendment by Representative OBEY would have provided an additional \$2.5 billion for homeland security, including substantial support for nuclear nonproliferation activities, but it was blocked by the majority. An amendment offered by Representative MARKEY to scan all shipping containers was also blocked. Legislation that I introduced to require the screening of cargo on commercial planes, on passenger jets, commercial cargo on passenger jets was also denied a hearing. The administration and majority have failed to translate the urgency of preventing WMD and nuclear terrorism into action. This must change.

After the attacks of September 11, senior officials repeatedly asserted that we had failed to prevent the attacks because of a failure of imagination. This was the central finding of the 9/11 Commission.

We know about the danger of nuclear terrorism. We are in a race with terrorists who are actively seeking nuclear weapons. The choice is ours: accept the present failure of leadership and risk a nuclear disaster, or take action to prevent it. When one considers the consequences, the choice is really no choice at all.

But I would like to turn now to an issue that was raised by my colleague from Maryland, and that is the role that we have in this body to provide oversight, oversight of the security of our troops overseas.

Today I offered an amendment to the defense department authorization that requires periodic reports on our efforts to disable, to interdict, and to destroy these improvised explosive devices that are claiming the lives of so many Americans.

I have lost at least four of my constituents in Iraq, most of them from

improvised explosive devices. I am not satisfied that we are doing all we can to up-armor our vehicles, to provide the state-of-the-art body and side armor that will keep our troops alive. I am not satisfied that we are acting swiftly enough to deploy these technologies that are being developed to jam and otherwise disable these improvised explosive devices.

My constituents would be willing to line up around the block to work in a factory overnight around the clock to produce these materials to protect our troops. There is no lack of a willingness to serve. There is no lack of a willingness to sacrifice among the American people. But they have to be asked, and we in Congress have to provide the leadership to make sure that we are doing everything we can to provide the protection of our troops.

We also have to make sure we are doing our oversight in this body, to make sure that we have the intelligence agencies doing the work to protect us, and, at the same time that we protect our Constitution.

My friend from Maryland makes the point that administrations and majorities can choose their own policies, but they can't choose their own facts. I would add to that, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, they can't choose their own Constitution either. We all operate under the same Constitution. It is a Constitution that has served us very well. It is a Constitution that has allowed us to adapt to the changing needs of the Nation and its people and to the emerging threats facing the country.

As one of our justices said some time ago, the Constitution is not a suicide pact. It doesn't prevent us from taking the steps we need to protect the country. But it does do an awfully important job of making sure, at the same time, that we protect our civil liberties.

I, like my colleague, have been very concerned that some of the NSA programs which could be done under the oversight of the FISA court, and in my view are legally required to be done under the oversight of the FISA court, are not being done with court review.

Today there was yet another revelation of a broader NSA program that may be obtaining information about tens of thousands, perhaps millions, of calls within the United States, a program that probably until news leaks today, Americans and Members of this body were unaware of.

□ 1945

Now certainly there is a need for confidentiality. But at the same time in this body, in classified hearings, there is a need for oversight. And we have not been willing to do it. There has been an allergy by the majority to do the oversight, to make sure that the limits on the executive go beyond the mere good faith of the executive.

When the Attorney General testified in the Judiciary Committee, I asked him what were the limits of the au-

thority as Commander in Chief? Could they bug purely domestic calls without court approval? And the Attorney General said, well, he would not rule it out.

If that is the case, then what is the limiting principle? It is nothing other than the good faith of the executive, and that is not the limiting principle of our Constitution.

I would be delighted to yield to my colleagues the gentlemen from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from California in his leadership on these issues. We both serve on the Judiciary Committee. And we know the revelations about the domestic wiretapping program came out back in December. And as of today, we have not had a single hearing in the House Judiciary Committee devoted specifically to that issue.

And whether people are for it or against it or undecided, we have an obligation as a separate branch of government to do our oversight, to get the facts, to ask the hard questions. And that committee has been AWOL on this issue, just as it has been, this Congress has been on so many other issues.

And I am very pleased that my colleague pointed out in the 9/11 Commission's sort of final report card they issued last November with respect to the issue of nuclear nonproliferation. They did give this Congress and the Bush administration a big fat D, D on that effort.

My colleague from California has been active in proposing different ideas for how we can strengthen those, but this Congress has not moved ahead. I just want to cite from that report card where it says, "Countering the greatest threat to America's security is still not the top national security priority of the President and the Congress."

What is that top priority, they say? A maximum effort by the U.S. Government to secure WMD. The fact of the matter is, we know after 9/11 that the most toxic combination of all would be some terrorist group getting their hands on weapons of mass destruction and the consequences to the people of our country.

We are getting a D on that. We can do a lot better. That same report card gives this Congress a D in another area, an area we have been talking about. Under the category of congressional and administrative reform, there is a subcategory, intelligence oversight reform.

Grade D. We would be embarrassed if our children brought back Ds from school, and yet Congress gets a D for this. And it is important to point out in this area, this is an area entirely under the control of the leadership in Congress. The Republican leadership could decide today to fix this.

This one has nothing to do with the administration. This has to do with decisions that can be made tomorrow by this Republican leadership. They have decided not to do it. Apparently a D is acceptable to them. And I think it is

important to go back to the consequences of that failure of oversight.

Now, we know in the lead-up to the Iraq war the failures of intelligence. The former Director of CIA, George Tenet, very decent guy, said it is a "slam dunk case" that there are weapons of mass destruction.

Well, what happened? Well, first the President awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The guys in intelligence and research in the State Department who got it right, they have never gotten any recognition. And then what happened?

Mr. SCHIFF. If I can interject, Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Prior to the vote on the authorization to use force, several of us were invited to the White House to sit down with Mr. Tenet. I was most concerned about the nuclear program, Iraq's nuclear program, about the evidence that you discussed a moment earlier.

And I asked Mr. Tenet and then head of the NSA, our now Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, how confident were they in the intelligence on Iraq's nuclear program? On a scale of 1-10, how confident were they?

They were a 10. They were supremely confident. And they were supremely wrong. And as you very well point out, this has had the most enormous of consequences in terms of this Congress making a decision to go to war, in terms of our credibility vis-a-vis Iran now.

When we talk about oversight, the lack of oversight has these most far reaching consequences.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, that is exactly right. Very serious consequences for the American people. And that is why it was surprising, I must say, that after George Tenet left the CIA as Director, that the administration decided to replace him with Mr. Porter Goss. Now Mr. Goss is a very decent, well-meaning person. But the fact of the matter is he was the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee at a time when this House failed to ask the hard questions and failed to do its oversight job. It accepted what the administration told them at face value, and it was a rubber stamp when it came to taking the administration's word on intelligence.

And yet he was the one they decided to make the head of Central Intelligence. And he brought with him some of the members of his committee staff. He brought his staff director and some of the other people who were very politically close to him, including his staff director, Patrick Murry.

And what was the result of that? Well, I think it is important to take us back to, this is what happened right after that appointment at the CIA. And I am reading from a Post story back from November 2004.

The deputy director of the CIA resigned yesterday after a series of confrontations over the past week between senior operations officials and CIA Director Porter Goss's new chief of staff

that have left the agency in turmoil, according to several current and former CIA officials.

John McLaughlin, a 32-year CIA veteran who was Acting Director for 2 months this summer until Goss took over, resigned after warning Goss that Goss's top aide, former Capitol Hill staffer Patrick Murry, was treating senior officials disrespectfully and risked widespread resignations.

The day after this, the story says, the agency official who oversees foreign operations, Deputy Director of Operations Stephen Kappes, tendered his resignation after a confrontation with Murry.

It goes on to say, it is the worst roiling I have ever heard of, said one former senior official with knowledge of the events. There is confusion throughout the ranks and an extraordinary loss of morale and incentive.

That was the result of the Goss appointment at the CIA. Now, we see that Goss is being pushed out. And they are trying to bring back the guy, Kappes, in fact it looks like he will be coming back, that Goss's chief of staff essentially pushed out. He got in a confrontation and Kappes said, the person with great experience said, I am out of here.

But a recent Post article of today, looking back on this period, said, former and current intelligence officers say Goss never had a strategic plan for improving spying on terrorist networks.

I think it is also important to note another recent development with respect to people who were brought in at the top of the CIA, because another one of those people was a gentleman by the name of Kyle "Dusty" Foggo. It says, and I am quoting from a very recent Washington Post story, other Goss lieutenants at the agency also appear to be on the way out following Goss, who resigned Friday.

Kyle "Dusty" Foggo, brought in by Goss as the CIA's Executive Director, number 3 official, announced to agency staff in an e-mail yesterday he plans to resign as well.

The FBI said it is investigating whether Foggo steered contracts to a friend, Brent R. Wilkes. People may recognize that name, Wilkes. He is the defense contractor who got caught up in the Duke Cunningham bribery scandal that we all know about and is an example of what is wrong in this House.

So these people who are at the CIA were appointed by this administration. I do not think it gives people confidence to know that the same people who appointed Michael Brown as the head of FEMA were the people who made these appointments to the CIA, an agency the American people depend on to gather good intelligence for our security.

And yet we have been a rubber stamp in that area. And the 9/11 Commission report continues to give us a D. And this Congress deserves a D because the

Republican leadership has not done anything. Until we get our act together with respect to conducting serious oversight in the intelligence area, we are going to continue to get policies that are not based on fact, but instead policies that are based on the world as people would like to see them, not the world as it really is.

In this day and age, we need people who are clear-eyed and can see the world as it is, because that is necessary for our national security.

I yield.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. I was struck, and perhaps you were too, as some of the networks pointed out with the near identity of language that the President used in describing his proposed nominee, General Hayden, for the post of Director of the CIA, saying that he was the right man at the right time for the right job, which was merely identical to what he said about Porter Goss a year and a half earlier, which kind of begged the question about what time he was referring to today. Is his proposed nominee the right man at the time a year and a half ago, or the right man right now when the last right man is being pushed out the door?

But I suspect what it means is that during the last 18 months the agency has been adrift and that we are not much farther ahead than we were a year and a half ago in assimilating our intelligence agencies and coordinating them and improving the quality of our human intelligence which was identified as such a glaring weakness within our overall intelligence capability.

But getting back to the consequences of all of this, the consequences of Congress' lack of oversight. When we talk about Congress being in the dark about this new NSA program, for example, the problem is that without someone being able to review whether these programs make sense, whether they are getting the results we need, we may be expending enormous sums of money and manpower and time and energy in fishing expeditions that lead us nowhere.

Even if they were within the confines of the Constitution, which is a substantial enough question, that does not mean that they are actually effective. We may have mountains of data about domestic calls to the United States that is of little or no value except to raise the anxiety of the American people that their privacy is being eroded.

There would be nothing worse than the erosion of our privacy without any commensurate benefit to the national security. But unless we do our oversight, it is impossible for us to know. And, unfortunately, I think that dearth of oversight has allowed these intelligence reforms to drift along or, worse, allowed the coordination of intelligence to degenerate over the last year and a half.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, that is right. If I can just say to my colleague, you know this Congress was

relatively quick when the 9/11 Commission recommended changes to the executive branch, in redesigning our national security review apparatus. We have the Director of National Intelligence now, Mr. Negroponte, and trying to change around the oversight within the administration, even though it is important to remember that the Bush administration originally resisted that reform and fought the reform.

They realized that when the 9/11 Commission on a bipartisan basis came out in favor of that recommendation that change would have to be made.

□ 2000

But here in the Republican-led Congress they have not done anything to address the 9/11 Commission's recommendations with respect to oversight. And I think everybody understands that at a time when we are trying to identify terrorists who are trying to do harm to our country and respond against them, it is absolutely essential that we get it right. It is important that we get it right for our military men and women. It is important that we get it right for the American people. It is important that we get it right for our own credibility.

In order for us to do that, we know we have to expand our abilities in human intelligence gathering overseas. You need to have people who know more foreign languages. It is a shift in paradigm somewhat. And what is absolutely clear is that this administration has not had that paradigm shift when it comes to intelligence. Certainly the leadership in this House of Representatives has not had a paradigm shift, because they have not supported the bipartisan recommendations of the 9/11 Commission with respect to the issue of oversight. And so unless we do something, we are going to be caught with our lenses looking one way when the danger to this country sneaks up from another direction.

We need to get it right. We need this oversight. It is like a board of directors that decides to go on vacation for four years and not pay any attention to the company. That board of directors would be sued for malpractice by the stockholders if something went wrong. We know some things are not going right and you have got to hold people accountable. And when you reward people who fail to punish or ignore people who get it right, you have got a recipe for failure. We need a recipe for success.

Mr. SCHIFF. That is very well put, and we have seen the consequences of our intelligence failures. They manifest. We have seen the consequences of our diplomatic failures as we are seeing in abundance now with Iran where we just had a terrible setback in our efforts to mobilize the international communities to deal with Iran's weapons program.

We have seen the consequences in our failure to stop North Korea from proliferating. But I am confident with our

Real Security plan we can reverse the decline in our own national security, and I want to thank the gentleman from Maryland again for all of his great work and for joining this Special Order hour.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my colleague from California.

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, if all the American people listened to the Democrats and what they say here night after night, day after day on the floor, you would think that we lived in the worst country in the world.

It is just amazing to me that people are risking their lives every day to get into this country when you hear what they have to say, because from their perspective all Republicans are evil. All Republicans are liars. All Republicans are no good, and this is the worst place in the world to be living. And yet we have one of the best economies that the country has ever had, and as I said, people are risking their lives every day to get into this country. I think because it is the greatest country in the world. And frankly, I think that it is not good for this country, for our colleagues to constantly, constantly be saying negative things about it.

We are not perfect. Nobody is perfect. The President is not perfect. No Member of Congress is perfect. No elected official is perfect. But we certainly do work hard trying to have a good country where the basic instincts of the people are good and people are trying to do good for their neighbor as well as for their country. And frankly, I get a little tired of it and I know a lot of my constituents tell me that they are tired of it too.

I want to come here tonight and talk a little bit about positive things. I think that while we can all acknowledge that we are not perfect and the country is not perfect, we do not have to dwell on the negative all the time. And I want to talk a little bit about our economy tonight and some other things relating to the economy and the impact that actions of the President and the Republican Congress have had on the economy.

I am going to put up one chart to start with because I want to keep with our theme that a group of us have come up with so that we can present the truth. The Truth Squad is here tonight. Just part of the Truth Squad is here, but we are going to try to keep our record of getting out the truth to the American people.

The economy is strong and it is continuing to grow; 138,000 jobs were created last month alone. That is April 2006. In the past 12 months, 2 million new jobs have been created; and since

August of 2003, more than 5.2 million jobs have been created. Our unemployment rate is 4.7 percent, lower than the average of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The GDP grew at a strong 4.8 percent annual rate in the first quarter of this year. This follows economic growth of 3.5 percent in 2005, the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation.

Over the past 12 months, employment increased in 48 States and four States set record-low unemployment rates.

Now, our colleagues on the other side would say, well, you know, yeah, there are new jobs being created, but they are not good jobs. They are just service jobs; they are no good. So I thought I would share a little bit about where those jobs are.

Between May 2003 and March 2006, job growth in key sectors, the five key sectors, in transportation, 197,000 new jobs; in the financial area, 294,000 jobs; in construction, 808,000 jobs; in education and health services, 1,039,000 jobs; in professional and business services, 1,288,000 jobs.

Now, those do not sound like bad jobs to me. And they must not be real bad jobs since our unemployment rate is only 4.7 percent. It must mean that Americans like those jobs pretty well because they are taking them.

Now, our tax policies, Republican tax policies, have spurred this economic momentum. Republicans have reduced income taxes for every American who pays income taxes. Republicans doubled the child tax credit, reduced the marriage penalty, cut taxes on capital gains and dividend, created incentives for small businesses to purchase new equipment and hire new workers, and put the death tax on the path to extinction. Together this tax relief has left \$880 billion in the hands of American workers and businesses.

Now I have said this before, there is an easy explanation or easy definition for the difference between Democrats and Republicans. Democrats think that the government knows how to spend your money better than you know how to spend your money. Republicans believe that you know how to spend your money better than the government knows how to spend it. We do not want to take any more of your money than we absolutely have to to do the things that Americans cannot do for themselves. The Democrats want to take all of your money.

If you listened to their leader this weekend, she talked about no deficit, no deficit if Democrats were in charge. But when pressed to say how she would get rid of the deficit, she really could not quite bring herself to say raise taxes, but the commentators pointed out that is the only way you can keep spending and do away with the deficit, and especially spend more as they have said on this floor they want to do and in committees. They want to spend billions more dollars, and all that would do would be to add to the deficit.

Now, I want to share a chart that shows some information about what