

DAVID BATES. Well, the pictures, I'll say this. My thoughts on the whole process was: how the hell did they get hearings, and torture from anywhere is wrong. But as we've spoke on, this torture has taken place for over two to three decades in America, on the Southside of Chicago. Why didn't we have public hearings? Why didn't the state legislators come in and do investigations? We actually had to go outside the country to an international court to deal with police torture. On October the 14th, the People's Law Office and other attorneys met in front of the Organization of American States to bring attention to the issue of torture, and we're looking for delegation of individuals to come in and to ask Mayor Daley questions that he hasn't been able to answer to the public since this Jon Burge stuff has been going on. And I tell you, it's going to be an embarrassment to a lot of people, but like my good friend Conroy said, they've been knowing about it.

AMY GOODMAN. Let me ask about the knowledge to the very top. Some are saying—and I want to put this question to Flint Taylor, attorney with the People's Law Office in Chicago—that the report could well implicate, as you were talking about, the State's Attorney, Richard Daley, his assistant Richard Devine, who now holds the top job. Can you talk more about how they knew, the whole issue of them being told early on?

FLINT TAYLOR. Well, as I said, Richard Daley was previously the State's Attorney of Cook County. In 1982, when one of the major—the first major case broke with regard to police torture, the Andrew Wilson case, the superintendent of police was informed by the head of the hospital, the prison hospital where Andrew Wilson was being held, that there was serious evidence of torture, that Andrew Wilson not only said, but had physical evidence that supported the conclusion that he had been tortured by electric shock, by beating, and he had 15 injuries all over him, burns and everything like that. And the head of the hospital was so shocked, he brought it straight to the superintendent of police.

The superintendent of police then brought it straight to Richard Daley. He knew that Andrew Wilson had been charged with very serious offenses, shooting two police officers and killing them. So Daley decided that rather than to investigate the criminal activities of Jon Burge in torturing Andrew Wilson, that that would, in fact, undercut and undermine, he thought, the prosecution of Wilson, so he did nothing. He did no prosecution at that time.

He then presided over the next eight years over the State's Attorney's office, which was complicit in taking over 55 confessions from 55 different victims of Burge and police torture. In all of those or many of those cases in the individual courts, there was testimony from those victims that they had been tortured. However, Daley defended all those cases, put all those people behind bars, many of them on death row, and in no instance did he investigate the continuing allegations that were coming out of Burge's police headquarters that people were tortured. Daley then went on to be the mayor of the City of Chicago.

There was—and John and I disagree in the sense that there had been at times public outrage. The public outrage reaches certain proportions at different times. We're at one those key points again today. We had been in the early '90s. And one the reasons for that was this Andrew Wilson trial that brought out all this evidence and put together all these different allegations of torture. Because of all of that, the police department was forced to reinvestigate. This was in the early 1990s.

They put an honest investigator in charge of the investigation, and lo and behold, he came to an obvious conclusion. He said there was systematic torture at Area 2. He said he had looked at 50 cases, and there was systematic torture. Well, what did the superintendent of police do? He suppressed that report. He then met with the mayor of the City of Chicago, after we had gotten that report released by a judge, and he and the mayor, who is now Richard Daley, instead of saying, "Now we have the evidence to prosecute. Now we should proceed. Now we should lock Burge up," what did they do? They not only attempted to suppress the report, but then they went publicly and discredited it. Daley stepped forward and said, "These are only rumors and innuendo." So, at every point, as I've mentioned, Daley, rather than taking his responsibility as chief law enforcement officer and chief executive officer of the City of Chicago, moved to suppress and to do nothing.

AMY GOODMAN. Legally—let me ask you, Flint Taylor. Legally, if crimes are known about, and they are covered up, is Mayor Daley criminally liable?

FLINT TAYLOR. Well, at this point, is he criminally liable? I suppose you could see him a co-conspirator, in that it was certain obstruction of justice over the years, certainly. But I think at this point what we're looking for is if a special prosecutor comes out with a report and says, "I can't indict, because it's too late," then the people of the City of Chicago have to look in two directions. They have to look backwards to Daley and Devine and say, "Well, the special prosecutor was hamstrung by the fact that Daley and Devine didn't act when they should have," and then we have to look forward and say, "That's not sufficient. That's not right."

There are continuing criminal violations here, and if the special prosecutor won't do anything about them, then Fitzgerald, who is the U.S. Attorney here and who, of course, has made his name in the Valerie Plame case and has already indicted Daley's people in a wide-ranging truck scandal, he has to open his investigation into federal RICO or racketeering charges, as well as obstruction of justice and perjury. And as David has mentioned, it has been taken to the international forum, not only last fall to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which is the Organization of American States, who is still looking into this issue, but this past week and right now, it's been presented to the Committee Against Torture of the United Nations in Geneva, and one of our people has spoken with and presented evidence to the Committee Against Torture, and that committee has ordered the government to respond and to speak to the issues of torture here in this country. And in its concluding remarks, it put with Abu Ghraib and put with Guantanamo the situation of Chicago.

And so, perhaps there's not enough public outrage here, but the international community is looking at it in a very strong way, and to hear Chicago put in the same breath with Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib is something that—if that doesn't wake up the powers that be here in the City of Chicago and that doesn't wake up the U.S. Attorney's office and that doesn't, in fact, put on the carpet the State's Attorney of Cook County and the Mayor of the City of Chicago, I don't know what will.

AMY GOODMAN. John Conroy, the Midwest Coalition for Human Rights will present a report that includes the Chicago torture allegations to the U.N. Human Rights Commission. How significant is this? And, finally, why do you call your book "Unspeakable Acts, Ordinary People"?

JOHN CONROY. Well, let me take the second question first. I call the book "Unspeakable Acts, Ordinary People," because torture is always done by—we want our torturers to be monsters, but it turns out that they're just ordinary people like you and me. And I can go back and cite you all kinds of psychological experiments in which they have found that people will do extraordinary things, inflicting pain on other people, if they are simply ordered to do so, simply following orders someone else is taking responsibility. And it doesn't require any sort of a twisted mind to do this. We are all—most of us are given to obedience. And so, I've interviewed torturers from around the world, former torturers, and they all struck me as very ordinary men.

How significant the international attention will be remains to be seen. It's a unique turn, and it's somewhat thrilling, I think, for those of us who have been watching this for a long time to see it finally raise to the level of being mentioned in a phrase with Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. But whether this will just be one of those media—you know, where the media comes in for a day or two and then leaves remains to be seen.

AMY GOODMAN. And what's the timetable on this?

JOHN CONROY. The special prosecutor is supposed to—I'm sorry. The judge who oversees the prosecutor is supposed to rule, I believe, on the 12th of May, as to whether the report will be released or not.

AMY GOODMAN. That will be Friday, and we will certainly follow it up. I want to thank you all for being with us: David Bates, torture victim himself, telling his own story; Flint Taylor, attorney with the People's Law Office in Chicago, who has represented many of the victims; and John Conroy, who has written about this for years for the Chicago Reader, author of "Unspeakable Acts, Ordinary People: The Dynamics of Torture."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCHWARTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICAN HOMELAND SECURITY

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, for much of our history the United States has not feared a direct attack. The vast expanses of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans allowed our young Nation to survive and thrive safe from the predation of the great powers of the 19th Century, and the growth of our military power in the 20th Century reinforced the belief that no hostile power could strike us here at home.

Only the British, nearly two centuries ago during the War of 1812 have mounted a sustained military campaign on American soil. Japan attacked both Hawaii and Alaska during World War II, but was unable to carry out a major ground offensive against the United States.

Our relative physical isolation fostered a sense of the invulnerability of the American people. Our borders with Canada and Mexico were relatively open, and we traditionally welcomed foreigners to our shores both as visitors and immigrants.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, American policymakers viewed terrorism as primarily a Middle Eastern and European problem. Even when the targets were Americans the acts themselves took place abroad. The hijacking of TWA 847, the Rome and Vienna airport massacres, the La Belle discotheque bombing, the seizure of the Achille Lauro and the bombing of Pan Am 103 resulted in hundreds of American casualties, but they all took place overseas.

This reinforced the deeply held belief that terrorists would not strike in this country. As a result, our Government at all levels was not configured to deal with terrorism, nor was the phrase "homeland security" part of our national lexicon.

During the 1990s terrorism came to America. The 1993 truck bombing of the World Trade Center began to rouse us from our complacency, and the Oklahoma City bombing 2 years later shocked Americans into the realization that mass casualty terrorism could happen here.

The fact that the Oklahoma City bombing was an act of home-grown terrorists, however, mitigated the sense of urgency that should have spurred Congress and the executive branch to take serious action to prepare for an act of international terrorism on our shores.

So, Mr. Speaker, our Nation did not see the gathering clouds for what they were, and America remained complacent. The September 11, 2001 attacks shattered that sense of security. Through the tears and their anger the American people demanded action. And the President and Congress promised swift and comprehensive measures to safeguard our Nation.

In the 4½ years since 9/11, the Federal Government has undergone a massive reorganization centered on the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, and a reorganization of the American intelligence community.

Government buildings and other high-value targets are now ringed by concrete barriers. Aviation security has been Federalized, foreign visitors are routinely fingerprinted and photographed upon entry into the United States. Law enforcement has been granted greater authority to monitor the activities of people it considers potential terrorists.

But to what end? Are these measures and hundreds of others making us safer? The answer, Mr. Speaker, is that in some ways we are safer now than we were on September 11. In other ways we are not safer. And we are not nearly as safe as we should be and as we could be.

Numerous commissions and investigations at the Federal, State and

local level, as well as a multitude of private studies have pointed to broad systemic and other flaws in our homeland security program.

Tonight I have a message for the American people. The Democrats have a plan to better secure our homeland. Our plan is tough and 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, Minority Leader PELOSI, Senate Minority Leader REID, and others 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.

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In a series of six Special Orders, 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, building a military for the 21st century. The second, the steps to winning the war on terror. Third, protecting our homeland. Fourth, a way forward in Iraq. And, fifth, energy independence for America.

Three weeks ago, we discussed the first pillar of our plan, building a military for the 21st century. We discussed the need to rebuild our state-of-the-art military, to provide the best equipment and training to our troops, to assure accurate intelligence and a strategy for success, to build a GI bill of rights for the 21st century, and to strengthen the National Guard.

Last week, we discussed a comprehensive plan to win the war on terror which focused on a wide range of strategies to destroy the threat posed by Islamic radicalism. We outlined steps to destroy al Qaeda and finish the job in Afghanistan, to double our special forces and improve intelligence. We talked about how we will eliminate terrorist breeding grounds, the preventative diplomacy and new international leadership that must be brought to the cause in the war on terror; our goal of securing loose nuclear materials by 2010, probably the most urgent national security threat we face and stopping the nuclear weapons development in Iran and North Korea.

In the coming weeks we will be discussing a new course in Iraq to make sure 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 the responsible de-

ployment of U.S. forces. Democrats will insist that Iraqis make the political compromises necessary to unite their country, defeat the insurgency, promote regional diplomacy, and strongly encourage our allies and 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 far-reaching ramifications for our country and the world is to achieve energy independence for America by 2020.

The real pillar of security that I will be addressing tonight with my colleague DAVID SCOTT, the gentleman from Georgia, is the one that most directly touches on the lives of ordinary Americans. Since 9/11, the lives of Americans have been changed by the new reality of the need to secure the United States and the American people here at home. As I have just said, most experts have concluded that there are huge gaps in our preparations and that we need a new strategy to secure America. Tonight, we will introduce you to our plan.

When Democrats are in charge, we will immediately implement the recommendations of the independent bipartisan 9/11 Commission, including securing national borders, ports, airports, and mass transit systems. We will screen 100 percent of our cargo bound for the U.S. in ships and airplanes at the point of origin, and secure and safeguard America's nuclear and chemical plants, its food, and water supplies. We will prevent the outsourcing of critical components of our national security infrastructure such as our ports, our airports, and our mass transit. We will provide our firefighters, emergency medical workers, police officers, and other workers on the front lines with the training, the staffing, the equipment and the cutting-edge technology that they need. And we will protect America from the biological terrorism and pandemics including the avian flu by investing in public health infrastructure and training public health workers.

Providing real homeland security requires taking a pragmatic and comprehensive approach that uses resources to effectively maximize security and balances our offensive and defensive efforts. At any given time, we have to make hard choices about how to spend our national security dollars. The Democratic plan directs resources to those areas that minimize the risk of a terrorist attack. We rejected the reactive mentality that too often plagues the Federal bureaucracy of planning against the last attack. Under real security, we will integrate our foreign and domestic security efforts, balancing the projection of power abroad with securing the country at home. Central to this will be the implementations of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

This commission was one of the most effective bipartisan commissions in our

Nation's history. It had access to some of the most experienced professionals and influential experts on homeland security. The commissioners weighed a wide range of issues, including emergency preparedness, transportation, critical infrastructure, and first responders and made sensible and sweeping recommendations to the administration and to Congress.

Unfortunately, the administration's performance on implementing these recommendations has been unimpressive. In fact, in December of last year the 9/11 Commission Public Discourse Project, made up of the members of the commission, issued a report card on its progress. The report card was filled with Cs, Ds, and Fs for the administration's implementation of the 9/11 recommendations.

In a statement accompanying the report card, Chairman Thomas Kean, a Republican, and Vice Chair Lee Hamilton, a Democrat, said, "Many obvious steps that the American people assume have been completed have not been. Some of these failures are shocking."

What we have seen over the last 4 years, Mr. Speaker, has been a failure of leadership and a failure of initiative.

I would now like to yield time to my colleague, a leader on national security issues, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. As always, it is indeed a pleasure to join you on the floor of our very distinguished Congress of the United States to address what is without a doubt the most pressing issue facing the American people, and that is security of our Nation, national security, homeland security.

I think it is very important for us to make the first step, to show that we as Democrats are indeed not only strong on security, but we are the stronger party on security.

Our legacy, our history is rich. We have built this military all the way through Democratic Presidents, from World War II with Franklin Delano Roosevelt, through the Korean War with Harry Truman, through all of the crises that we have had with Lyndon Johnson, with John Fitzgerald Kennedy; and with Bill Clinton leaving this Nation with a tremendous surplus and built a military that was capable of moving and being able to handle any threat in the world.

But then 9/11 came and then President Bush's response. And I am here to say tonight that the American people deserve much better than what we have gotten in that response from President Bush and this Republican-led Congress. Let us review for a moment 5 years.

Five years ago, 9/11 took place. And what has happened since that time? Can we say we are safer? Are our ports safer today? Obviously they are not, for not only do you and I and the rest of America know that only 5 percent of our cargo is being checked, the whole world does. The President's response to checking our ports was to turn the se-

curity over to a company that was owned by a country, the United Arab Emirates. That was one of only three countries in the world that recognize the Taliban as the ruling authority in Afghanistan.

At a time when our young men and women were dying and are dying and putting their lives on the line fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan, our President, this administration, so cavalierly says let these people guard our ports, a nation that we had from our intelligence that proved to be the central banking process that handled the financing of al Qaeda and other terrorists coming through that country; yet this was the country that owned the company Dubai Ports to handle security at our ports, a country that we know from our intelligence that was the cross-trading ground for shipping nuclear material, building fusion material into Iran, who has subsequently said they want to knock Israel off the face of the Earth and then turn and do the same to the great Satan, the United States of America. That has been that response on the port security.

And as Democrats have tried to do time and time again since then, to rein that in, joined by Republicans, we were successful in defeating that move, that very foolish and unwise move made by the President and this administration. And then, as we turn then to one of the worst disasters, perhaps the worst natural disaster in the history of this country, the very first opportunity for this Nation to be responsive to the major threat to homeland security, when Hurricane Katrina rolled in, another disturbing, disappointing, mismanagement, incompetence, and failure of the worst kind that resulted in the loss of over 2,000 American lives, billions and billions of dollars of loss and damage, farms and crops out of place, energy costs zooming, all because of slow mismanagement that we have not been able to recapture our place to this day.

FEMA, the lead organization in homeland security, a total F in response. And right to this day, exactly 14 days before the next hurricane season begins, we do not even have not just an executive director of FEMA, we don't even have a regional director of FEMA in the Atlanta region, my home base, in the region which will be most devastated by a natural disaster and the hurricanes.

And in that region, while I am at it, the response has been, even to reorganizing our military, even to realignment of our military bases, to take the primary base that trains, that deploys all of the National Guard and first responders in the event of a terrorist attack or a hurricane threat, a hurricane hitting this country at Fort Gillam. Instead of responding and building that base up, this administration comes in and recommends that that base be closed. And yet when Katrina hit, where did they have to turn? The only

bright spot we had in the whole response to Katrina was to come and take our first responder commander, General Honore, and dispatch him down to the scene. Total mismanagement in every single aspect of response to our homeland security.

Now here we are with a great threat to our borders, which, quite honestly, is perhaps the single most aspect of our own threat to not just homeland security but our national security, untold numbers, thousands of undocumented illegal immigrants sneaking into this country putting extraordinary downward pressure on our wage system, and providing in a way a very serious threat to the basic social services infrastructure of this country.

But it just didn't happen overnight. Where has this administration been? Why are the American people so upset? Why are the polls so low in the face of these Republicans and this administration? It is obvious: slow response, mismanagement. And nowhere is it more exacting and exemplary than with the response to Katrina, a threat to our homeland, and a response to our border security. And that is what is happening.

What is the response? Now it is because in this budget that they get on the floor and they are clapping about that they passed, a budget that cut homeland security by over \$6 billion, a budget that would not fund the 1,000 border agents that the 9/11 Commission and a bipartisan group of us Democrats and Republicans in this Congress have recommended. And then to take and overtax the overextended National Guard that has been overextended in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in responding to our hurricanes, and to say now we are going to put them on the border. Too little, too late of the wrong type. And how hypocritical.

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How hypocritical to take 6,000 of our National Guard and put them on the border, but to cut the funding for an additional 1,000 to 2,000 border agents that actually need to be there? The American people want some answers to that. That is not an adequate response. America deserves better, and I assure you that Democrats are going to give them better.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his comments and for all of his work in this area.

The gentleman highlighted the lapses that we saw in homeland security with Katrina, which I think were all the more graphic with the fact that we could literally see Katrina coming. Now, with infinite ways to perpetrate a terrorist attack, we may not see it coming in exactly the form it takes, and if we were not better prepared as a Nation for the hurricanes we could see coming, it gives me great concern about those attacks we do not foresee with that degree of precision.

These failures in the preparation and response to Katrina were also, I think,

the result of a failure of initiative. The report of the bipartisan congressional committee that investigated the response to Katrina, in fact, was entitled "A Failure of Initiative." The report cataloged a series of errors in judgment and in planning, including a failure to prepare for a catastrophic event, a failure to execute the National Response Plan, a failure to evacuate New Orleans and other vulnerable areas, and a lack of information sharing and coordination. We were not prepared for a natural disaster that gave us several days of advance notice. We are even less likely to be prepared for a disaster, natural or man-made, that strikes us suddenly.

Under our Real Security plan, the Department of Homeland Security would develop a comprehensive national emergency preparedness and response plan that spells out the responsibility for government and private agencies at every level. While the Department of Homeland Security had a response plan before Katrina, it lacked the details about coordinating various agencies and jurisdictions, and it was not treated seriously even within the bureaucracy.

For example, a review by the Joint Chiefs of Staff found that the National Response Plan did not even specify the role of the Pentagon and other Federal agencies in assisting local leaders during disasters.

In addition, a GAO report found that the National Guard units that responded to Katrina had only 34 percent of their authorized equipment, which also slowed their response.

These, I think, are some of the failures my colleague from Georgia alluded to, and these are also I think incumbent on the party in power in Congress to do its oversight, to make sure that we are prepared, to hold the executive accountable.

We have not done that oversight. We did not do it before Katrina. We have not done it adequately since, and under Real Security, it not only requires organizational changes within the executive, but also requires Congress to step up to its responsibilities, would you say?

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Absolutely, and I will tell you another example of the lack of response as well.

When we look at our military and the overextension of our military, all of our generals are saying that, and we have got to listen to them. They are the ones that we have in place to be able to run the military and be able to execute our programs, to maintain and keep us safe.

Now, we in this Congress, for example, have just allocated the money and the space for 17,000 additional National Guardsmen, and what did this administration do? Cut it, at a time when we have our National Guard so overextended.

As you have been, I have been to Iraq and as I have been to Afghanistan, and I might say at the outset here that our

soldiers are doing an extraordinary job. My hat's off to them, and it is just a pleasure to just get on a plane and fly over there into Kuwait and into Baghdad as we have done and into Afghanistan and Kabul and to see them do their job under most extraordinary circumstances and the sacrifices that their families are making.

But this administration and this Republican-led Congress, to not fund them at the levels that the military leadership is asking us to and to have them go on two and three tours of duty and then come back here and to short-change them in their training operations, that they took 2 weeks periods of times in rotation, to go and provide and do paperwork on the border security, quite honestly sometimes feels insulting to me, and our military deserves better. We have got to strengthen our military.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlemen, and these issues and the others we will continue to explore in the coming weeks as we further amplify Real Security.

Let me just end on this note. I had lunch with one of the Guardsmen from my district who served in the war in Iraq. He described to me how they had to put sheets of plywood and sandbags in to fill the doorways in their humvees because they did not have up-armored vehicles for their runs. The fact that our Guard have to go to those lengths, part of the Real Security plan that I outlined earlier was making sure our troops have the best equipment possible. We have not lived up to that standard. That is going to change under Real Security.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Or you go into junk yards, they are scrapping metal just to give them some body armor. That is despicable. That is never going to happen again. We are going to make sure of that.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

BORDER FENCING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for the remaining time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to address you and the House of Representatives.

As you all know, I have been to Iraq a number of times, and our troops over there in the early stages of this theater and in the overall global war on terror, and it is also known, that we did not send over there humvees that were armored because that was not something that was anticipated was the IEDs. As they began to materialize and manifest themselves, this Nation and our military and all branches of the services that were exposed, they aggressively moved down the path of armoring our equipment.

As I was there, I saw the retrofitting of humvees, the retrofitting of trucks,

the retrofitting of the equipment that was going out on to the streets and the roads of Iraq. Given the nature of the logistics of the difficulty, I saw people that mobilized, put their equipment in shape, and it was not very long before nothing that went outside the wire was left unarmored.

So the argument that we did not have enough bulletproof vests or we did not have enough armor, that is true early in the war. It is not true today, and we have provided resource after resource to our people in the Middle East and our people in this global war on terror.

It needs to be noted, Mr. Speaker, that Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has been in the front of this. They have done everything they can to accelerate the development, the manufacturing, the delivery and I will say the installation of the armor on our humvees, on our mobile vehicles and the bulletproof vests and the equipment for our military. There has never been a military in history that was so well-armored as our military, Mr. Speaker, and I do think it does a disservice to the efforts of all to bring up the issue and make the allegation that that is not enough over there.

Those would be isolated cases, if they are anything, but isolated. I would hope that that information comes to me so I can look into it with my colleagues who just left the floor. I wish they were here to respond to that, Mr. Speaker.

But I came here to talk about the issue that the President has raised today when he made his trip down to the southwest border, the Arizona-Mexico border, Mr. Speaker. Air Force One left Andrews Air Force Base early this morning, headed out along that way, landed and they did some stops along the southwest border of Arizona and Mexico and then turn around, came back here into Washington, D.C.

I have got a clip here from ABC News that says, Bush says border fencing makes sense, Mr. Speaker, and I have made that statement for a long time. I will contend that it does make sense. It makes a lot of sense, and I am here, Mr. Speaker, to endorse that statement and that philosophy. I may want a little bit more fence and I may want it a little more solid than the President wants, but philosophically, we are in key on this border fence.

A week ago, last weekend, so about 10, 11 days ago, I spent 4 days on the ground on the border between Arizona and Mexico. I did not go on a formal CODEL. I did not go on a formal, appointed trip. I went down there on an unannounced trip because even though I appreciate the hospitality that comes from the border patrol and the National Guard and the other entities down there that are defending our border and the work that they do and the way that they have welcomed me and given me the guided tour in the past times I have been down on the border, this time I chose to go down on the