

Avenue. Whether it is a meeting or a social event, a trip to the White House is always a big deal. It's always exciting.

It was on one of those trips to the White House that I had the great fortune to meet Tony Snow. I didn't set out to meet Tony Snow that day. It happened because I had something that I had been asked to share with the President. It was a letter. It was a letter brought back by a soldier from Iraq. It was a letter that was handwritten by an Iraqi woman. It was a letter that was taken to this soldier early one summer Iraqi morning, the heat, the dust, the barriers, the wire; and this woman made her way up to the checkpoint and handed this letter to the soldier and said, Can you get this to President Bush?

The soldier lived in my district back in north Texas. So after he came home, he brought the letter with him, and he was determined to get it to the President. And he did what anyone else would do with a letter to get to the President; he brought it to the town hall where his congressman was speaking and handed me the letter in front of a great number of people and said, "Can you please help me get this letter to the President?" Of course I said I would. But I didn't really know how I was going to do that and brought the letter back to Washington.

I worked with the White House congressional liaison, but I wasn't really getting the letter to where it needed to be. So we had the White House picnic scheduled, and at the last minute, I put the letter in my pocket. I said, Well, if I see the President, I will hand the letter to him personally. But as is usually the case, you go to one of these events and the President is absolutely mobbed by people, and I honestly just didn't think I could get through the swarm of individuals that were lining up to have their picture made with the President.

So I turned around, and there was Tony Snow. I didn't know Tony, but I walked up to him and struck up a conversation. And he was very happy to oblige. He was warm, he was witty, certainly very, very easy to talk with. He was a larger-than-life press person, a pundit, a press secretary, having just a pleasant and regular conversation with a very freshman congressman from Texas.

It dawned on me that day that Tony might be the right person to whom to give this letter to take to the President. I asked him. I said, I have a letter that a soldier asked me to deliver to the President that was given to him by a woman in Iraq. Do you think you can help me? He said of course he would take the letter, and he'd be happy to see that it got into the hands of the President.

Now, that was the White House picnic in June. Many, many months went by, many, many weeks went by, a couple of months went by. I didn't hear anything, and I really wondered what had happened to that letter, if it had

ever gotten to where it was intended to go.

And then at another event right at the start of school in September back in my district, the same soldier came up to me at a Chamber of Commerce breakfast. Again, a lot of people around, and very excitedly said, "I just want you to know what you have meant to me getting my letter to the President." And I was somewhat taken aback because I didn't know the President received the letter. He said, Oh, yes. They called me from the White House. They identified themselves. At first I thought it was some of my buddies that were kidding with me. But in fact the letter had gotten to the White House. The President called me and thanked me for it. In the letter, the woman had thanked the President for everything he had done for the Iraqi people and said she was praying for him every day, and the President was deeply touched by the woman's words.

Now, Tony Snow did not have to take that letter from me that day. He didn't have to deliver it to his boss. He didn't have to take it to the President. But that's just the kind of person he was: honest, decent, and a man of his word at all times.

Well, certainly for me it was a great honor for me to meet Tony Snow that day. Certainly the country again mourns his loss, and I just wanted to bring to the floor this evening one of the other stories of what a great American Tony was and how much, as a country, we will miss him and honor his memory.

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**AIR FORCE GENERAL MOSELEY
AND SECRETARY WYNNE
SHOULD BE HONORED, NOT
FIRED**

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, the June 5 forced resignations of Air Force Secretary Michael W. Wynne and Chief of Staff General T. Michael Moseley represent the first time in United States history the top uniformed and civilian leaders of any service were ousted simultaneously. The actions of Secretary of Defense Gates are totally unprecedented and deserve deeper scrutiny and inquiry.

Successful leaders must focus on today's problems while simultaneously anticipating future challenges. The tenures of Moseley and Wynne were defined by these characteristics. They cultivated a service that was second to none.

Moseley and Wynne developed and employed new technology, such as the unmanned aerial vehicles that are yielding unparalleled effects on the battlefield. They also recognized that the Air Force has to adapt to a changing world, and they directed the service

to build competencies in new areas such as cyberspace and alternative fuels. And finally, Wynne and Moseley took action to re-capitalize the Air Force's aging fleet with a wide array of assets, including the tanker, the F-22, and the next generation bombers. These are steps that will prove essential as the service confronts future challenges.

Secretary Gates' real reasons for the firing of Secretary Wynne and General Moseley may never be known. However, I have come to believe that his stated reasons do not necessarily match up with reality. The publicly stated reason was primarily because of the violation in sending nuclear control units to Taiwan. Perhaps the real reason for the firings is because of disagreements on the strategic defense of this Nation.

The parts that were in violation were removed from the nuclear control list in 1991. The parts shipped were just special lamps. Moseley and Wynne had approved a correction on this matter and were spending over \$1 billion to make those corrections. If Secretary Gates, or others in the Pentagon, had some concerns, they could have voiced those concerns much earlier.

In addition, it is important for the Secretary to release the full report by Admiral Kirkland Donald, who investigated the case of the mistaken shipment to Taiwan. Admiral Donald's findings directly led to the firing of Moseley and Wynne, and the report should be made public as soon as possible. I call on the Secretary tonight to make this report public.

Now, there have been reports that Moseley and Wynne constantly clashed with the Secretary of Defense's office over greater procurement of the F-22. In order to avoid a showdown with the Air Force, the Defense Department decided that instead of closing down the F-22 line, it would restrict how many planes the Air Force could buy and leave the ultimate decision to the next administration.

The F-22 will serve as replacements for the aging F-117s and F-15s. The Air Force needs a minimum of 381 F-22s to fill out its 10 air and space expeditionary forces. However, it has been authorized funds for only 183. As a result, the Air Force must keep selected F-15s and F-16s in service much longer than had been expected. Mostly and Wynne fought hard for the F-22 against the wishes of Secretary Gates and his office.

Now, considering the impressive record of General Moseley and Secretary Wynne, one must ask why they were forced to resign. While I certainly understand and share the Secretary's concern regarding the Air Force's control over its nuclear inventory, I think the reason for the firings extends far past his publicly stated reason.

We had a clash of philosophies here. Moseley and Wynne were not leaders that were content with simply toeing the line for today. They were pushing

hard for the future. This garnered much criticism, with many suggesting that it is impossible to adequately focus on today's challenges if one is also thinking about the future. That's what Secretary Gates believed. He even went so far as to deliver a speech where he disparagingly termed this concept as "next-waritis." Is it not the responsibility of the Secretary of Defense to plan for the future defense of this Nation?

Many mistakes that Moseley and Wynne were blamed for can be laid squarely at the feet of the Pentagon leadership. Without a real commitment from the Secretary of Defense' office, many of those problems will persist. To ignore this trend is simply irresponsible. General Moseley and Secretary Wynne understood this. Unfortunately, it led to their dismissal.

Responsible military leaders do not have the luxury of focusing on the present at the expense of the future. Failure to anticipate, adopt and learn lies at the core of military disasters. Given the stakes, "next-war-it is" is a sacred duty, not a reason for decapitating the leadership of the Air Force. History has taught us repeatedly that those who solely fixate on today's problems will be woefully unprepared to address tomorrow's challenges. Iraq and Afghanistan are obviously important, but we must also respond to global trends and realize that future wars may not always mirror our past conflicts.

We must support our military leaders who aggressively tackle the challenges of today and tomorrow. Firing Moseley and Wynne for taking this comprehensive view is simply irresponsible and sets a disastrous precedent. Instead, we owe them a debt of gratitude for all they did to help win today's fight and help the nation posture for the future. They understood the complex array of challenges facing the country and I stand resolute in my support for continuing this encompassing approach—the nation cannot afford to consider any other option.

Many of the mistakes that Moseley and Wynne were blamed for can be laid squarely at the feet of the Pentagon leadership. Without a real commitment from the Secretary of Defense's office, many of these problems will persist. We cannot ask aircrews to fly in combat missions if their airplanes are falling out of the sky due to structural fatigue. We cannot afford the cost of inefficiencies within the Department of Defense that is created by unnecessary overlap in roles and missions. We cannot ask our Airmen to undertake missions if they are not supported with adequate budgets to facilitate those missions that we as a nation ask them to fulfill.

To ignore these trends is simply irresponsible and could prove devastating for the nation. It takes an immense amount of time, planning, and resources to posture for these challenges and we will not have the luxury of any of these elements when what was once a seemingly distant future threat becomes a critical challenge for today. General Moseley and Secretary Wynne understood this. Unfortunately, it led to their dismissals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ENERGY SOLUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for that designation of hour, and the purpose for being here this evening is to focus on the number one issue that many of us are hearing from our constituents back home, and that's the pain that they're feeling over the increase in energy prices.

There are a number of us here that are serving in the United States House of Representatives that are hearing the American people, Mr. Speaker, and we are crying out, as our constituents are crying out, to make sure that something can be done.

And the reason why we're bringing this discussion here before this body, the most magnificent body on the planet, the floor of the United States Congress, where freedom reigns, we're bringing this up here because the United States Congress is the entity that caused the current problem that we're under, and let me explain why.

The United States Congress has made it virtually illegal to access America's rich storehouse of energy resources. I know it's hard to believe, Mr. Speaker. It's almost impossible to believe. Why would any group of people, especially in a country where there's freedom, want to restrict access to energy resources? It doesn't make any sense.

So a number of us are here this evening because we want to talk about the possibilities that there are to have energy independence in the United States and to reach the very possible goal of getting back to having Americans pay \$2 a gallon or less.

So, to start off this evening, I'd like to call on my colleague and I'd like to defer to him, Mr. PATRICK MCHENRY from the great State of North Carolina.

Mr. MCHENRY. I thank my colleague for yielding, and Congresswoman BACHMANN, thank you for your leadership here. This is your first term in Congress. To take such an active role on energy policy is very helpful, not just for Minnesotans but for the rest of the country as well. Thank you, and thank you for hosting this hour as well.

I think it's important that the American people understand what's happening in terms of energy policy. This challenge was not created overnight, nor will it be fixed overnight. But we have to take steps now to make sure we have an American energy independence day in the future. And what we can do now to decrease the price at the pumps is to increase supply. I think the American people understand the laws of supply and demand, but let's