$150 billion in a country that has more to do with errors in judgment than threats of terrorism against the United States.

The patchwork of actions and reactions about terrorism are long on rhetoric but stop well short of defining potential threats and responses or a philosophy to guide America. Questions need to be asked and answered, and that is why what the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) is doing tonight is so important.

The acting director of the CIA admits that a good case can be made for a new Cabinet-level Secretary to oversee all of the Nation's intelligence agencies, but the director thinks some changes in the CIA could accomplish just as much.

Now, in Washington, D.C., turf issues are big issues. Are the remarks by the acting director turf or analysis? When it comes to terrorism, the old ways of Washington, turf among them, must change.

The President took America to war in Iraq over alleged ties to terrorism, now proven incorrect. We learned just today that eight of the 9/11 hijackers passed back and forth through Iran before the attacks. We learned the Iranian government instructed border guards to let all al Qaeda pass. The CIA says there is no evidence of an official connection, but there is tacit approval, at a minimum. The same could have been said before Iraq, but that did not stop the President from going to war.

What does this new information mean about Iran? The President says he launched a preemptive war in Iraq. Well, will the President launch a postemptive war against Iran? Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction. Iran is openly developing a nuclear capacity, claimed peaceful at this point, but outside the scope of objective knowledge and data. Is Iran next for U.S. military action? Why? Why not?

Given Iraq, would Congress write this President another blank check for anywhere else in the world? What about North Korea? There is a regime that is as oppressive as Saddam's. There is a country that bought weapons technology from our old friend or our new friend and our old nemesis Libya. There is a country where weapons are almost certainly not theoretical. Are we going into North Korea anytime soon? We are pulling our troops back in South Korea from the border. We are thinking about moving some of them to Iraq. What does that mean?

Today, Libya must be in line for, and I am not kidding about it, a football game. Mr. Qaddafi may have isolated himself economically for years, but he could still watch television. So, today, Qaddafi is trying to buy a British sports club, hoping that the English version of football will thaw the icy relations.

Then there is Pakistan. They were not at the top of our list until we needed a friendly Nation in the Middle East after the September 11 attacks. Now, Pakistan is a key ally. We have made them a non-European NATO ally. Is that good for Pakistan and the United States? If so, why? Is it a good thing for relationships between India and Pakistan and the United States? If it is, does this mean that the world is so interconnected that the notion of friend or enemy no longer applies?

After all, we remember the television networks have shown pictures of Defense Secretary Rumsfeld bringing greetings to Saddam Hussein, not that many years ago, in the administration of Bush I. He was a bad guy then, but Mr. Bush liked him, and I guess that was good enough for those days.

□ 2230

Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago he became a bad guy. We did not like him any more, and we all know what happened then. What is the distinction between Saddam Hussein in Bush I and in Bush II? He just gassed people in his own country in Bush I. America needs a better definition of policy than just expediency. American policy today is grounded in reaction, not philosophy.

There has been enough time since the tragedy of 9/11 for the President to articulate a terrorism policy for the Nation to debate, adopt and defend. All of us gave him some slack right after 9/11. Who would not want our President to have the power to deal with what he needed to deal with at the moment, but that is a long time ago.

We see nothing. We do not have a policy, and the headlines can prove it. We have a military stretched so thin that the President launched an undeclared draft to compel soldiers to return to active military duty. If officers did not resign their commission, the service can reach back 20 years to bring them in.

The New England Journal of Medicine just carried a study that 1 out of 5 people coming home is subject to psychological problems, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and other problems. We are suffering casualties. If we think out of 160,000 people, 1 out of 5 coming home, that is 30,000 people, never mind all of the people who have lost an arm or leg. Now we have psychological problems coming home as well.

Does America need a draft? The administration says no, or not until at least after the election. They say this ''no'' just after they have issued stop-loss orders to prevent soldiers from leaving active duty in Iraq. We have an indefinite military commitment in Iraq. But why, if we supposedly handed the country over to the Iraqis?

America lives in perpetual terrorism-alert status. Is there nothing to be gained other than a CYA for this policy? Who decided that we should be told to be very worried just after America was told not to worry any more that we were already worried? They are moving the fear back and forth and keeping the American people on edge, and that summarizes the administration's recent public statements on terror. It also symbolizes the lack of a coherent terrorism policy.

Today the administration basically says just trust us. Just trust us. America's response should be mine from the Reagan administration, ''Just Say No.'' We did trust, and that is how we got into Iraq. The safety and security of America is everyone's business. It should be debated in this House before the People's Body. Every district, every person in this country is represented on this floor. It should not be decided by one man. I think the average American knows that and knows what the administration has given us so far is not a policy but wishful thinking.

Mr. Speaker, the President has 105 days to articulate the terror policy, what he is really trying to do. If he does not do that, we are going to have a new President.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for yielding me this time.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. Let me close by saying at the end of the day we all need to pay tribute to those wonderful, wonderful young men and young women in uniform, whether they come from Missouri, Washington, Ohio, New York, Florida, or all across our country. They are professionals. They know what their duty is, and we certainly wish to salute them this evening as well as the families that support them and wish well for them and of course pray for them.

9/11 WAS NOT PREDESTINED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HENSARLING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for half the time before midnight, approximately 43 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) who has always had the respect of his colleagues. I know that the gentleman is very serious and sincere about the national security of the United States. I appreciate him trying to put forth some creative and positive alternatives to the current policies he may or may not agree with in terms of the war on terrorism.

There are positive opponents to the President and there are negative opponents to the President. There are people who offer alternatives, and there are people who do nothing but undermine the President's policy; but there are also those who have legitimate complaints and alternatives to offer, and I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for always trying to provide the alternative.

Let me note, after hearing our last colleague who spoke, Saddam Hussein had a blood grudge against the people of the United States of America. He

wanted to hurt us and would have hurt us had he been given a chance. It is a good thing that Saddam Hussein was removed from power. Those who nitpick our President and backbite him as we try to make this situation, turn the situation around in Iraq, would not return Saddam Hussein to power. That is not the question.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, let me note that we need to look at the terrorism angle which is what the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) was suggesting for tonight. I have a speech to talk about what happened on 9/11, the terrorist attack, and I give this speech leading up to some time this week when the terrorism task force will report to the American people on what happened on 9/11.

The most important thing that the American people need to know when looking at 9/11, the 9/11 terrorist attack, was that it was not predestined. It was not unavoidable. Unfortunately, the commission investigating 9/11, and we will find this out when they issue their report, they seem to be uncomfortable with fixing responsibility, branding such attempts of fixing responsibility to individuals or to policy as the blame game or pointing fingers. So instead of looking for policies that were dead wrong or people who were incompetent, we have heard about glitches in the system or a lack of communication or a lack of a shared database. Expect the recommendations of the task force to be consistent with this thinking. We will hear about changes in flow charts, organizational restructuring and the creation of a new central authority, an intelligence czar. If there has ever been a cliche, let us create a czar and give him all of the power, and that will solve the problems.

No, I am sorry, 9/11 represents a dramatic failure of policy and people. A number of insane policies led to the creation of a hostile, radical Islamic movement, the one that we face today, and we had policies in place that enabled this weird, feudalistic religion, religious zealots of radical Islam to become a major threat to the western world, and especially to the people of the United States.

Yes, the origins of this frightening reality go back aways. In the 1980s, high-level officials in the Reagan administration, and this is probably where it started, agreed to the demand of Pakistani President Zia Al-Haq that his government oversee, read that control, America's support for those Afghans who were fighting against the Soviet troops occupying their country. Much of the lethal inventory that we sent to the Afghan freedom fighters ended up in the hands of Pakistan's favorite Muslim fanantics, like Rasul Sayyaf or Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Hekmatyar was a fiend, for example, who in his college days threw acid in the face of young women who refused to cover themselves with a burqa. That is who ended up with the lion's share of our aid to the Afghan freedom fighters.

During the war with the Soviet occupation, I hiked into Afghanistan with a small mujajadin infantry unit. On our way to the seige of Jalalabad, which was the last major battle in that war with Soviet troops, we came across an encampment of Saudi volunteers. In stark contrast to the spartan living conditions of the Afghan fighters who I was with, this camp site was complete with large safari-style tents, cots, and even SUVs. I was told not to speak English because the Saudi crazy man who led this bunch would rather kill Americans than Soviet troops. His name was Osama bin Laden.

So by the end of the 1980s, the presence of dangerous wackoes in Afghanistan was well known. I can assure Members that complaints were made at the highest levels about American support ending up in the hands of these fanatics. I personally made such protests while working in the Reagan White House, yet the policy continued, probably because those representing us on the scene, meaning in Pakistan and Afghanistan, did not complain. In fact, everything indicates that the American so-called professionals on the scene supported the let-Pakistan-decide policy.

Milton Bearden, senior CIA officer overseeing America's support for the Afghanistan insurgency, has suggested that his job was beating the Soviet Army and he should not have been expected to keep our weapons out of the hands of those who might pose a long-term threat to us, to the United States. Nonsense.

Had he raised the issue, coupled with the complaints like the ones I was making to the National Security Council, as well as other people who I know who were making these complaints, this policy would have been reviewed and it would have been reversed. But Milt did not want to rock the boat. He did not want to upset the Pakistanis, so our weapons continued to be delivered into the hands of people who hated us. So put this man, Milton Bearden, CIA station chief, on the list of people who helped bring about 9/11.

Also put unnamed high-level Reagan officials, perhaps even CIA Director Bill Casey, who I have a great deal of respect for, this might have been one of the mistakes he made. We all make mistakes. But in the end, we made a deal to give Pakistan the dominant role in this operation. To be fair, there was no indication at that time that these medieval mullahs would ever pose a threat to the United States, but we should have supported people who were more pro-western and more enlightened. They were available, but we would have had to make Pakistan mad at us for us to we have delivered weapons to them directly. Nevertheless, we could have helped these others and it would have been a better world and better path for us to be on in the long and short run had we done that, and had the CIA and Milton Bearden insisted this was the best way to go and the moral way to go.

Contrary to leftist cliche, and this is what is important, contrary to leftist cliche, the roots of the current terrorist crisis lie not in our support for the Afghan people in their gallant fight against the Soviet occupation, but instead on America's willingness to let Pakistan distribute war supplies and our unconscionable decision after the retreat of the Soviet Army to walk away ourselves and leave the poor and wounded Afghans to live in the rubble and suffer their misery.

To fix responsibility on that decision, look at the list of senior foreign service officers at our embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, in the 1980s and 1990s. Up to this day, there are high-level State Department officials and career foreign service officers who still toe the Pakistani line, who still seem unable to call Pakistan to task for its transgressions, its sins of omission and commission. These State Department pros, always trying to prevent a crisis on their watch, always trying to avoid a decision that will mandate a confrontation, these people gave us 9/11. Put them on the list.

Furthermore, it was a policy decision to walk away and abandon our devoted Afghan allies even after psychopathic killers like Gulbadeen rose up as the Soviets departed. President George Bush, father of our current President, has to accept the lion's share of the blame for this cowardly, arrogant and selfish policy. There would be no Marshall Plan for Afghanistan or anything else like that because like during the war itself, we left postwar construction and assistance basically up to the Saudis and up to the Pakistanis which was another indefensible policy decision.

□ 2245

As we went into an era in the 1990s of prosperity, the Afghans were stuck in misery and they could not even take care of their wounded, the people who had lost limbs during the war. They could not even clear away the land mines.

So what happened when we left it up to the Saudis and Pakistanis to take care of the situation? Predictably, they had their own agenda, which included the creation of a radical Islamic state in Afghanistan. They were not upset about violent extremists like Hekmatyar and Sayyaf being so well armed. The Saudis and the Pakistanis supported these violent extremists. They were the ones who armed the violent extremists and did so in many cases with our own weapons. Predictably, what followed when the Soviets left and we walked away was a period of havoc and bloodshed. Hekmatyar Gulbadeen peppered Kabul with American rockets that were stockpiled during the Soviet occupation. Thank you, Mr. Bearden.

There was a way out of this bloody mess. Afghanistan's benevolent old king, King Zahir Shah, was exiled in Rome and he was ready and willing to

return to Afghanistan to offer a moderate leadership to that country. He is now and was at that time the most beloved man in Afghanistan. He is a pro-western force for stability and decency in that country. But instead of supporting King Zahir Shah, our State Department opted for the creation of a third force. This new force was to be made up of religious fanatics educated in the Madrassas, the so-called schools in Pakistan that were financed and built by the Saudis. I pleaded with my own government and I pleaded with the Saudi intelligence chief, Prince Turki, to at least give the old king, Zahir Shah, a chance to lead an interim government and bring some stability there. ''No way'' was the answer. Again our State Department sided with the Saudis and Pakistanis, going with the radical Muslim fanatics rather than going with a pro-western alternative. We ended up, yes, with the Taliban. That is what we are talking about being created.

Make no mistake about it, the Taliban's ascent to power as well as their ability to stay in power was a Clinton administration policy decision promoted by the know-it-alls at the State Department. Again, put on the list of those whom to blame for 9/11 those people in the State Department that supported and advocated this policy. The policy of the State Department again and the Clinton administration in collusion with the Saudis and the Pakistanis was to create and support the Taliban control of Afghanistan. They obviously did not learn a thing from the horror that they created by backing Islamic fanatics like Hekmatyar.

Two specific diplomats to put on the 9/11 blame or shame list are Ambassador Robert Oakley who was on the scene as U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan when following Pakistani lead became U.S. policy. Another diplomat, John Holtzman, was the deputy chief of mission at our embassy in Pakistan during the 1990s. He discouraged and undercut efforts to those who were offering an alternative to the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Of course our government's support for the Taliban was never publicly acknowledged. It is too diplomatic for that. We do not mention that but that was the policy and it was never publicly acknowledged but for those of us who were engaged in that region. Let me say there were darn few of us who were engaged in that region after the Soviets had left. We knew it was clear that the United States was supporting the Taliban, but what is even more poignant, most Afghans believed that the Taliban were created by the United States of America and that they had our support. Why should they not believe that that was our policy? America's aid, for the most part, was channeled, and I say this, channeled disproportionately through the Taliban-controlled areas. I remember trying to clear the way for the shipping of private humanitarian relief to a non-Taliban area in the northern part of Afghanistan only to be blocked by Assistant Secretary of State for Southern Asian Affairs Rick Inderfurth. If there was any doubt about my suspicions about U.S. policy, it was confirmed in 1997 when high-level executives from the Clinton administration saved the Taliban from total defeat and extinction. Here is what happened. In April of 1997, the Taliban launched a major offensive aimed at taking control over the northern third of Afghanistan which up until that point had remained a free zone under the control of regional leaders. Those regional leaders are commonly referred to as warlords. One of those regional leaders, General Malik, tricked the Taliban and managed to capture almost all of their front line troops along with most of their heavy weaponry. It was an utter disaster for the Taliban. The road to the capital, Kabul, was wide open. The Taliban were totally vulnerable and could easily have been wiped out. I sent a message to Commander Masoud and others that Kabul should be liberated and the king of Afghanistan, Zhir Shah, this moderate force I have been talking about, should be brought back to oversee a transition government which hopefully would evolve into a democratically elected government perhaps like we saw in Spain where the monarchy was brought back and they evolved into a democracy. But before the anti-Taliban forces could strike, before the anti-Taliban forces could take advantage of this incredible opportunity to get rid of the Taliban, Assistant Secretary of State Rick Inderfurth and American and United States Ambassador Bill Richardson flew to northern Afghanistan and convinced these anti-Taliban leaders that this was not the time for an offensive. Instead, they insisted, this was the time for a cease-fire and an arms embargo. This was clearly a statement of U.S. policy that two top foreign policy leaders in the Clinton administration for that region flew to northern Afghanistan to convince the anti-Taliban forces not to take advantage of their one opportunity to soundly defeat and thus eliminate this enemy.

Let us remember, by this time it was clear that the Taliban were Islamic Nazis. I had fought the Taliban for years trying to present the king as an alternative. When they took over Kabul, I remember even my comment was, ''Well, let's wait and see. Let's give them the benefit of the doubt.'' I was very skeptical, even for just a matter of 2 weeks, but within 2 weeks there was no doubt what these people were about: Making women stay inside their homes. They could not get adequate medical treatment, much less have jobs. Repression of any type. Listening to music much less expressing some type of opposition to their government. No, these were fascist Islamicists. Instead of letting them be defeated, the Clinton administration, Mr. Inderfurth and Mr. Richardson, went there and saved the Taliban and they convinced them not to take advantage of this one opportunity they had.

So let me underscore this again. We knew by that time that the Taliban were evil. Yet we helped save them because we had made a deal with Pakistan and with Saudi Arabia to create the Taliban and to keep them in power. Just to note, right after the cease-fire and the release of prisoners that were brokered by these high-level Clinton administration officials, the Pakistanis began a Berlin-like airlift to resupply and re-equip the Taliban which was obviously financed with Saudi money. If I knew of this massive resupply effort, certainly the Clinton administration officials who set up this disastrous scenario also knew. Why were the anti-Taliban leaders not notified of this situation? Why did we continue to enforce an arms embargo which only affected the anti-Taliban forces even as the Taliban were being rearmed and resupplied by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia? The answer is, it was U.S. policy to keep the Taliban in power during the Clinton administration. So add the Clinton appointees, Assistant Secretary of State Rick Inderfurth and U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson on the 9/11 blame list, but, to be fair, they were obviously carrying out policies that were made elsewhere and higher up. How much higher up? All the way up to the very top of the Clinton administration.

Last year, the current Foreign Minister of Pakistan visited California. Furious by my repeated accusations that Pakistan was responsible for the Taliban, he blurted out at a well-attended event that from day one, America was part of the deal that created the Taliban. I had been trying to prove that the Clinton administration was covertly supporting the Taliban and now at last I had a confirmation. As a member of the Committee on International Relations, it had been my responsibility to oversee this policy. During the last 2 years of the Clinton administration, I made numerous requests, with the support of the committee chairman, Ben Gilman, for Taliban-related documents so I could prove what our policy was and what we were doing behind the scenes in terms of the Taliban in Afghanistan. I asked for these documents. I asked for cables, talking points, meeting notes. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made a commitment to me and to the chairman of the committee in an open congressional hearing to provide my office and Chairman Gilman all related documents. We were stonewalled. That is it. The elected officials got stonewalled by the permanent government, by the pros who made the policy in the first place, the people who they sent over to take over the policy in Islamabad and oversaw this, protecting themselves but also protecting the secret agreement with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. So instead of sending the

dossiers, the documents about the Taliban, they sent to us, the people who were elected to oversee that policy, meaningless documents that included innocuous news clippings. This is about as arrogant as it gets, unelected State Department careerists dismissing the requests of elected officials for security-related information.

One wonders if the current independent commission examining 9/11 has asked to see these documents. We will have to see if the commission investigating 9/11 goes into why the Taliban was in power in the first place. This is a vital piece of information. If the Taliban would not have been in power, these radical Islamicists would not have provided bin Laden and the terrorists with the base of operations which led to 9/11. In some ways, it is hard to characterize the Clinton administration's support of the Taliban as covert. The stench was hard to miss. Covert or overt, it was disgraceful and led to 9/11 by creating a safe base of operations for bin Laden and a training base and staging area for al Qaeda.

Bin Laden is from an enormously wealthy Saudi family. While our petro dollars flowed into Saudi Arabia by the hundreds or tens of millions, the Saudi establishment not only turned a blind eye but also attempted to buy off this violent anti-western Islamic fringe in their own country. Billions of our dollars, our petro dollars, came back to bite us in a big way. It obviously continues to this very day. The first gulf war in 1990 and 1991 did nothing but expand bin Laden's hatred for the United States. In terms of our presence in Saudi Arabia, he has piously proclaimed that it is an insult to his faith. Get that. An insult to his faith. This is a mass slaughterer of unarmed people and, of course, slaughtering these unarmed people and these noncombatants as we saw on 9/11 and others who he has slaughtered is perfectly consistent with his faith, but he is insulted by America being in the Middle East. Perhaps we should quit taking seriously all of this self-righteousness from radical Islamicists because in reality what we are talking about are psychopathic killers. And whatever religion they would be part of, whether it is Christianity or Hindus or Israelis or Americans, whoever we are talking about, there are psychopathic killers in every society, only what we have got here is in the name of the Muslim faith, these people have managed to wrestle leverage which gives them enormous power to attack us and to kill our people.

In the mid 1990s, bin Laden and his cohorts began to set up his terrorist underground army for the war that he intended to wage on America. In the mid 1990s, he operated not out of Afghanistan but out of Sudan. America's official position was that bin Laden was a terrorist on our most wanted list. In fact, CIA director George Tenet declared him the CIA's number one target. Inexplicably while designated as such this self-aggrandizing monster organized, financed and implemented attacks that caused tens of millions of dollars of damage and the deaths of thousands of innocent people, not just in the United States on 9/11 but in a worldwide campaign over a 2-year period.

□ 2300

Yet the same CIA that declared bin Laden as their number one target, with all the power, the money, the technology, and other assets available to our CIA, they could not thwart 9/11 nor did they even warn us about 9/11. Remember, 9/11 was a major operation planned and carried out by the CIA's number one target and hundreds of others, many of whom were also on that most-wanted list.

If this is not incompetence on the part of our intelligence establishment, then what is? Furthermore, there were mind-boggling missed opportunities to get bin Laden before 9/11. Either intentionally or as a matter of policy or through incompetence, bin Laden was never stopped, even though there were numerous opportunities to stop him permanently.

The government of Sudan paid close attention to bin Laden when he operated in that country. I am told they catalogued all the people to whom he spoke on the phone and in person. The former Ambassador for Sudan in the United States, Mr. Mahdi Ibrahim Mohamed, told me personally that he offered our government this terrorist catalogue, which was a silver bullet for the total destruction of bin Laden's terrorist network.

Vanity Fair reports that the Sudanese government's offer was abruptly turned down by none other than Secretary of State Madeleine Albright herself. Reportedly she instructed that no one look at the material or copy the material offered by Sudan. So in bold print add to the list of those responsible to 9/11 Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

I should note that former President Clinton is denying that he turned down such an offer from the Sudan, and it is not unreasonable to assume that the wording of his denial has been crafted in such a way that we really do not know what is, is.

And while we are at it, we can add Richard Clarke to the list. Let us take a look at Richard Clarke, who got much attention a few months back by criticizing President George W. Bush before the investigating 9/11 panel. Clarke was a senior government policy official. And while all of that that I am describing took place, Richard Clarke was there in high-level positions of authority. He either approved of what was going on in all these things, especially that were happening during the Clinton administration; he either approved of the policy of the Taliban, he approved of not following up on these leads to get bin Laden, or he did nothing. Either way, he is certainly high on the 9/11 blame list, and he has no credibility in criticizing our President, who, as we now know, when he was sworn in as President of the United States, the 9/11 plot to attack the United States was well on the way, that it had been planned long before George Bush was even elected. It was planned and started and put into place during the time when Richard Clarke was a senior guy at the White House and could have done something about it and instead did nothing.

From the first attack to the World Trade Center in 1993, to the bombing of the U.S. military barracks in Saudi Arabia, to the attack on the USS Cole, and the destruction of our embassies in Africa, the response from the last administration was so tepid and so weak that the perpetrators thought Americans were cowards. That was why they went ahead with 9/11, which was aimed at killing not just 3,000 Americans but tens of thousands of Americans that they thought they were going to kill in those towers. This we have learned from those we have captured since 9/11. It was the weakness of the 1990s that led to the war that we are in today. It was the weakness during the Clinton administration years and the weak response and limp-wrist response that we gave to the terrorists that encouraged them to move forward with a monstrous attack on 9/11.

By the way, after one attack it is reported that Richard Clarke was the White House official who insisted that retaliation be taken against guess what target they chose after an attack where our people died? The target was a pharmaceutical factory in the Sudan, which had nothing to do with terrorism. This was while our government was still helping the Taliban stay in power. So we attacked a pharmaceutical company in Sudan. Something stinks about this situation, and some day we are going to get to the bottom of it and we will learn what forces were at play and what the positions of our government and those people really were.

Then an even more personal incident happened about bin Laden. In April and May of 1999, America, our country, had an incredible opportunity to be capture bin Laden. And, yes, I was personally involved in this one. It is, unfortunately, another example of incompetence by those we trust to protect us from attacks like the one that occurred on 9/11. In April of 1999, a friend of mine, a long-time friend, who was deeply involved in the Afghan fight against Soviet occupation, contacted me. My friend, an American, had an impeccable record, had credentials, and he was widely known and admired among the Afghan people. My friend called to tip me off that bin Laden was out of Afghanistan and could be easily captured. I told him I would pass on his phone number and his name to the CIA, and I did so the very next day. There I passed on my friend's name and phone number and explained that they had to get to him right away because he could

give them bin Laden on a platter and that he had great credentials, so he was believable.

A week passed, and my friend was not called by the CIA. So I went back to the CIA, and this time they were adamant that they would contact my friend because they insisted they wanted to get bin Laden.

As time passed, guess what. They did not call my friend again. So I went to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS), who is the chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and let me note that I have deep respect for the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) and hope that he becomes the next Director of the CIA because he is a man who knows that agency and a man who is committed to the security of our country and whom I trust explicitly.

When the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) heard my story, he immediately went into action and arranged a meeting for the next day. At that time I met with not just the CIA but with representatives from NSA, National Security Agency, and the FBI. They were the ''bin Laden Task Force.'' I told them what had happened. They apologized for those dunderheads at the CIA, they will never get it right, and they promised they would get on it. Another week passed, and my friend still was not contacted.

So here we had bin Laden vulnerable for weeks, and our intelligence establishment did nothing. I mentioned it to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS). He was appalled. The very next day, and I am sure it had something to do with the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS), a representative from an intelligence agency called my friend, but the caller's tone of voice suggested that the call was obligatory and he really was not interested but he made the call, but it would not make any difference anyway because by then the trail was too cold to follow.

This was very strange and very disheartening. We had passed up a chance again to get the America's most-wanted terrorist, and there was no explanation. Either incompetence or by design, I do not know. Clearly, however, there was something dreadfully wrong at the CIA or with American policy.

Over at the FBI, it was just as bad, if not worse. It is widely known now that 2 months before the September 11 attacks, Phoenix FBI agent Kenneth Williams sent a memo to FBI headquarters in Washington and New York warning that bin Laden's disciples might be training at U.S. flight schools, and he asked for a review of documents and a review of the situation to determine if bin Laden's people were being trained in other parts of the country. The Williams memo was ignored by David Frasca, the Supervisory Special Agent in Washington, D.C.

One month before 9/11, Minnesota FBI agent Colleen Rowley asked FBI headquarters to issue a warrant allowing agents to search would-be terrorist Zacarias Moussaoui's computer. They determined that he might have links to the terrorists, and when this FBI agent asked that his computer be searched, the FBI headquarters ignored her warnings and ignored her. So agent Rowley basically notified the CIA about the Moussaoui case, and the FBI, when they learned that she had told the CIA to watch out for this guy, reprimanded her.

□ 2310

There is something terribly wrong in a culture at the FBI if when they get admonished for telling the CIA, and they will not investigate themselves, and then admonish the person for contacting the CIA.

Clinton appointee Louis Freeh headed the Bureau for almost 8 years. The new director, Robert Mueller, took over just 7 days before 9/11. The Bureau obviously needed a major overhaul, and this became painfully evident shortly after the World Trade Center crashed to the ground and shocked the Nation.

The troubles at the FBI were not just organizational, but there was a mindset there, and that was a problem, but there were also mandates and restrictions that were put on the Bureau during this time period.

Let me note that we had all sorts of political restrictions put on the FBI, especially during the 1990s. The one case in point, Jamie Gorelick, who now passes judgment on the Bush administration as part of the 9/11 investigation, she is part of that committee. In the 1990s, she was in the Clinton administration. She ran our domestic terrorist law enforcement and intelligence operations, and she wrote a memo while a Clinton lawyer forbidding any cooperation between intelligence organizations and law enforcement agencies.

So right here on the 9/11 investigating panel is an example of why we suffered 9/11. The presence of Jamie Gorelick on the investigating panel represents a massive conflict of interest, and this was well-known and has been well-known. She should have been removed a long time ago. The panel thus is demonstrating the same inflexibility and aversion to correct action as it is investigating.

The Gorelick directives reflected a mindset in the last administration, a mindset that was reflected even by high-level career intelligence officials.

The Defense Intelligence Agency, for example, is supposed to provide the Pentagon with detailed information necessary for it to deal with any potential threat. With all that is spent by the DIA, the Pentagon, like the rest of the government, let us just note, the Pentagon was caught off guard and unprepared for 9/11, just like the rest, even though we spent enormous amounts on the DIA.

The Pentagon's lack of information and analysis almost had disastrous results beyond 9/11. A counterattack strategy almost implemented would have sent American military forces into Afghanistan from the south, where the goal was occupying a few major cities like Jalalabad and Kabul, leaving the Taliban in charge of the countryside. We would then negotiate with the Taliban and offer to withdraw our forces if they turned over bin Laden.

The Taliban would have been left in power. That is insane, but that was what the policy was. The plan was to come in through the south and to have our troops supplied out of bases in northwestern frontier areas in Pakistan, an area that we now know as being a anti-American stronghold.

An alternative plan, based cooperation with the battle-tested troops of the Northern Alliance took time to develop, because the Pentagon didn't know who the players were, much less what the anti-Taliban forces in the north could do. My staff, my personal staff, ended up providing the Pentagon with the names and satellite cell phone numbers of those significant Afghan leaders who opposed the Taliban who could help drive them out of Afghanistan.

That the Pentagon was unprepared was no surprise to me. In early 1999, a DIA analyst came to me for help. She was in the process of being fired, and her story tells us volumes about why 9/11 caught America off guard and ill-prepared.

Julie Sirrs was one of a small number of Afghan analysts at the DIA. She took her job seriously, as she should have. She, in fact, went to Afghanistan, but was only permitted in those areas controlled by the Taliban.

Upon returning, she realized that her one-dimensional view of Afghanistan left gaping holes in the Department of Defense's understanding of the situation. She requested to go to Northern Afghanistan, especially to that area controlled by anti-Taliban Commander Masoud. She was denied permission to go.

Realizing the danger posed by her lack of information, Julie Sirrs took the initiative. She paid her own way, organized her own trip to the Panjshir Valley in Northern Afghanistan, which is the bastion of Commander Masoud, and he was the last Afghan holdout against the Taliban.

Well, I met with Masoud in one of his mountain strongholds 2 years before and had dinner with him and discussed strategy. That was risky. What Julie Sirrs did was even riskier for her. What she did was heroic.

When she got to the Panjshir Valley, she found out her assumptions were right. Something vital to America's security was happening, something she was not allowed to discover when she visited the Taliban-controlled areas.

Commander Masoud told her he was facing a new enemy in Afghanistan. Masoud's militia was finding itself in fire fights with some kind of fundamentalist foreign legion. Apparently, bin Laden was making Afghanistan his base of operations and importing Islamic radicals from around the world,

training them as terrorist killers and then setting them against Masoud's troops for combat experience.

Masoud offered to let Julie and other Americans interrogate these foreign prisoners, many of whom he had captured.

This was an intelligence bonanza. Julie Sirrs was uncovering the creation, the organization and the training of bin Laden terrorist army, al Qaeda. She only had a short time. She collected enough information for a preliminary report and then she headed home.

The minute she got back, she was ordered not to distribute her report and limit her briefings within her own agency. The commanding officer of DIA labeled her as insubordinate, fired her, and when she fought her dismissal, he set out to destroy her.

Amidst the fight to save her job, the DIA Director complained that he was upset with Julie because she had made contact with Masoud, who, according to the DIA, was a bad guy. This general was sending his people to be briefed by the Taliban, but refused them any contact with Masoud or he would dismiss them.

Something is terribly wrong with this picture. The vitriol in the attack against Sirrs were shockingly false. Patently false charges were brought against her to overwhelm her defenses and to intimidate her and force her to go quietly.

She was charged, for example, with lying, even though the agency lie detector test proved she was telling the truth. She was charged with misusing equipment, having borrowed an office camera to take pictures of Afghanistan. She returned the camera when she got back, and she had taken valuable pictures of Northern Afghanistan.

The attacks on this sincere and responsible intelligence analyst were arrogant, nasty, malevolent and loathsome. The brutal treatment of Sirrs sent a negative message to anyone at that time in the DIA who had idea of taking the initiative or thinking creatively.

Let me just note that Julie Sirrs was fired. She was fired by a general who was in charge of the DIA, who I had come to my office. That general, General Hughes, is now, unfortunately, a high level official in our Department of Homeland Security in charge of analysis.

There are many things that we need to do, where we need to hold people accountable. General Hughes was wrong and put our country in jeopardy. These other individuals that I have mentioned tonight, their decisions were wrong, the policies were wrong. We must hold them accountable.

We are looking forward to the report by the 9/11 Commission that will be up this week to see if they name names, hold people accountable, hold policy accountable, and we will be having a further talk on this issue later on.

Julie came to me because she had no one else to whom she could turn. I was the one elected official with experience in Afghanistan. I requested a meeting with the General and right off the bat he insisted Sirrs was insubordinate. I told him that from my view she was a hero, risking her job, and her life, spending her own money, all this to get information she believed necessary for our country to be prepared if something happened in Afghanistan.

After hearing each other out, I recommended to the General that we compromise. If he just gave her back her job she'd end up neither hero nor scofflaw. I'd back off and he could use political pressure from me as an excuse for reinstating her.

After the General left my office he not only reaffirmed the firing of Julie Sirrs, but later stripped her of her security clearance as well, thus eliminating her ability to earn a living as an intelligence analyst. He demonstrated how he could destroy anyone who would deviate from his program or defy his directives. "Insubordination" was the ultimate challenge to his authority, and reaffirming his authority, was more important than the security of the United States of America.

A few months later the General retired and all this would have been a regrettable but forgotten incident, except for the resultant 9/11 tragedy. Except for how terribly unprepared the Pentagon was for a war in Afghanistan.

It is my sad duty to report to my colleagues that the General to whom I'm referring is Lt. General Patrick Hughes, who today is one of the top officials, as Assistant Secretary for Information Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security. I am certain that over his long and distinguished career he made many contributions, but his indefensible conduct in the Sirrs case cast serious doubt over his judgment. I have notified Secretary Ridge of this side of General Hughes' character and recommended that he should not hold the high level position in the Department of Homeland Security that he does.

When George W. Bush took office in January of 2001, the 9/11 terrorist operation, unbeknownst to anyone in our government, was already well underway. But the threat posed by the radical anti-western Islamic regime in Afghanistan was known, and policy towards it needed to go. Having worked in the Reagan White House I understood it took time for a new President to appoint staff, set policy and begin to take control of government. Nevertheless, during that brief interlude between Bush's inaugural and 9/11, I met the new National Security Council staff on three occasions, including one meeting with Condoleezza Rice, to discuss Afghanistan. There were, in fact, signs noted in an overview story in the Washington Post that some steps were being made to break away from the previous administration's Afghan policy.

One thing was certain to me at that time, George W. Bush, unlike his predecessor, would have an unmistakable response to bin Laden's terrorist attacks. As I stated earlier we know now that those who planned and financed the 9/11 attack did not believe the United States would act as forcefully and as unrelentingly as we have. This calculation was a result of the tepid American response to earlier al Qaeda attacks from Africa to New York City.

Here again, was an example of the rotten policy that led to 9/11. And yes, had we retaliated more aggressively when our Embassies were blown up in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 the terrorists we have captured now tell us that it may have been given them second thoughts.

I took pride in those days as being one of the few Members of Congress who had maintained an interest in Afghanistan, which I saw as a potential major national security threat to our country.

Then, 2 days before 9/11, the news came that Commander Masoud had been murdered in Afghanistan. I felt as if I had lost a friend. As I mourned his loss I struggled to fully understand the significance of his death. Then it dawned on me why Masoud had been assassinated. America was going to be attacked and it would be so monstrous that bin Laden's gang in Afghanistan wanted to cut us off from the means of counterattacking. We would have turned to Masoud if we were attacked; now he was dead. Perhaps his death was a signal to set the planned attack in motion.

So on the 10th of September I tried to alert anyone and everyone who would listen to my warning of an imminent terrorist attack. A few people listened as a courtesy but for most their eyes simply glazed over as I tried to warn them. One of my colleagues, JIM GREENWOOD, stood behind me in an elevator and overheard me lamenting that something horrible was about to happen and that I couldn't get anyone to take my warnings seriously. It's like the Twilight Zone, I said. As I got off the elevator he lightheartedly patted me on the back and with a smile told me not to be so melodramatic and certainly not so apocryphal.

Undeterred, I called the White House and asked for an emergency appointment to see Condoleezza Rice in order to warn her of a major impending attack. Her office apologized that she was incredibly busy that day, but she respected my opinion and would see me at 3 p.m. the next day. The next day was 9/11. The plans began flying into the buildings at 8:48 a.m.

In the afternoon of that chaotic and fateful day, my colleague, Congressman GREENWOOD, approached me. I've been telling everyone how you tried to warn people of this. You knew it was about to happen? How did you know? We must ask, how is it that one Member of Congress, with the help of one staff member, was able to analyze the situation and determine that the terrorists based in Afghanistan were about to launch a major attack on us, when the CIA and others failed to do so. The question is not how did I know. It is why didn't the rest of the establishment know. Those whose job it is to protect us should be held accountable for 9/11, for not thwarting the attack or even warning us.

On 9/11 there was an incident that underscored that something was dreadfully wrong at the CIA. Shortly after the attack I called King Zahir Shah in Rome. He was now America's greatest asset in any action against the terrorist forces in Afghanistan. Masoud was dead, but the Afghan people would rally behind the King. If I could figure that out so could the Taliban, so I was shocked to find that the King had no protection. He was totally vulnerable. I told the King to stay put and went to work. I called the CIA and managed to speak directly to one of Tenet's top lieutenants. I explained the situation and he acknowledged the importance of the King, assuring me he would take care of it.

About 5 hours later, I happened to run into this gentleman. I will never forget his response

when I asked if the King was now being protected. "You don't expect us to act that fast do you?"

Just like at the FBI, there was something wrong with the mindset at the CIA. Yes, George Tenet must be placed on that 9/11 blame list; perhaps his name should be underlined.

It is time for those who made possible the rest of the Taliban; the rise of bin Laden and yes, the tragedy of 9/11 to be held personally accountable.

The list stretches over both Republican and Democratic administrations. Through the failures of the CIA under Reagan to the blunders of the State Department under Bush to the incompetence and disingenuous posturing of the diplomats under Clinton, accountability requires that their names be given.

Retired General Patrick Hughes, who as head of the DIA fired Julie Sirrs and who today holds a high position in the Department of Homeland Security.

Former Ambassador and now Governor Bill Richardson, who save the Taliban from military defeat.

Former senior CIA Officer Milt Bearden, who armed the most fanatic of the Afghan factions in this struggle against Soviet Occupation.

Former Assistant Secretary of State Rick Inderfurth, who weakened the anti-Taliban forces.

Former CIA Director George Tenet, whose culpability should have led him to resign long ago.

Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who was the point person for the policy of covert support for the Taliban, and who derailed the opportunity to receive a detailed account of the entire al Qaeda terrorist network.

And finally, Richard Clarke, former senior Clinton official, who along with a few others was in a position to argue against if not to change the grotesquely mistaken policies of the 80s and 90s, but failed to do so.

If another 9/11 is to be avoided, we need accountability, not rearranging of bureaucratic organization charts. There was nothing wrong with our system that brought on 9/11, which will not be corrected by having different policies in place and different people in positions of authority.

Let us now, if nothing else, be honest with each other and insist on an honest accounting. Then let's beat our murderous enemy so completely that no one will ever miscalculate about our power and courage ever again.

IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HENSARLING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized until midnight.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, we come to the floor this evening in the continued responsibility of keeping a very close eye on this administration's policy in Iraq in the continued series of what we style the Iraq watch.

I will be joined by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) this evening, and hopefully the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND.)

We have been now coming once a week to the floor of the House because we believe that the House has a duty not to sweep under the rug the accumulation of errors, misjudgments and deceptions that have been foisted on the American people by the Bush administration leading to the war in Iraq.

The reason we are here every week is that there is too much tendency to forget the sacrifices that are being made by our men and women in uniform in Iraq; to treat them as sort of background noise; to sort of say, well, the casualties are down to several a week, so we can just sort of forget about Iraq. That is wrong.

We have been here for months blowing the whistle on this administration's repeated failures in Iraq, and we will continue to do so, because this Nation owes it to our men and women in uniform to continue to be vigilant about what this administration is doing and not doing in Iraq.

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Perhaps, even more importantly, we owe it to the cause of democracy itself not to allow it to go unnoted when a President of the United States starts a war based on deception of the American people. We are here to say there is perhaps no greater abuse of democracy, no more dangerous event in the great American democratic experiment, than for an American President to foist falsehoods on the American people to start a war, which we believe occurred in this case.

Now, I would like to start our discussion tonight by quickly setting the stage for the history of the Iraq war to date. Unfortunately, this administration has made not 1, not 2, but 10 serious mistakes, deceptions, errors of judgment, negligence, and carelessness that have led to the troubles that our people are facing in Iraq. I would like to run through those very quickly before I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

There are 10 major errors the Bush administration has made in Iraq. Error number 1: This administration told America in no uncertain terms, with no doubt, with no vagueness, with no ambiguity whatsoever, that it was required to start a war in Iraq because Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. The President said, in a culmination of his multiple statements, and this must not be forgotten; on August 26, 2002, the President said, ''Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction.'' And there was not only no weapons of mass destruction, there was plenty of doubt. This President's statement was false, and this was falsehood number 1.

Error number 2: The President told us on repeated occasions, and his administration, that they had clear, convincing and cogent evidence that there was a working relationship between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda which led to the attack on September 11. They told us this over and over and over again, and now that the evidence has been made clear from the multiple reports that have come in on a bipartisan basis, this President's statement that Saddam Hussein was associated with the attack on this country, this venal, evil attack on this country was false, and it led to a war. And there is no greater error, breach of democracy than an American President saying that when this was false. And it continues to this day. With all of this mountain of evidence showing the falsehood of this President's statement, the Vice President of the United States has the chutzpa, if one can stretch that word that far, to try to continue to foist this on the American people, and it is falsehood number 2.

Number 3: The American people were told repeatedly that we would be welcome as liberators in Iraq. We would be welcome with rose petals at our feet. We would be welcome with nothing but clear sailing because the people would see us as liberators. There is no question in the belief that Saddam Hussein was an evil tyrant, and there is no question he abused thousands of Iraqis. But this President made a massive misjudgment by listening to Mr. Chalabi, one of the great sycophants in failures of predictions in international history, and the President was suckered and the American people were suckered by this misstatement, and we have paid dearly with our treasure and our lives and the health of our service personnel in Iraq.

Falsehood number 4: This President ignored the clear, professional judgment of people who said we needed to have more boots on the ground to prevent anarchy in Iraq, but this President ignored that advice because he has wanted to fight this fight on the cheap from day 1, and we have suffered as a result. General Shinseki told him that we needed several hundred thousand people in Iraq to quell disturbance after the Iraq war, and he ignored it, and our people paid dearly for error and falsehood number 4.

Number 5: The President said we did not need the United Nations, we could go in there alone, as long as we had the Philippines and a couple of other small island nations. Well, the Philippines have now withdrawn. This President decided to go it alone in Iraq, and our people have suffered dearly. Falsehood number 5.

Falsehood number 6: The President said that by implication, everything would be aboveboard. There would not be any war profiteering in Iraq, people would not make millions of dollars worth of profits in Iraq. Now we see Halliburton, this company so intimately tied with this administration, reaping millions of dollars of taxpayers' money, wrongfully. The GAO has reported on it. This is a scandal, and Harry Truman rooted out world profiteering in World War II. We need to get to the bottom of this war profiteering by Halliburton and the like. Falsehood number 6.

Falsehood number 7, and error number 7: This President and this administration led us down one of the most