

acres. Over time, the Coles family has expanded their operations, not simply to expand their business, but to protect prime land from development. By purchasing 180 acres of the Bradshaw Farm in Solebury Township, as well as 132 acres in Buckingham Township for preservation, Georgiana Coles has demonstrated her unquestionable dedication to preserving Bucks County's natural history.

I want to recognize Georgiana Coles for her hard work and continued dedication to the preservation of open space. I and the residents of the 8th Congressional District of Pennsylvania thank her.

REAL SECURITY

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, the Preamble to our Constitution lays out the basic functions of government and notably featured is the need to provide for the common defense.

National security is the single most important purpose of government; all of the other blessings of liberty flow from it. Throughout much of this country's history, Senator Arthur Vandenberg's famous maxim that "Partisanship must end at the water's edge" has guided the formulation and execution of America's national security policy.

Unfortunately, over the past several years that bipartisan tradition has been undermined by the Republican Party which has sought to convince Americans that only one party could be entrusted to preserve our Nation's military strength and its position as the world's preeminent power.

This unwillingness to listen to other voices has reached its zenith under the current administration, which took office with one overriding principle, that was to guide American national security policy. Yet when the previous administration, that of President Clinton, was for it, they were against it. The result is an America that is less safe than it should be and less safe than it needs to be.

Our military has been stretched to the absolute limits in Iraq, leaving us precious little ability to respond to other contingencies around the globe. Overseas, we are less often seen as a force for good in the world, and surveys of public opinion consistently show that we as a Nation are viewed negatively, even by our friends in Europe.

At home, we have frittered away the 4½ years since September 11 instead of making real strides in safeguarding the Nation from terrorist attack.

In Iraq, a stubborn refusal to commit enough troops to save the lives and

pacify the country in the months after the invasion has led to a protracted fight against the Baathists and Islamist insurgents that has claimed now more than 2,300 American lives.

And finally, we have failed to reckon with the Achilles heel of our national security, our reliance on foreign oil to supply our energy needs.

Clearly, Americans want and deserve change. Last week, Members of our party from both the House and the Senate unveiled a comprehensive blueprint to protect the American people 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.

During the next several weeks, Democratic Members of the House will be doing a series of 1-hours where we will discuss the particulars of the Real Security plan. Tonight, we will give an overview of that plan, and in the following weeks we will flesh out each of the five pillars of the Democratic Real Security plan for the country.

It is a tough and smart strategy to rebuild our military, equip and train our first responders and others on the front lines and here at home, provide needed benefits to our troops and veterans, fully man and equip our National Guard, promote alternative fuels and reduce our dependence on foreign oil, restore Americans' confidence in their government's ability to respond in the face of a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

To protect the American people, we will immediately implement the recommendations of the independent bipartisan 9/11 Commission and finally protect our ports and airports, our borders, mass transit systems, our chemical and nuclear power plants, and our food and water supplies from terrorist attack.

After September 11, all Americans trusted the President to take the steps necessary to keep our country safe. Since then, inadequate planning, sometimes incompetent policies, have failed to make Americans as safe as we should be. The tragedy of Hurricane Katrina showed that the Federal Government was still not prepared to respond.

Under the administration's leadership, the war in Iraq began with intelligence that was at best wrong and at worst manipulated. 140,000 of our finest young people were sent into Iraq without an adequate plan for success.

Our ports and other critical infrastructure remain vulnerable, while both soldiers in the field and first responders at home lack the basic equipment and resources they were promised.

Both in the Persian Gulf and on our gulf coast, lucrative, no-bid contracts have gone to companies like Halliburton, Kellogg, Brown&Root and others with friends in high places.

Despite record high fuel prices, our country remains heavily dependent on foreign oil because of an energy policy that benefits the big oil interests.

The Real Security plan rests on five pillars that my colleagues and I will introduce to you tonight. They are the creation of a 21st-century military, a smart strategy to win the war on terror, a plan to secure the homeland, a plan to move forward in Iraq, and a proposal for achieving energy independence for America by 2020.

Under Real Security, a Democratic Congress will rebuild a state-of-the-art military by making needed investments in equipment and manpower so that we can project power to protect America wherever and whenever necessary.

We have all heard the stories of parents using their own money to purchase body armor for their own children serving in Iraq. I personally asked Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld about the shortage of body armor, about the lack of adequately armored vehicles, and the holdups in development of equipment to counter roadside bombs that have killed and maimed so many of our troops. Despite his assurances, there are still problems and young Americans are still paying the price.

Under Real Security, Democrats will guarantee all of our troops have the protective gear, equipment, and training they need and are never sent to war without accurate intelligence and a strategy for success.

I have been to Iraq now three times; and I visited our wounded troops here at home, there, and in Germany. I have spoken at the funerals of my constituents who have been killed in Iraq, and I have sat with their families as they have mourned. These experiences have reinforced my sense of commitment to ensuring the well-being of America's soldiers and their families and our veterans.

Democrats will enact a GI bill of Rights for the 21st century that guarantees our troops, active, reserve and retired, our veterans and their families, receive the pay, health care, mental health services, and other benefits they have earned and deserve.

Our active military are stretched to the breaking point, but our Guard and Reserves have also been ground down by multiple deployments and falling enlistment and reenlistment. This has, in turn, added to the stress on the active Army and Marines.

As part of our Real Security plan, Democrats will strengthen the National Guard in partnership with our Nation's Governors to ensure it is fully manned, properly equipped, and available to meet missions at home and abroad.

□ 2100

The next pillar of Real Security is a broad strategy to win the war on terror. Four and a half years after 9/11 Osama bin Laden is still at large, and al Qaeda has morphed into a worldwide amalgam of discrete cells that are more difficult to track down.

When Democrats are in charge, we will make the elimination of Osama bin Laden our first priority. We will destroy al Qaeda and other terrorist networks, and we will finish the job in Afghanistan and end the threat posed by the Taliban. We propose to double the size of our special forces, increase our human intelligence capabilities, and ensure that our intelligence is free from political pressure.

Despite their vow to drain the swamp, the administration has done little to eliminate terrorist breeding grounds by combating the economic, social, and political conditions that allow extremism to thrive. Democrats will fight terrorism with all means at our disposal by leading international efforts to uphold and defend human rights and renew the long-standing alliances that have advanced our national security objectives.

Under Real Security, we will confront the specter of nuclear terrorism by greatly accelerating the pace at which we are securing nuclear material that could be used to make a nuclear weapon or a dirty bomb. Our goal is to secure loose nuclear material by 2010. We will also redouble our efforts to stop nuclear weapons development in Iran and North Korea. While Democrats understand that no option can be taken off the table, we are committed to a muscular diplomacy as the best option for curbing Pyongyang and Teheran's nuclear ambitions.

The third pillar of Real Security is homeland security. In the wake of 9/11, there have been numerous commissions and investigations at the Federal, State and local level, as well as a multitude of private studies. All of them have pointed to the broad systemic and other flaws in our homeland security program. Almost 2 years ago, the independent bipartisan 9/11 Commission published its report, but most of its recommendations have yet to be implemented.

As part of Real Security, Democrats will immediately implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, including securing national borders, ports, airports, and mass transit systems. We will implement the screening of 100 percent of containers and cargo bound for the U.S. in ships or airplanes at the point of origin, and we will take steps to better safeguard America's nuclear and chemical plants and our food and water supplies.

Democrats will prevent the outsourcing of critical components of our national security infrastructure, such as ports, airports, and mass transit to

foreign interests that could put America at risk. Under Real Security, Democrats would provide firefighters, emergency medical workers, police officers, and other workers on the front lines with the training, staffing, equipment and cutting-edge technology they need.

While the immediate threats to our national security come from terrorists, we face other dangers as well. Democrats are committed to a security strategy that will protect America from biological terrorism and pandemics, including the avian flu, by investing in the public health infrastructure and training public health workers.

The fourth pillar, and the one that will have the most immediate effect on our security, is to chart a new course in Iraq that will ensure that 2006 is a year of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with the Iraqis assuming primary responsibility for securing and governing their country with a responsible redeployment of U.S. forces. Democrats will insist that Iraqis make the political compromises necessary to unite their country and defeat the insurgency, promote regional diplomacy, and strongly encourage our allies in other nations to play a constructive role.

As a part of Real Security, Democrats intend to hold the administration accountable for its manipulated prewar intelligence, poor planning, and contracting abuses that have placed our troops at greater risk and wasted billions of taxpayer dollars.

Our security will remain threatened as long as we remain dependent on Middle East oil. The fifth pillar, and the one with the most far-reaching ramifications for our country and the world, is to achieve energy independence for America by 2020.

Under Real Security, Democrats will increase production of alternate fuels from America's heartland; biofuels, geothermal, clean coal, fuel cells, solar and wind, promote hybrid and flex-fuel technology and manufacturing, enhance energy efficiency and conservation incentives. All this we will do, and more, to meet the real national security needs of the country.

And now, I would like to turn to some of my colleagues who have been leaders on national security issues. I would like to begin by introducing my colleague from California (SUSAN DAVIS) to hear her thoughts on one of the five pillars.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to applaud my colleague, Mr. SCHIFF, for bringing us all together this evening so we can talk about real security for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, America has the absolute finest military in the world, and that wouldn't be possible without the people who wear the uniform. I want all Americans to know that it doesn't

matter to me whether they call themselves a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or anything else. I stand here tonight to simply tell Americans that there are indeed Democrats in Congress who are strong on national security. We get it, and we have a plan to get America back on track.

Let me be just clear at the outset. Support for the troops has no party affiliation, and that is definitely true here in Congress. There are hundreds of us, Democrats and Republicans alike, who want to do right by the troops who are in harm's way right this minute all around the globe. I am convinced, however, that the Democratic plan to protect America is the path this Nation needs to embark upon now, and I say that because the Democratic plan for a 21st century military focuses on the same resource that the military itself focuses on, and that is the people. It is about the people who volunteer to wear that uniform.

I have been very proud to serve in Congress as a Member of the House Armed Services Committee since I was first elected to represent the people of San Diego. As anyone from San Diego can tell you, we are the epitome of a military town. San Diegans have a deep and long-standing relationship with the military that gives our community a very unique level of interaction and familiarity with the Armed Services. San Diego's operational bases provide a valuable network of military resources that, taken together, equate to bottom-line military readiness. We host the Pacific fleet's largest concentration of carriers, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, amphibious ships and submarines, and our regional training and support facilities supplement these resources superbly.

But at the end of the day, while these are valuable assets, what it really comes down to is the people. Outside their uniforms and off the battlefield, these brave men and women serve double duty. They are our neighbors, they are our Little League coaches, they are our PTA presidents, and they are our community volunteers. In short, our military servicemembers are extraordinary people who lead ordinary lives, just like you and me.

For those people and communities who are not as familiar with the military, I think it may be easy sometimes to think of them in a more desensitized, mechanical way, almost as if the troops themselves are made of the same steel and weaponry they use to accomplish their missions and protect themselves with. But this couldn't be further from the truth. Our troops are a mirror image of the American people themselves. They find strength in their convictions as Americans. They are strong in their education and training and they are strong in their diversity and their mutual respect for one another.

Mr. Speaker, you may wonder why I would choose to spend so much time this evening talking about the human characteristics of our military personnel in the context of a Democratic plan to protect America. But the people who make America's military great are really the heart of the Democratic plan. Americans expect their elected leaders to take care of the troops, and that is exactly what Americans and what Democrats here today are prepared to do.

First, that means having enough people. This administration ignored the advice of respected senior military leaders by sending too few troops to Iraq. No matter how you look at it, that was a serious miscalculation. It impaired America's ability to accomplish its mission quickly. Democrats will insist on 21st century military forces that are large and strong enough to meet any challenge America may face in the future without creating neverending states of deployment.

A 21st century military also demands fully equipping and supplying our troops, and that is exactly what the Democratic plan would do. Democrats will fight to ensure America's troops are never under-equipped. The Democratic plan is a plan that would emphasize the body and vehicle armor our troops need before they find themselves in harm's way. Moreover, we must rebuild and replace the equipment that has been used in Iraq and Afghanistan so our troops can continue to rely on it with confidence in the future.

The Democratic plan also means a renewed investment in research and development. We simply must invest in technology today that will lead to advancements for the battlefield that will keep on protecting our soldiers and sailors and will keep on helping them to accomplish their future missions.

Similarly, we must continue to make investments in the way we educate and train our military personnel. Training and education is a key component in the dominance and success of America's military, and this will be no different for a 21st century military. We must commit to providing superior ways to continue expanding and advancing the minds of our military professionals.

The Democratic plan for a 21st century military also envisions a renewed commitment to the National Guard and Reserve. Our efforts must reflect the level of respect and commitment our reserve components have earned and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic plan for a 21st century military encompasses many more components, including increased human intelligence, honoring veterans and retirees, and making good on America's promise to take care of the health and well-being of our soldiers and also their families. It is real-

ly about the people: Our training them, equipping them, and our support for them. The troops demand better, Mr. Speaker, and Democrats are poised to provide it to them.

I am happy to return to Mr. SCHIFF and join with my colleagues as we discuss the rest of the Democrat plan and the pillars of security.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentlewoman from California for all her work in this area, and I know that you represent a very large constituency of servicemembers in your district, probably one of the largest in the country. Undoubtedly, you have had the opportunity to visit with a lot of the families of those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and know firsthand some of the demands being placed on our active duty but also on our guard and reserve.

Many of them pulled out of their jobs, earning a lot less on active duty than they were in their civilian occupations. This must be a tremendous hardship for families.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. I think it is, and because our families prepare as well as the men and women who actually go into war, it provides a particular burden on all of them. And I think that is why it has been, in a community like San Diego, why we have felt this so acutely.

And know how important it is for people to have a sense of comfort that they have the equipment they need and that once deployed and coming home, particularly for the guard and reserve, that they will not see these kind of endless deployments. That has been very important and it has been really hard for the families to sometimes get a really good handle on that.

Mr. SCHIFF. I imagine that you have had the experience that I have with some of my constituents in talking to their families, those that are serving in Iraq and the concerns that they have, and in talking with the soldiers when they return about whether they had the up-armored vehicles that they needed, and finding out from them firsthand that, notwithstanding protestations to the contrary by the Pentagon, that in fact they often didn't have up-armored vehicles. I still have people coming back telling me of the inadequacy of materiel they have to work with and to keep them safe.

But I thank you so much for all your leadership on this issue. You do a tremendous job on behalf of your constituents in the San Diego area and in the armed services area for all the rest of our country. Thank you.

I would like to turn now, Mr. Speaker, to one of my close friends and colleagues here, DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. We cofounded, along with STEVE ISRAEL, the Democratic Study Group on National Security. He has been a strong voice and a great leader on national security issues. We are very grateful for your joining us this evening.

The gentleman from Georgia.

□ 2115

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be on the floor with Mr. SCHIFF. I commend his leadership on the national security issue. It is so important for the American people to be able to understand and know wholeheartedly that Democrats are the strongest party on national security. Our record speaks to it, all the way from Franklin Delano Roosevelt who shepherded us through World War II and built up our Army, to Truman, all the way up to John Kennedy. No stronger Presidents have we had on national security.

Democrats are very strong on national security. I want to spend my remarks here speaking from my own experience. I have been overseas visiting our troops on four different trips, to Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and to Lithuania, into Germany, visiting them at Ramstadt Hospital and the air force base. I have been to Camp Victory at Baghdad on the front lines, as well as with our group on national security to which every Thursday we bring in the experts. We bring them in whether they are Republicans or Democrats, from Newt Gingrich to Sam Nunn to Andrew Young. We have had people there with experience because we want the American people to know that this Nation is secure, has been secure, and will be secure in the future in the hands of Democrats.

I want to spend just a few moments in talking about where we are in this 21st-century of our military. We have the finest military in the world, but since 9/11 our Nation's Armed Forces have become overextended. There is no mistake about it. Some of our recruiting goals have not been met.

But under Democrats we will make sure, and we have already begun the process to make sure, that our Armed Forces are not overextended and to make sure we have policies and procedures in place to help us meet our recruitment goals.

As you well know, Mr. SCHIFF, we have an all-volunteer Army. The draft is no longer applicable, nor will it be in the foreseeable future. With the advances in technology, we are going to be competing at a high level with private industries and others to get those high-caliber individuals to volunteer. Even the M-116 rifle is basically a computer. We must have soldiers who are well equipped, well prepared. So we have to go out and compete for those soldiers, and we have to realize what this 21st century means.

The men and women of America's Armed Forces and our first responders here at home have met every challenge with skill, with bravery, and selfless dedication. They along with veterans, military retirees, and the families of those who have given their lives to defend our country deserve our utmost

gratitude; and we give it to them with our support. That is why we Democrats are launching our effort here. We want to make sure that America knows this country will be safe with us, that we have the record and we have the program.

Much has been said and, yes, we have criticized the President. We have criticized the Republicans because it is due, because there has been failure after failure and bad planning. We know that now. And bad intelligence. But I assure you, if Democrats are in control, we will never send our troops into harm's way with inaccurate intelligence and not equipped with the body armor that they need to do their job.

It is important for the American people to know what we are doing now and what we plan to do. The whole world sees what is wrong step by step with our policies. I want to point out to the American people some facts they may not know about what Democrats are doing now and what our record has been.

We are committed to strengthening our military, but we have been fighting to make sure, we have been at the leadership in making sure that our troops have been fully equipped. Every step along the way, it has been Democrats who have sought to ensure that our troops were fully equipped for this war in Iraq. It was not a war of our choosing, but it was a war that was decided upon based upon incomplete and inaccurate information that we know now, but did not know then.

And Democrats stood strong and said we have to go based upon our information. But once our troops were in harm's way, once they were sent and it was found out that they did not have the body armor and their Humvees did not have the equipment to sustained the underbellies for the improvised explosive devices, it was Democrats who provided the leadership.

For example, because of Democratic efforts, the 2003 Iraqi supplemental budget included more funds for Humvees, body armor, and jammers to prevent the detonation of explosive devices. It was Democrats who offered amendments to shift \$322 million from reconstruction for safety equipment for U.S. troops in Iraq. It was Democratic Senator CHRIS DODD of Connecticut who led that fight, and to shift \$4.6 million from Iraqi reconstruction for support and safety of our troops, including critical funding for repairing and replacing the critical equipment for combat in Iraq. That was Mr. OBEY, our ranking member on the Appropriations Committee that led that fight.

Although both of those efforts were at the need, when they needed that armor, that is when Democrats stepped forward. It was Republicans who rejected those amendments. But we Democrats did succeed in requiring the Department of Defense to at least re-

imburse those servicemembers for the cost of their protective safety and health equipment that had to be purchased by them and their families.

You remember the newscasts. We had our soldiers searching through dung heaps, land fields and junkyards in Iraq and the Middle East trying to find metal to protect themselves. It brought tears to my eyes to think that this Republican administration would send our young men and women in harm's way and not have them armed with body armor. They were writing back home to mom and daddy saying, send me some money so I can buy something to protect myself. Never again can we let that happen, and it is we Democrats that are providing the way on this.

I want to make sure we cover one other point.

We are going to vote on a budget at some point. Luckily, they didn't have the votes tonight; but just to show you cut after cut after cut, \$1.5 billion cut to veterans. The Democrats will treat our veterans with the respect they deserve, and we will put together a GI Bill of Rights. We will get rid of the military tax on widows. We will increase the benefits, and we will make our military proud and strong. And we will make sure that the rotation cycle is not two and three and even four tours of duty at a time, because our military is stretched thin.

We will strengthen our military. We will move us into the 21st century, and Democrats will provide that leadership. I am proud to be with you here tonight and my colleagues.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. SCOTT, we are proud and grateful to have you here. You mentioned the proud history of the Democratic Party and national security under the leadership of Presidents like Roosevelt and Truman and Kennedy and others.

Today we saw in the press reports that the President authorized Mr. Libby, the chief of staff of the Vice President, to disclose classified information, national security information, for a political purpose. Can you imagine Roosevelt or Kennedy or Truman doing that? Can you imagine, for political reasons, any of them disclosing classified intelligence information for a political reason?

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Absolutely not. Our President, it brings chills to me when I remember what President Roosevelt said: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself," to raise people, our people, to that level. Or President Kennedy saying: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

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

It gives me great pleasure to yield to Mr. BENNIE THOMPSON, our ranking member on the Homeland Security Committee, someone who has brought

great intelligence, foresight, and determination to protecting America, to ensuring we have port security and airport securing, and that we plug many of the gaping holes here in the homeland. I yield to the ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SCHIFF for putting this Special Order together to give us an opportunity to talk about real security from the Democratic standpoint.

As you know, unlike my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, we have a plan. That plan is very simple. If we can get additional support, we can make this country safer. But for this hour, let us talk a little bit about homeland security.

First of all, I want to take you to the notion that as a grandfather, I spend a lot of time reading children's stories. It may be because I am the ranking member on the Homeland Security Committee, but recently I was reading the "Emperor's New Clothes," and I could not help but think about the Department of Homeland Security.

For those of you who are not familiar with the story, it is about a ruler who loved to dress up in the finest threads. One day some folks came by and promised to make him the finest suit he had ever seen. As they made it, they kept asking him what he thought about the beautiful cloth and the fine design. Not seeing anything but feeling a little naive, the emperor said it was beautiful.

When the day came for him to wear the suit out in public, he called a big parade and put on the so-called outfit. Everyone "oohed" and "aahed" until one small child spoke out and said those magic words, "He doesn't have anything on."

Why does that story remind me of the current administration's homeland security efforts? Because DHS is like the naked emperor. Despite the Department's many press releases of success, the agency's efforts are not enough to cover our Nation's critical parts. Like the citizens of the emperor's town, we all want to believe what we are hearing and seeing is sufficient. But let me tell you, it is not.

If you have any doubts about this, just look at the government's response to Hurricane Katrina last year. As Clark Kent Ervin, the former inspector general of the Department has said, if Katrina was a dress rehearsal on how the U.S. would respond to a terrorist attack, we are not prepared. A lot needs to be done to ensure homeland security is covered. Our security gaps at our borders must be eliminated. Our trains and subways must be protected so we do not have a London or Madrid attack.

Our ports must be secure, and our Coast Guard must be well funded. That means we must work with our partners

internationally to protect our ports by screening 100 percent of the U.S.-bound containers at their points of origin rather than waiting until they arrive at our port communities.

Those flying the friendly skies should be safe as they are carried to their final destination. That means we must secure our passenger airlines by requiring 100 percent screening of air cargo that travels on the same plane with the passengers. We must have common-sense security at chemical and nuclear plants. The private sector is looking for guidance from the Department. We need to be sure that they have it. We must ensure that hazardous cargo is carried safely through our communities.

Also, we must guarantee that our local cops, firemen, and EMTs have the training, staffing, equipment, and technology they need so that they can talk to each other during an emergency. As you know, we saw with 9/11 that a lot of the individuals involved in that situation could not communicate with each other and many of them lost their lives because of it.

□ 2130

Now, when the small child called the emperor out, he knew the child was right, but thought the procession goes on. He carries himself proudly and his assistants acted like they were keeping his invisible robe off the ground.

The Department's procession absolutely cannot go on. I ask my colleagues across the aisle to stop carrying this invisible robe and join us in recognizing that the Department of Homeland Security has been without clothes for way too long. It is about time that we outfitted the agency so that it can fulfill its mission. Our Nation and its citizens deserve no less.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman, and I particularly appreciate your talking about the common sense changes that have to be made to protect this country. Does it make sense, I ask our ranking member, to have a policy where you have to take off your shoes at the airport to get through the metal detector, but 50 percent of the cargo on the plane you are flying on is commercial and 98 percent of that is never checked for an explosive? You can ship a bomb the size of a piano that will never get opened in a crate under that same plane, but you have to take your shoes off. Does that make sense?

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. None of it makes sense. The other thing is, we have the technology available to us to do many of these things. We have to have the will to produce the resources necessary to acquire the technology in order for that to occur.

We have tried in our committees to fully fund all of the screening programs, not just at airports, but we are talking about screening cargo coming into our country. But we can't get the

support on the Republican side of the aisle to move in that direction.

We have two government agencies, Department of Energy and Department of Homeland Security, charged with radiation screening of certain activities. We can't even get support to merge the two programs. They are operating in ports separate and apart. So clearly, there are a number of things, Congressman SCHIFF, that we need to do.

Mr. SCHIFF. And that last point, I think, is the key one. The President, I am sure you recall, during the first debate with Senator KERRY, was asked what is the top national security threat facing the country? And he said, nuclear terrorism. Senator KERRY agreed. I think they were both right.

But if that is true, and the most likely suspect for nuclear terrorism is al Qaeda, then the most likely delivery device is not a missile but a crate. And that crate is going to come into one of our ports. And why we haven't mobilized the resources to implement that portal technology, why we are spending as much as we are on a more distant threat in terms of national missile defense, rather than the more proximate threat of a smuggled in dirty bomb or crude nuclear weapon is not in our Nation's national security interest.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Well, it is not. And what we find is there are a substantial number of containers that come to this country, as you know, without any inspection. To inspect it when it gets to our shores, if it is a dirty bomb or anything like that, is unacceptable. We have to do the inspections or the screenings at a minimum at the points of origin rather than when they get to this country. If we don't, we are in for a rude awakening.

The other point I want to make, and I want to thank you for this time, is we clearly have to support financially the safeguards that are required. We have the technology. We have to make sure that we put the resources to support the technology.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman very much for all his leadership in improving our Homeland Security.

I would now like to turn to my colleague, DENNIS MOORE from Kansas, who does a tremendous job. He is one of the true leaders on a variety of issues, including energy self-sufficiency and energy independence. It is one of the pillars of our national security plan. DENNIS MOORE.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. SCHIFF, the distinguished gentleman from California, I want to thank you for your leadership in putting together this little seminar and this presentation this evening on national security and how important it is for our country.

I want to talk for just a few minutes about the importance of national security in the context of energy independence for our Nation. Some of our view-

ers this night, Mr. SCHIFF, will be old enough to remember back in the late 1970s there was a gentleman by the name of Jimmy Carter who was President of United States. And one night President Carter was sitting addressing the people of America on national television. He had on a cardigan sweater. He was sitting in front of the fireplace and talking about the long lines at the gas pumps. And he was talking about the need for our country to develop energy independence and a comprehensive energy policy to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

I think President Carter was right then, and I faulted every Republican and Democrat since President Carter for not doing what he said we needed to do back then. And especially, since September 11 of 2001, and 5 years into this administration we still are very dependent, heavily dependent on foreign oil, and we need to find for America energy independence.

And I think this is no longer just a concern about long lines at the gas pumps or the high cost per gallon of gasoline. This now has become a national security issue, and it is an issue that we, as a Nation, must deal with.

This issue, Mr. SCHIFF, should not be about Republicans and Democrats. This should be about us taking care of our people and our country. And we all must come together to do this, and I think it is highly important, again, that we reduce our dependence on foreign oil and find an independent way to do this.

President Bush mentioned in his State of the Union this year, for the first time, I believe, trying to develop some way to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and enter energy independence. But he didn't make any proposals, and I think what we need are some solid proposals to do that.

We need, for example, conservation. We need to develop hybrid automobiles, hydrogen fuel cells. We need to look and develop solar energy, wind energy, ethanol biodiesel. We need to reduce our dependence on Middle East oil and increase our dependence on Midwest farmers who can provide the crops necessary to produce some of the fuels I am talking about, alternatives and renewable sources of energy here.

Energy independence, in fact, again has become a national security issue. We must reduce our dependence on foreign oil. We cannot and must not be held hostage by foreign nations who control our supply of oil. We must do this as Americans, again not as Republicans and Democrats, but as Americans because our country needs this and demands this.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. MOORE, we thank you for your tremendous leadership on this issue and for joining us this evening.

Now it gives me great pleasure to yield time to the gentlewoman from

Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), who I would say is a rising star in the Congress, but she was a rising star. She is now a full star in the firmament. The rise has already been complete. But we are so grateful for your leadership, and I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Mr. SCHIFF. I too want to join my colleagues tonight in thanking you for putting this together because one of the things that we have been trying to do over the last several months as Democrats in the House of Representatives is roll out our vision for the direction that America should go in.

Clearly, the vast majority of Americans today believe that we are going in the wrong direction, and in terms of homeland security and protecting our Nation's borders, that is one of the number one priorities.

And what I would like to talk a little bit about tonight is an issue that is extremely important, given that my State is a peninsula, and that is port security, because I represent the people of Florida's 20th district, which is south Florida, Ft. Lauderdale, Hollywood and Miami Beach. My district borders two ports, Port Everglades and the Port of Miami, and they both serve as a gateway to millions of tons of cargo and people every year.

In 2005, in fact, almost 5.8 million tons of goods came into the United States through the Port of Miami. Nationally, though, only 6 percent of cargo is screened. That is a shocking statistic. That means that just in the Port of Miami alone, over 5.4 tons of goods were left uninspected before they entered our supply chain. That is just an unbelievably alarming statistic.

The administration claims to have cargo security programs, such as the automated targeting system, that mitigate any threat, according to them, that the remaining 94 percent of cargo entering our country without physical inspection may pose.

However, the Government Accountability Office, a third party validator, recently released a report showing shortfalls in these systems. Multiple deadlines have been missed, and key controls are still not in place to ensure the adequate implementation of such programs.

These facts were true when the Bush administration approved the sale of operations at six major U.S. ports, including the Port of Miami, to the United Arab Emirates. That agreement, had it gone through, outsourced American security to a country with a spotty record in fighting terrorism and one that is currently participating in an illegal economic boycott of the State of Israel.

Responsibility for America's security should not go to the highest bidder. History has shown that friends of the United States truly come and go. Thir-

ty years ago Iran was our ally, and 20 years ago Iraq was our ally.

Given the current gaps in port security, we are placing far too much trust in port terminal operators beholden to foreign nations. The companies have access to America's classified security operations. And I can tell you, having toured the Port of Miami, I can at least transmit to you that at the Port of Miami the people who run the terminals, they run their own internal security, and they have intimate knowledge of the security operations in the rest of the port.

So far the divestiture announcement from DPW appears to be nothing more than a diversion that was designed to deflect attention away from this outsourcing of American port security.

The current level of vulnerability at our ports is simply unacceptable. Three years ago, the Coast Guard said that they needed \$7.2 billion for port security measures. But the majority in this Congress, the Republicans, have only allowed for the allotment of \$910 million since September 11, 2001.

When it comes to our national security and the safety and defense of our homeland, we should be focused on policy, not politics. We should be pursuing legislation to protect our Nation's ports and remedy the systemic weaknesses that facilitated this deal in the first place.

As the Nation's legislators and lawmakers, it is our responsibility and duty to keep America safe, and the Republican administration and Congress is not accomplishing this objective.

Before I close, I want to share with you yet another alarming statistic. And I notice that when you began your remarks you referred to the removal of shoes as we go through our magnetometers in our Nation's airports.

When I went to the Port of Miami, the staff there talked to me about the disparity in port security versus airport security. In the last 5 years, since 9/11, we have spent, this Republican Congress has spent \$18 billion more on airport security, which is a good thing. But comparatively they have spent less than \$700 million on port security. Essentially we have rested the sum total of our increase in national security on taking our shoes off as we go through the magnetometer. That is about the only thing that most people could say they noticed was a difference between before 9/11 and post-9/11 national security.

Again, I commend you on your effort to pull us together tonight.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentlewoman and I am tremendously grateful for your leadership and participation tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Maryland, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, for his patience this evening. It has been a long evening already, and I have been keeping him and my other

colleagues from the beginning of the recess. He has done a tremendous job in his tenure here in the Congress. He has already established himself as a superb leader on national security and other issues, education. Without any further ado I turn over my time to Mr. VAN HOLLEN for such time as he may consume.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my colleague from California, Mr. SCHIFF. And again, like my colleagues, I thank you for your leadership on issues of national security in this Congress for our country.

I think we all understand that in order to successfully conduct the important work of our Nation, we must have management systems in place. We must have systems of checks and balances to make sure that those people who are making critical decisions for our country are held accountable, and nowhere is that more important than in the area of national security. We have to have competence and we have to have accountability, and unfortunately we have seen a lack of both those qualities in the decisions on national security made by this administration.

It is Basic Management 101 that if you reward failure you are going to get more failure, and if you want success you should reward success. But if you look at the way this administration has approached national security, they have kind of got that principle backwards.

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In fact, they have essentially rewarded and acknowledged those in the administration who got it wrong and criticized those who got their facts right.

Let us just go back to General Shinseki, who proposed early on that we would need, he said, a couple hundred thousand troops on the ground in post-war Iraq in order to maintain stability. He was dismissed by then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz of being "way off the mark."

We have had up to 160,000 troops on the ground, and as you, Mr. SCHIFF, noted early on, it is the consensus of most military experts that one of the reasons we failed in the immediate post-war period to maintain stability was the lack of enough troops on the ground. General Shinseki was right. He was dismissed by the administration. Mr. Wolfowitz received the plum job as president of the World Bank. I do not know what kind of message that sends.

How about the costs of the war? Well, Secretary Wolfowitz said: "We are dealing with a country that can finance its own reconstruction and relatively soon." Well, we know today that Iraq has still not come back up to its prewar oil production, and the predictions that were made by the chief economic policy adviser to the President, Lawrence Lindsey, who at the

time said he thought the cost of the war would run about \$100 billion to \$200 billion, look good from today's vantage point.

At the time we need to remind people that others in the administration, like the head of the Budget Office, Mitch Daniels, dismissed those projections as being too high, and said very, very high.

We have seen a recent study by the Columbia University economist and former Nobel Prize winner in economics, Joe Stiglitz, who projects that this war could be up to \$2.5 trillion in costs.

But perhaps most dangerous from the vantage point of national security have been the failures with respect to the intelligence and the abuse of intelligence. And we need an intelligence system where the facts inform the policy, rather than a system where politics shape and distort the facts. But we have seen the administration ignore many of the professionals in the government who actually called it right in many instances.

If you look back now over the national intelligence estimates and you look at what the people in INR, Intelligence Research at the State Department, were saying; if you look at what the folks at the Department of Energy were saying, a lot of them questioned these conclusions that were being jumped to with respect to the presence of weapons of mass destruction. They questioned both those agencies, the fact that these aluminum tubes were somehow evidence of an Iranian nuclear program. They said they did not believe that. And yet in its selective use of intelligence, the administration ignored those. They relegated those opinions to mere footnotes and essentially put forward the other information.

And you mentioned today a very disturbing revelation has come to light with respect to the selective use of intelligence. And I just want to quote from the Los Angeles Times. This is in many other papers. It turns out, according to the information put forward by Patrick Fitzgerald, the special prosecutor, "President Bush personally authorized leaking long classified information to a reporter in the summer of 2003 to buttress administration claims, now discredited, that Saddam Hussein was attempting to acquire weapons of mass destruction for Iraq."

Before the war, they selectively leaked information in a way that misinformed the American public; and then when they were essentially caught doing that, they further selectively leaked information to try to hide that fact when revelations were brought to light.

This has very serious consequences for our security because our credibility around the world depends on people whom we go to believing that the information that we have is true and that it

is solid. When Adlai Stevenson was at the United Nations in the Cuban Missile Crisis and he said the Soviets were putting missiles into Cuba and had the information to support it, our credibility as a Nation was enhanced. As a result of the failures and abuse of intelligence, our credibility around the world has been degraded. It makes it much harder to persuade others about the seriousness of the threats in Iran and North Korea.

Now, the 9/11 Commission made a number of recommendations as to how we could deal with this particular issue; and one of the recommendations they made was to bolster intelligence oversight reform. Let us hold people accountable for their decisions. Let us not reward failure because we will get more failure. Let us not reward and ignore mistakes; we will get more mistakes. But when it comes to intelligence oversight reform, what grade did they give to the Republican Congress and the administration? A "D." A "D."

We have said, we Democrats, as part of our proposal, we are going to strengthen the oversight process. We are going to hold people accountable, and we are going to implement all of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, including the recommendation to improve the oversight of intelligence so we can end the abusive intelligence, restore our credibility around the world, because that credibility is essential to the national security of this country.

I thank the gentleman from California for his leadership on this issue, and I hope we will continue to have this conversation that I think is so important to our country.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for his leadership and his eloquence and the tremendous job that he also does as we serve together on the Judiciary Committee.

I am now pleased to yield to JAY INSLEE from the great State of Washington, who has been a pioneer in the area of energy independence.

Mr. INSLEE. Thank you. And I have a simple message. We Democrats want to strike a preemptive blow against our enemies in the Middle East. And the single, most effective preemptive blow we have is to starve them from resources with which to attack us. We know where the money came from to finance the attack on September 11. It came from our addiction to oil that must stop.

And we now have a President who said he wants to break our addiction to oil, and we welcome his language about this. But we cannot run our cars on rhetoric. We cannot run a national energy independence program on rhetoric. We need real policies. And we are offering them. We have offered to the country the New Apollo Energy Act, H.R. 2828. That is H.R. 2828. If folks

want to look at it, they are welcome to see the most comprehensive plan that will really deliver a situation where we send less money to Middle Eastern sheiks and more money to middle-American farmers. That is a policy that we will embrace, and we will be more secure than we are today.

I thank you for letting me have my few words today.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues this evening for all their comments and their leadership. Over the next several weeks, we will be unveiling in greater detail each of the pillars of security: how we intend, as Democrats, to rebuild the 21st-century military; how we intend to take the war on terror to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda; how we intend to beef up our homeland security and repair a lot of the broken pieces of our homeland security policy that make us continue to be vulnerable; how we will make Iraq in 2006 a year of transition to full Iraqi sovereignty; and how, as Mr. INSLEE points out, we can achieve energy independence, something vital to the present and this Nation's future.

I want to thank my colleagues for their leadership, DAVID SCOTT for all his great work, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, JAY INSLEE, all of the other speakers tonight. We look forward to continuing this dialogue with the American people.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 889, COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2006

Mr. LOBIONDO (during the Special Order of Mr. SCHIFF) submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 889) to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2006, to make technical corrections to various laws administered by the Coast Guard, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 109-413)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 889), to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2006, to make technical corrections to various laws administered by the Coast Guard, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.

Sec. 2. Table of contents.