

ONE NATION—TWO PRESIDENTS

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, across the country today, Americans are going to the polls to vote for candidates and issues. A year ago, the Americans went to the polls and voted for a President, but they got two instead. We have George W. Bush, the President of domestic policy, like appointing a self-described fashion God who left the gulf coast unprotected; and we have DICK CHENEY, the President of foreign policy, including secret CIA presence around the world.

Now, today the President of foreign policy is trying to round up votes in the Senate to exempt the CIA from an amendment that would ban the torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners. It is a sure sign that America has lost its way when we even have to talk about banning torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners.

America has never had two Presidents until now, and America has never had a question about its moral integrity, until now. The President of foreign policy would have us believe that we must become the enemy to defeat the enemy. Like so much from this administration, this is not true. America's moral imperative is true enough, strong enough, and safe enough to keep this Nation a shining light of freedom without secret, black ops demanded by someone who was never elected President.

Throughout our history, Presidents have led this Nation through wars at home and abroad by remaining true to America's principles and values. In the mid-19th century, America had never before faced a more ferocious enemy than the one from within that reduced us to the Civil War. President Lincoln never lost sight of what we were fighting for. He said: "Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as a heritage of all men in all lands everywhere. Destroy this spirit, and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors."

In the early 20th century, America had never before faced a ferocious foe like the one that plunged the whole world into war, but President Woodrow Wilson did not forget what America stood for. He said: "The present and all that it holds belongs to the nations and the peoples who preserve their self-control and the orderly processes of governments; the future to those who prove themselves the true friends of mankind."

In the mid-20th century, America had never before faced an enemy more like one that had plunged us again into a world war, but Franklin Delano Roosevelt never wavered in his defense of his country: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

And with the world on the brink of nuclear terror during the Cuban Mis-

sile Crisis, John Kennedy kept America free and safe without subverting American values. JFK knew a lot about winning a war without losing the peace. He said: "When at least at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each one of us, our success or failure in whatever office we may hold will be measured by the answers to four questions: Were we truly men," and I would add women, "of courage, men and women of judgment, men and women of integrity? Were we truly men and women of dedication?"

Presidents Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, and Kennedy knew a thing about freedom and liberty; and they knew a lot about America. We are the land of the free and not the home of the afraid. But the President of foreign policy would have it otherwise. His demands for black ops is a black eye on this Nation. American history, not the unelected President of foreign policy, should be our guide.

Great American Presidents have led this Nation in times no less frightening than today. Ask any veteran of the Second World War what was at stake. They called it a world war for a reason. They did not shrink from their duty, and we must not forget that we did our best and we are the best hope of this world. We keep America free without losing America's moral integrity.

The unelected President of foreign policy wants an exemption on an amendment that would ban torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners. He wants the CIA to be free to do whatever they want.

We have come a long way from the days of great Presidents to arrive at the day of an unelected President. He acts not in the shadow of the White House, but standing in front of the person elected President. We used to shine light into the darkness of regimes where people disappeared into secret prisons, gulags. Now, the unelected President of foreign policy would have us become the custodians of gulags.

For a long time, people have wondered just how President Bush could get it so wrong so often. Now we know: he has help. America has a second President we never elected.

Mr. Speaker, I will include for the RECORD an article from the Village Voice.

PRESIDENT SHOULD DUMP CHENEY

(By James Ridgeway)

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Politicians across the political spectrum are hoping against hope that President Bush can take control of the nation and jumpstart a second term, kicking out chief adviser Karl Rove—who remains at risk in the Plame Affair—and changing policy in Iraq, where U.S. soldiers continue to die. But as everyone in Washington knows, Rove isn't the real problem here. The real problem for Bush is Vice President Dick Cheney—it's Cheney's now former chief of staff, Scooter Libby, who has been indicted in the Plame Affair, and it's his pushing that has the administration taking a hard line on the handling of detainees. And the best way, perhaps the only way, for Bush to take charge of the country is to dump the vice president,

forcing him into retirement before he can be charged by Plame Affair prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald with violating the espionage laws.

These last few days, while Bush wandered around South America from one fruitless meeting to another and fended off charges of prisoner abuse in Iraq with bland statements such as "We do not torture," Cheney was busily working away behind the scenes seeking to persuade Congress not to impose restrictions on the CIA torture interrogators. The Washington Post revealed last week the CIA was running interrogations in secret jails for suspected terrorists in eastern Europe.

Cheney, even more than Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is the man behind the Iraq war. Fitzgerald's indictment of Libby bluntly states that Cheney's top aide learned Valerie Plame, the covert CIA agent, was administration critic Joe Wilson's wife from Cheney. Given that, how can Cheney avoid testifying in a Libby trial? He does not have the immunity of a president.

"Libby is the firewall protecting Vice President Cheney," writes John Dean in his FindLaw column:

The Libby indictment asserts that "[o]n or about June 12, 2003 Libby was advised by the Vice President of the United States that Wilson's wife worked at the Central Intelligence Agency in the Counterproliferation Division. Libby understood that the Vice President had learned this information from the CIA."

In short, Cheney provided the classified information to Libby—who then told the press. Anyone who works in national security matters knows that the Counterproliferation Division is part of the Directorate of Operations—the covert side of the CIA, where most everything and everyone are classified.

If Fitzgerald were successful in flipping Libby—and that seems pretty clearly to be his intention—then Cheney himself would face charges of violating the espionage act.

The outcome? Libby will probably hold fast through the 2006 election, his lawyers dragging out the case by interviewing reporters, etc. and then Libby, if convicted, can expect a pardon. As for Cheney, he could save face, resigning for health reasons—that suspect ticker of his coming to the rescue.

At that point, Bush could appoint a new vice president to serve out the remainder of his term. This appointment would require majority approval of both houses of Congress under the 25th Amendment.

Meanwhile, its business as usual, Bush drifting from day to day with the currents. Yesterday just as Bush uttered his denial of torture, the army charged five Rangers with abusing prisoners in Iraq. This morning, Italian state TV aired a documentary describing how the U.S. used white phosphorous bombs against civilians in Falluja. The U.S. admits using the weapons to illuminate battlefields. We are not signatories to a treaty banning the use of white phosphorous weapons. The film is being broadcast on the first anniversary of the U.S. attack on Falluja, which destroyed much of the city and displaced its population of 300,000.

Tomorrow, Ahmed Chalabi, a deputy prime minister of Iraq, the man who fed the gullible American press wrong information on Saddam's possession of weapons of mass destruction, is visiting Washington to address neocon headquarters at the American Enterprise Institute. Chalabi also is to meet with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. A thoroughly disgraced liar, the conduit of so much of the phony information that led us to war, a man with no political base outside the conniving neocon circles, Chalabi is now seriously discussed in Washington as a possible American-backed compromise candidate for Iraqi prime minister because he might appeal of the Shiite southern part of the country. As it stands, he is now in control of the

oil industry, and in the minds of U.S. policy-makers, that counts for a lot.

□ 1400

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

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HURRICANE WILMA AND RECONCILIATION

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a crisis in South Florida.

The third most destructive hurricane ever to hit this country struck my congressional district just over 2 weeks ago. Thousands of people are still without power, thousands still have holes in their roofs that threaten to condemn their houses with every new rain.

Thousands have mobility issues and are without housing because they cannot get up and down the stairs to their apartment. The list goes on and on, and it is truly heart wrenching.

Just last week I was delivering meals to seniors in my district who could not get out of their third floor condominiums. Even though it was 5 days after the hurricane struck South Florida, the residents there said that no one had heard from FEMA, no one had seen FEMA and, worse yet, no one knew how to get in touch with FEMA to make sure things did not get any worse.

And why do I fear that things could get worse? Because of problems like this. This is a third floor apartment, that is the ceiling of the apartment, and as we can see, you can look right through the ceiling at the sky.

This is the woman's master bedroom and literally during the storm, 1 minute after she walked out of that master bedroom the ceiling came down on her bed. The roof caved in. A minute earlier and it would have caved in on her.

Obviously, this apartment is uninhabitable. However, this is a three-story building. If we delay the disaster response, if we do not get FEMA tarp distribution centers set up right away, if we wait weeks before we deliver individual assistance, then not only are we saying to the woman that lived in this unit, tough it out, you are on your own for now, but we are also making the problem worse because there are two floors below this apartment unit.

If it rains through this massive hole in the ceiling in this woman's apartment, then it will leak down onto the apartments on the second floor and possibly weaken the structure, leading to the evacuation of everyone in that part of building. And that is beginning to happen; this is what is happening. Our ineffective response is not only irresponsible, but it also costs the taxpayers more money than necessary.

Now, I have been talking about a natural disaster, which is Hurricane Wilma. But I also want to talk a minute about a man-made disaster that is coming, something that will victimize once again the victims of Hurricane Wilma, Katrina and Rita. I am talking about the Draconian budget cuts proposed by the Republican leadership in their so-called budget reconciliation package.

Last week, the papers in South Florida blared the news that over 5,000 people's homes had been condemned, much of it affordable housing. In Broward County the median price of a home is \$348,000, making many homes and even rental apartments out of reach for thousands of south Floridians.

While the loss of 5,000 homes damaged by Hurricane Wilma is terrible, I would like to point out that the budget reconciliation package endorsed by the Republican leadership eliminates affordable housing vouchers for 3,500 people in Florida alone.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, while Hurricane Wilma made 5,000 Florida families homeless last week, the Republican leadership is proposing cuts that would make 3,500 more Florida families homeless. So first we get hit by Katrina, then we get hit by Wilma and either this week or next the American people will get hit by Hurricane Republican.

Hurricanes are natural disasters, Mr. Speaker. What we will be debating in the House this week or next is a man-made disaster, a man-made disaster that not only would leave 3,500 Florida families homeless through cuts to Section 8 housing vouchers, but also, incredibly, would cut \$58.9 million in elementary and secondary education funds for Florida students, \$4.9 million in cuts for supplemental nutrition programs for women infants and children,

\$25.1 million in cuts for children and families.

These are funds that provide for the Head Start program and help abused and neglected children. Cutting funds for abused and neglected children, what are we coming to here?

I urge my colleagues to vote against a man-made disaster that will originate from this body this week and sweep across the country, displacing thousands of people nationwide. I urge them to vote against the Republican budget reconciliation package.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the upcoming special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, there is a bill in the wings called the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, its fate yet to be determined because it is not at all clear that there are enough votes in this body to pass it.

Basically, this bill is part of the budget resolution for 2006, and what it anticipates is a three-step process except that those steps are treated very separately and in isolation. The first step is what the bill I am talking about proposes, that is, reductions in mandatory spending, so-called "entitlement spending," of about \$54 billion.

The second step to follow is a reduction in taxes in the amount of \$106 billion. That is what the budget resolution calls for. As a consequence, this bill does not achieve its stated name, which is the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Instead, by cutting taxes by more than they cut spending, it leads to a deficit that is \$52 billion bigger than would otherwise be the case. That is the second step.

And then there is a third step in this bill that is not much talked about, but it is written into the bill, written into the budget resolution for 2006, and that is an increase in the debt ceiling of the United States by \$781 billion. That is what happens when you have tax cuts that are not adequately matched by spending cuts. The deficit gets worse, and the bottom line is, \$781 billion will have to be added to the debt ceiling of the United States, the legal limit to which we bill because of the fiscal policies we have followed for the last 5 years.

Now, some supporters claim that this bill, the so-called Deficit Reduction