

gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. Alan).

I want to close with an interesting point that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) raised. He said it just seems that Republicans do not much like the Medicare program. On the surface, that does not sound like it makes sense, because I have a whole lot of Republican constituents who love Medicare. They know it has saved their lives and let them live longer, let them live healthier lives; but there is something about Republican politicians and their relationship with Medicare.

Back in 1965, 12 Republicans, 12 Republicans total voted for Medicare, to create Medicare. Bob Dole voted against it, Gerald Ford voted against it, Strom Thurmond voted against it, Donald Rumsfeld voted against it. Then, 30 years later, the first time the Republicans had control of this House and the majority, they tried to cut \$270 billion, with a B, billion from Medicare. That failed because President Clinton got out his veto pen and said, Do not even try.

Then, in 2002, or in 1999, Congressman Army, the second top Republican in Congress, said, in a free society, we would not have Medicare; we would not want something like Medicare. Whatever that meant. Then, in 2002, another Southern Republican Congressman in the leadership, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER), said that Medicare is a Soviet-style program, whatever that meant.

The fact is that a lot of us in this institution, every single Democrat and some of the Republicans, care deeply about Medicare and want to preserve it, and that is why we fought against the privatization of Medicare that President Bush tried to foist upon us. That is why instead of these 50 cards, we want to see one discount card where seniors get a good benefit under Medicare, get a 30 or 40 or 50 or 60 percent discount like our neighbors to the north, the Canadians have, and like our neighbors across the ocean in Europe have. Instead, what we got was a bill written by the drug discount card companies, written by the insurance companies, written by the drug companies, all of whom are major contributors to the President of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, it was a sad day last December when this bill passed. It was a sad day when President Bush signed this bill. We all have work to do.

AMERICA'S WAR HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, just a few thoughts about the controversy concerning the abuse of prisoners by American contractors and military personnel, if accurate. Some of these charges, of course, must be ac-

curate. No American should deny the truth, nor ignore this unacceptable and illegal behavior. In fact, the source of information and photos documenting wrongdoing appears to have come from an investigation, an investigation that was set forth and set in motion by the Pentagon itself. The Pentagon launched an investigation in order to end any abuse of prisoners that may have been taking place. Americans can be proud that we have standards that will not tolerate such abuse, and the Pentagon moved to correct it before it was publicly known.

We Americans should not flagellate ourselves because of a tiny number of American personnel who humiliated or abused prisoners. Certainly, the vast, vast majority, if not 99.99 percent, of our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan have conducted themselves in a courageous and honorable way. But such abuses and such mishaps and wrongdoing have occurred in every war. From the American Revolution on, we have seen soldiers who perhaps lose a friend and are struck by grief and lash out with revenge, killing a person or killing a prisoner or mistreating a prisoner or, we find, in some cases, a person with sadistic tendencies ends up overseeing the prisoners that have been taken. This happens in every war and conflict. Yes, things like this may have happened in this war as well.

The question, however, is what is to be done? Our government has declared such treatment of prisoners as wrong and illegal. We have thus maintained an honorable standard that we can be proud of.

Many of those criticizing us now or jumping to criticize us have no such standard. They murder their own people. Saddam Hussein, for example, butchered hundreds of thousands of his own countrymen. We found the mass graves, and in those mass graves were thousands and thousands of children.

Now, the world, the Arab world in particular, criticizes us over and over again, finding everything that they could possibly criticize us about, for trying to remove this sadist Saddam Hussein from power. Most of those Arab countries who criticize us or Arab organizations that criticize us, well, let us take a look at the criticism. Yes, it is wrong to abuse prisoners, and to the extent that they were, we were wrong. But we are actually trying to correct the problem. But those people, most of those people or many of those people who are criticizing us do not come anywhere close to a humanitarian standard of their own. They should not be pointing fingers at us or at our troops. This is sort of like the drunk down the street who has been arrested for drunk driving and had his license taken away pointing his finger at a neighbor because the neighbor is drinking a beer on the front porch.

Well, this hypocrisy comes from nitpickers, naysayers, and America-bashers. It is a bit too much. We are correcting a bad situation. We are ad-

mitting our failures, and we are correcting it. But we recognize that any noble cause, any war that has a noble cause is messy, just like all wars are messy and brutal undertakings. And for Americans, war is usually thrust upon us.

Tonight, I rise to discuss the war on terrorism, a war that was thrust upon us. This great challenge to our generation is the challenge we must face. History records that the people of the United States rose up and courageously defeated the forces of evil that threatened this planet during the last century. First we defeated the combined might of the German Nazi and Imperial Japanese war machines. Without the strength, courage, and sacrifice of the American people, this would have been a far different world dominated by the likes of Tojo and Hitler. And, yes, in that war there were some abuses and some mistakes by American military personnel, but does that mean that our cause of eliminating Hitler and Tojo was wrong? Certainly not. And we moved to correct those abuses, just as we have moved in this case when we have found some people who were misbehaving and doing some immoral things.

After World War II, Americans believed they had earned a better and a more peaceful life, only to realize that another evilism, communism, would destroy democracy unless America acted. The Cold War was upon us. Had it not been for the tenacity of the American people, for our love of liberty and, yes, our willingness to bear the burden for a sometimes ungrateful world, a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship would undoubtedly be dominating this planet.

Do our Muslim friends really believe that it would have been better for us not to have won the Cold War? Do they believe that the Marxist-Leninist regimes like they had in Yemen would have been better throughout the Muslim world? Certainly the rest of the world understands that communism was an evil force, and we can be proud of ourselves that we helped defeat that force, and it would not have happened without America.

I am proud to have served in the White House during a pivotal time in that Cold War. For 7 years I was a speech writer and special assistant to President Ronald Reagan. It is clear now that it was the tough policies put in place by President Reagan that brought the collapse of the Soviet Union and brought the collapse of Soviet communism and an end to the Cold War, but it was not easy. It was not a historic inevitability, as we are being told now; and it would not have happened on its own.

So please do not tell me also of the bipartisan spirit that enabled President Reagan to rebuild our defenses, that enabled President Reagan to support those fighting Communist domination, that bipartisan spirit that enabled President Reagan to vigorously

expose the immoral underpinnings of Communist power. No, do not tell me that. I can testify to the Herculean effort that was needed to end the Cold War and that I never saw the bipartisanship the Democrats now remember so vividly.

What I remember is that every time we took a stand, as when we opposed a freeze on nuclear weapons production, that freeze which would have permitted the Soviet Union to dominate Western Europe, and as when we supported those resisting the Communist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, amplified by their friends in the media, blasted Reagan and blasted those of us on his team as warmongers, as if America and as if we were responsible for the conflict between East and West, and we were, of course, portrayed as the bad guys, even though we were promoting democracy.

The dictatorial concepts that are special to Leninism were just shrugged off. By the way, the Sandinistas, who the American left heralded as the representatives of the Nicaraguan people, have lost every free election that has been held in that country since President Reagan insisted that free elections be part of any peace plan there.

Ironically, one fight in the Cold War that did have bipartisan support was in Afghanistan. There we supported the Mujahidin, local insurgents who fought courageously for 10 years against a Soviet occupation army with all of its artillery, tanks, helicopter gun ships, and a willingness to do anything to destroy its enemies. Here was the greatest victory of the Cold War, which broke the will of the Communist Party bosses in Moscow.

However, the Afghan people paid an enormous price for this victory: millions dead or wounded, families, villages, and a way of life destroyed; people living in abject poverty, with a million babies dying of dehydration and other easily curable conditions and diseases.

The retreat of Soviet troops from the Afghan war marked the end of the Cold War. It was not the German people, let us note, who brought down the Berlin Wall; it was the bravery and sacrifice of the Afghans. And while we celebrated and prospered, the Afghans continued to suffer. Not only now are we helping remove the millions of landmines planted throughout their country, many of which we supplied ourselves to the Afghans; and these landmines, which we are only now helping to remove, kill and maim young Afghan children even to this day.

The roots of our current terrorist challenge lie not in our support, not in our support for the Afghan people and their fight against the Soviet occupation, but in our unconscionable decision in 1990 to walk away and leave them in their rubble and suffer their misery.

□ 2200

Walking away was a policy decision. It was wrong. It was dead wrong. Presi-

dent 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 from the United States because when we left, we left everything up to the Saudis and the Pakistanis. Unfortunately, the Saudis and Pakistanis had their own agenda.

This was an unholy alliance doing the bidding of radical anti-western Muslims in their own countries, meaning Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. And while the majority of the Muslims even in a Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are wonderful people, there are large numbers of others who believe they have a right to commit horrendous acts of violence in the name of Allah, or as we would say, in the name of God.

Instead of trying to defeat, control or subdue these elements, the leadership of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan has tried to buy them off, compromise with them and as is evident now, the leaders of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, many of these leaders, sympathized and allied themselves with Muslim extremists who would make war on the west and were intent on destroying our way of life, the American way of life.

I first became aware of these vile forces within the Muslim world while I was still at the Reagan White House. One of the worst of these blood soaked monsters was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a fanatic who in college was known to have thrown acid into the face of women who refused to cover themselves. It is shameful that a disproportionate share of what America sent to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets went to this beast. Even when objections were registered, and I can assure you that strenuous objections and complaints were made, the CIA and the State Department continued to the policy of channeling our aid through Pakistani intelligence, the ISI, who then passed on much of it to their first choice, to their golden boy, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

So we knew crazies were out there and we knew the Saudis and the Pakistanis supported them. Yet, we walked away and left them in charge.

Later, I learned, after I left the White House, that the problem was even worse than I suspected. After I left the White House, I left the White House in 1988 to run for Congress and I won that election in early November of 1988. And while other Members of Congress took vacations during their 2-month break between the time they were elected and sworn in, I instead went to Afghanistan. I went to Afghanistan and joined for about a week an Afghan military unit, an infantry unit that marched into the battle, and it was the last major battle with Soviet troops in the war of Afghanistan, the Battle of Jalalabad. As I was hiking into that battle with this Mujahedin unit, we hiked where we could see a group of tents in the distance.

Now, I was dressed as an Afghan and I was dressed as a Mujahedin soldier. I had a beard, et cetera. We could see these tents. They were luxurious tents. It was more like a modern day camping expedition by some rich people with SUVs than a Mujahedin camp, that was for sure.

But I was told immediately that that was the camp of the Saudis and that I should keep my mouth shut and that no English would be spoken until we were far away from that camp because they said there was a crazy man in that camp who hated Americans, worse than he hated the Soviets, even though we Americans were there helping to defeat the Soviet Army.

They said that man's name is bin Laden, and if he finds out we have an American with us, he would come to kill us just as he would kill the Soviet soldiers. So it was no surprise and it should have been no surprise that there was a real potential threat there in Afghanistan, waiting in the wings to take hold of that country. But instead of rebuilding Afghanistan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia turned it into a mid evil kingdom run by psychotic, religious fanatics.

Now, in hindsight we know the horrific role the Saudis and Pakistanis have played in formulating anti-western Islamic terrorism, and we should also note that many of them today have committed themselves, many of the leaders of those two countries have committed themselves in an opposite course. They are trying to correct what was done wrong 10 years ago which helped create this problem. And we hope that they are sincere when they joined us in our effort in our war against terrorism and the war of the west against this terrorist threat. But, let us note that when this was happening and the Soviet and the Saudi leadership and the Pakistanis were actually helping the terrorist element or the anti-western element within the Muslims in Afghanistan, that part of the world, we should have seen it coming.

But just as the Saudis and Pakistani leaders subsidized and even assisted in this type of insanity, our government stepped aside and permitted the Saudis and Pakistanis to have their way.

So the Saudi and Pakistani leadership either helped or stood aside as these radical Muslims who hate the west and would make war on us began to take control, and then we stepped aside and let the Saudis and Pakistanis have the decision and make the decision. Yes, and we even helped the Saudis and the Pakistanis make that decision.

What was U.S. policy? We need to look at what the U.S. policy was in the 1990s that brought about this situation that we are in today. One of the things that I find most disturbing about the current hearing into the tragedy of 9-11 is that it downplays the importance of American policy in the laying of the foundation of 9-11. They would rather

talk, meaning those people who are conducting this investigation, would rather talk about flow charts and organizational structure and a lack of a shared data base and no central coordination than trying to fix responsibility.

We keep hearing that setting the blame, they call it the blame game, wrong is wrong. It is a bad thing to do. Well, I am sorry, 9-11 represented not an unavoidable tragedy but a dramatic failure of policy and of people. Those who put the policy in place should be held accountable. The individual leaders in our intelligence, the national security system who failed to thwart 9-11 because of their own incompetence and bureaucratic arrogance should be held accountable.

Tonight I will provide a number of examples of policies that led to the empowerment of the hostile radical Islamic movement that we face today and to the policies and to the people who enabled these weird, feudalistic religious fanatics to become a major threat to the western world and especially a threat to the people of the United States.

September 11 was the greatest massacre of American civilians in the history of our country. Yes, we are in the process of hunting down the perpetrators of this monstrous crime and destroying their terrorist network. And I strongly believe our President is resolved to do what is necessary to get the job done and secure our country and our world in the future. He and our military are doing a superb job under the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances and they are being nit picked and naysayed to death every time a mistake is made. People are trying to undermine the general effort and the noble cause in which our troops are fighting.

President Bush has a long-term strategy. That is why we are in an Iraq, for example. We are trying to build a democratic society. Our success will not just be measured in the removal of this vicious and powerful dictator, Saddam Hussein, who hated us, who would have this man had an all-encompassing grudge against us that would have only been satisfied when he inflicted the death and destruction upon our people and the future whenever he had a chance to do so; but getting rid of him was not the only thing we accomplished.

We not only did that but we freed the Iraqi people from their oppressor and we have also provided an opportunity to build in Iraq that will serve as a model for the rest of the Muslim world. We are providing Muslim people, especially the young people, an alternative a choice not to destroy western civilization, but to be part of it and to open the door of a new Renaissance of relations when Christians, Jews and others can live in the same world and benefit from each other. Even though we are distinct from each other, we can interact and trade and we can be friends.

That is the better world President Bush is trying to build. But it must start in Iraq. And if we lose in Iraq, the evil forces that would separate the west from the east and would have us fighting among various religious factions, they will then dominate this planet and we will not be able to stop them except at much greater expense of blood.

It is a strong vision that President Bush has. It is a noble vision; and it is the vision of a world living at peace where Muslims, Christians, Jews live together and this vision is stronger than what the radicals are advocating. They were trying to basically obliterate the faith and the culture of others. And our President is trying to make sure that the world is safe for us to live together in peace and harmony, no matter what our faith is. And we must succeed in Iraq. And I am here to today to applaud the President, and there has never been an action that has been perfect, but he is doing a tremendous job, as have our troops. As we support that, if we have succeed, we must hold those in our government, however, when we will hold them and we will make sure that they get the praise for a successful policy when and if we succeed, which I believe we will in Iraq.

But we must also, when we have a failure of policies, recognize what that policy was, what made us vulnerable to the attack on 9-11, for example, and we must hold those people accountable who failed to protect us and failed to put the policy that would best serve the United States and the western world. This is not the blame game that I am talking about. It is holding people accountable for decisions that they have made while in public service and while they have held authority from the people. So when I speak of bad policy, what am I talking about? What is this bad policy that led to 9-11?

Well, chaos and blood shed in Afghanistan, as I said, continued long after the Soviet Army left and America walked away. During this time in the early 1990s, I felt a personal debt to the Afghan people. I had been there when we were fighting the Soviets. I knew the sacrifices they made, so I felt that we owed them something, and I tried to do my best to find a solution but no one was listening. But it was not hard to find a solution. It was not hard for me to come up with an idea, with a plan that would have helped the Afghan people. But implementing that idea and finding that and making sure that solutions became policy was another matter.

So what was the solution? It did not take a genius to determine the best way to restore order and a stable government to Afghanistan was to bring back the honest and beloved former king, Zaire Shah, who had been living in Rome, Italy since his exile began in 1973. He was an elderly man, but he still had a good mind and an impressive stature. He was one person all factions of Afghanistan knew would not seek

vengeance upon him if he was returned to power.

After visiting him in Rome and being beaten by him in a chess game, I took it upon myself to promote the exiled monarch as the logical choice to bring normalcy back to Afghanistan. So it is not like there was not an alternative to the policies that were put in place. It was the logical choice. Yes, it was the logical choice except for the opposition of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The Pakistanis knew they could not control Zaire Shah.

Zaire Shah had ruled over that country for 40 years. He was independent and a fair and honest man. When he was in a charge of Afghanistan, they lived a relative peace for 40 years. But the Pakistanis were intent on dominating Afghanistan as many of them still are and they ruled out bringing back King Zaire Shah. The Saudi wanted to placate their own radicals. That is why they did not like Zaire Shah, the old exiled king. They wanted to placate the Wahabis who are their radical sector in Saudi Arabia. So they too, the Saudis, nixed the return of the king.

But most disturbing to me is as I sojournd throughout that region on my own, sometimes at great personal risk, promoting the Zaire Shah alternative, U.S. State Department officials would follow me explaining that I was speaking for myself and that I was a lone junior Member of Congress not to be taken seriously.

These arrogant and amoral policy-makers of our State Department could have given Afghanistan a chance for a leader who was decent and caring and peace loving, who loved his people and were loved by them.

□ 2215

Instead, they chose to play politics; and they chose the Taliban, make no mistake about it.

It is only when I spoke to the head of the Saudi Arabia's CIA, Prince Turki, that I was tipped off that another plan was in the works. Prince Turki was fired immediately after 9/11. Just keep that in mind, but until 9/11, he was the man who I could say was most responsible for Saudi policy in that region.

He explained to me personally that instead of the former king coming back, that they were creating a third force, and it was being created specifically to go into Afghanistan, and it would be comprised of religious students who had spent most of the war in the Islamic schools in Pakistan. These Taliban, which means student by the way, using their religious credentials, would dominate Afghanistan; and he assured me that they would not be involved in anything outside of Afghanistan.

These Taliban, by the way, with certain exceptions as I say, were not veterans of the war against the Soviets. They were not Mujahedin. A lot of people make that mistake. The Mujahedin fought the Soviets. The Taliban came

in well after the Soviets left; and in fact, when we felt, after we were attacked, we needed to drive the Taliban out, it was the remnants of the Mujahedin who joined with us and also drove the Taliban out of Afghanistan.

For a long time, I blamed the Saudis and the Pakistanis for creating a force of religious fanatics and putting them in power. It is clear now, however, that it was not just the Pakistanis and the Saudis. Prince Turki, in Washington, when he tipped me off about the creation of Taliban, certainly he was there at the beginning and certainly the Pakistanis were there at the beginning, but other people were there as well.

Last year, I found out about this. Last year, the current former minister of Pakistan visited Southern California; and when he was exasperated by my criticism of Pakistan, that they had created the Taliban, he was upset and he blurted out that Americans were in the room and part of the bargain that created the Taliban as well. There were three parties in that room. Well, that revelation was no surprise to me. I had been trying to get a confirmation of that for years.

During the latter years of the Clinton administration, I charged that the administration policy was secretly supporting the Taliban. After making that charge at a public hearing, I was labeled as "delusional" by a senior Democratic colleague. When I insisted, with the support of Ben Gilman, who was then chairman of the Committee on International Relations, that the State Department provide the documents that would clarify America's real position, we were stonewalled, even though Secretary of State Madeleine Albright personally pledged to comply with this request. Here we are; that is our job to oversee American foreign policy. We requested the documents on the creation of the Taliban. The State Department thumbed its nose at us, gave us documents that were meaningless, that had a bunch of newspaper clippings, et cetera.

Let us be clear and understandable on this point. I am charging that during the Clinton administration it was U.S. policy to create the Taliban, and once in power, the United States Government supported these Islamic fanatics. It was the policy of our government under Bill Clinton. This policy was fully supported and probably created by our State Department, and if one wants to accept the responsibilities for the policies that eventually led to 9/11, start right here, and those in the State Department, those who oppose the return of King Zaire Shah and undercut anyone who is resisting the Taliban, they have the blood of innocent Americans on their hands, those Americans who were slaughtered on 9/11.

Let us accept that rejecting King Zaire Shah, and that option was dead wrong, but let us accept also it was understandable perhaps that our foreign

policy establishment felt that way. They longed for stability, and they could not imagine stability without having the Saudis and the Pakistanis having their way, even though it is America that is supposed to be providing the leadership and not the other way around.

After the fighting stopped and the Taliban were in control, and this is after the third force was then unleashed, the Soviets had been gone for several years, this third force was unleashed. The Taliban swept across two-thirds of Afghanistan, and they took the capital city of Kabul.

Well, I have been trying to fight that for many, many months and many years; and I took a stand back, and just like everybody else, I wished the people of Afghanistan the best and I laid down a marker to the Taliban. I remember giving an interview where basically I said I would have a wait and see, and we expected them not to do things outside of their own country, and we expected them not to be a totalitarian force but a religious force. Of course, I tried to stop them from getting in power in the first place. There was nothing I could do at that point but hope for the best.

After about a month, it became obvious that I had been right all along and that this new force, the Taliban, were Islamic Nazis; and as such, if they were not stopped, they would hurt our friends or they would even hurt us.

So even after coming to power, our State Department, get into this, even after coming to power, our State Department closed its eyes to the increasing evidence of the nature of the Taliban; and they kept supporting the Taliban anyway. For several years, I was a lone voice, helped by Chairman Ben Gilman, then chairman of the Committee on International Relations, warning of the potential consequences of leaving such a fanatical, religious sect in power.

I even went to Afghanistan during this time and met with leaders resisting the Taliban, men like General Dostum, Commander Masood, Abdul Haq, and Ismail Khan. Masood, of course, is the most impressive of the lot, but of course, none of them are pure. Everybody makes mistakes; everybody has made bad judgments; everybody has done things wrong after they have been fighting for as long as these people have been fighting. They all made a certain number of terrible decisions; but unlike the Taliban, they were not totalitarian psychos who believed that God was talking to them and justifying the wholesale slaughter and control of other peoples.

Unfortunately, all of them and the rest of the Afghan people, when I say all of them I mean the leaders who were opposed to the Taliban, and the rest of the Afghan people, believed America was supporting the Taliban. So let us make this straight. Even after the Taliban took power, when it was no longer theoretical, it appeared

to everyone, and I suggest that it was the case, America was still supporting the Taliban.

Why should these people not, these Afghans, think that? Was not our aid going to the Taliban-controlled areas? I myself had been thwarted by the State Department under leadership of Clinton appointee Rick Enderfurth in getting humanitarian aid to parts of Afghanistan not under Taliban control. So it is okay for the aid to go to Taliban areas, American aid; but when I tried to get some aid to some of the other areas, that aid was thwarted.

If there were any doubts, my suspicions about U.S. policy were confirmed in 1997 when the Taliban was saved from total defeat by high-level executives from the Clinton administration. What happened was in April of 1997, the Taliban launched a major offensive aimed at taking control over the northern third of Afghanistan. So they had already controlled two-thirds of Afghanistan; but up until that point, one-third of Afghanistan, the northern part, the northern alliance, were free from Taliban control, and yes, they were under the control, you might say, of regional leaders who were called and are called today warlords, but they are regional leaders. We can debate about the title.

An Afghan general named Malik was one of those regional leaders; and when the Taliban attacked northern Afghanistan, General Malik tricked the Taliban and managed to capture almost all of their front line troops, along with all 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 have been wiped out.

We are talking about early in April of 1997. I sent a message to my friends in northern Afghanistan that Kabul should be taken and that King Zaire Shah should be brought back to oversee a transition government that would eventually evolve and inevitably evolve as well into a democratically elected government, perhaps like what they did in Spain when the King went back and Spain, after the Franco dictatorship, evolved into a democracy; but before the anti-Taliban forces could strike, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Enderfurth and United Nations Ambassador Bill Richardson, both Clinton appointees, flew to northern Afghanistan and convinced the anti-Taliban forces this was not the time for an offensive. This, they said, was the time for a cease-fire and an arms embargo. This was the United States policy. When the Taliban were vulnerable, it became time for a cease-fire.

These two top foreign policy leaders of the Clinton administration were there to convince the anti-Taliban forces not to take advantage of the one opportunity they had to defeat their enemy, this Frankenstein monster that provided a base of operations to kill thousands of Americans. These Clinton

appointees saved the Taliban. Right after the cease-fire and release of prisoners that was brokered by Mr. Enderfurth and Mr. Richardson, the Pakistanis began a Berlin-like air lift to resupply and re-equip the Taliban. So much for the arms embargo, which just happened as it always does, worked as an embargo against the good guys, but the bad guys, we just turned the other way.

If I knew, which I did, of this massive resupply effort that was going on for the Taliban, the Clinton administration had to know about this. So they just let the scenario happen while still enforcing the arms embargo against the Taliban's adversaries.

Let us note here that Richard Clarke, the man who testified on the hearings on 9/11, who cast aspersions on our President, who is now trying to take care of business, Richard Clarke was then a high-level official in the Clinton administration's foreign policy establishment. He undoubtedly knew about this effort to save the Taliban, was probably involved in all of these things that I am talking about, and probably approved it. So when you consider his self-serving testimony in which Mr. Clarke besmirched President Bush before the 9/11 investigation panel, keep in mind the role that he played in creating and supporting the Taliban.

Dick Clarke has no credibility. By the way, after this episode had run its course, the newly equipped Taliban army launched another offensive. This time they took almost all of what was left of Afghanistan, except the Panjshir Valley, which was dominated and remained the domain of my friend Commander Masood, the only hold-out against the Taliban, and America did nothing to help them, even as a new gang of radical cutthroats moved in and made Afghanistan its base of operations.

What am I talking about? Al Qaeda. What about al Qaeda? What about bin Laden? Where does he come from? So the reemergence of bin Laden.

Nowadays Osama bin Laden is a household name. Yes, he fought in Afghanistan against the Soviets. I saw his tents and his luxurious living conditions. No, United States money did not train him or supply him. The Saudis had plenty of money to take care of that. So the United States Government did not train and supply bin Laden, but he was there; and after the Soviets left, this is an important point, bin Laden left. Not only did America leave but bin Laden himself left. He could have financed the reconstruction of Afghanistan. He came from one of the wealthiest Saudi families. He had contacts all over the gulf region where they were swimming in petrol dollars.

□ 2230

He had all of the money and contacts needed for this noble deed of rebuilding Afghanistan. Instead he left, and it was during this time when he was making even more billions of dollars for his

family that he began to focus on the United States as the prime enemy of his faith and he committed himself not to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, but to the destruction of America. So this is how God talks to bin Laden. Do not help people, do not help rebuild, just kill innocent women and children and try to terrorize a Nation. Bin Laden is from an enormously wealthy Saudi family. And while our petroleum dollars flowed into Saudi Arabia by the hundreds of billions, the Saudi establishment not only turned a blind eye, but attempted to buy off this and other Islam radicals in their country.

Bin Laden's hatred for us grew during Gulf War I. Our presence in Saudi Arabia was an insult to his faith. The slaughter of unarmed people is consistent with his faith? In the late 1990s, bin Laden began to set up his terrorist underground army for a 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 and was on the most wanted list. In fact, CIA director George Tenet had declared bin Laden as America's number one target. While designated as such, this self-aggrandizing monster organized, financed and implemented attacks that cost tens of billions of dollars and the death of thousands of innocent people, and not just in the United States, but worldwide we have seen these attacks.

Yet the same CIA that declared bin Laden their number one target with all of the power and assets that the CIA has, they could not thwart 9/11 and they did not warn us about 9/11? If this is not incompetence, what is incompetence? But this everybody knows. Unfortunately, this is mind-boggling evidence. The fact is, the very basis is they did not warn us, and 9/11 happened and he was their number one target. What more evidence do we need of incompetence on the part of our government and CIA in particular.

Vanity Fair has an interesting report about bin Laden and perhaps America's policy toward bin Laden and why he succeeded. Vanity Fair suggested that when bin Laden was in the Sudan, the Sudanese government cataloged all of the people he spoke to on the phone and in person. Here was a listing of all of the members of the bin Laden network, and the Sudanese government was abruptly turned down when they offered to give the United States the entire catalog. According to Vanity Fair, Madeleine Albright made the decision to turn down the offer and instructed no one to look at or copy the material.

The Sudanese former ambassador personally told me that he tried to hand this list to a representative of the United States Government. It would have permitted us to apprehend bin Laden's entire network, but we threw it back in his face. By the way, Dick Clarke had to know about this decision, too. This is the man who cast as-

persions on our President. That was back during the Clinton administration, of course.

Then, an even more personal incident happened when we want to talk about our government's ability to protect us and what was going on during the Clinton administration that led to 9/11. In April and May of 1999, America had an incredible opportunity to capture bin Laden. I was involved, and I am here to report yet another example of the incompetence of those we trusted to protect us from an attack like what occurred on 9/11.

In April 1999, I was contacted by a long-time friend who had been deeply involved in the Afghan fight against the Soviet occupation troops. My friend, an American, had impeccable credentials. He had been in Afghanistan, and was widely known and admired by the Afghan people. My friend called me to tip me off that bin Laden was outside of Afghanistan and could be easily captured. I told him I would pass on his name and phone number and that he would be contacted as soon as possible by the CIA.

The very next day I briefed the CIA and I passed on my friend's phone number and name, and briefed them on his credentials, and told them he could hand them bin Laden on a platter. I called my friend after a week. The CIA had not called him yet. I went back to the Agency, and this time they were adamant they would contact my friend. There was still a chance to get bin Laden. Another week passed. The CIA did not call my friend. This time I went to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) who is the chairman of the Intelligence Committee. When the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) heard my story, he arranged a meeting for me the next day.

So the next day at the appointed time I went to a secure room in a secret and heavily guarded part of the Capitol where I went to meet with the representatives from the CIA. When I got there, there was a CIA representative and National Security Agency and the FBI. That was the bin Laden task force. They were all there, and they apologized for the dunderheads at the CIA who had not called my friend to get the information, and they were going to fall up on it immediately.

A week later I called my friend and he still had not been contacted. I mentioned it to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) who was appalled. The next day a representative from an intelligence agency finally called my friend. The caller's tone of voice suggested that the inquiry was obligatory. It did not make any difference because the trail was already cold.

This incident is bad enough, but then there is the episode of Julie Sears. At the same time I watched the CIA stiff my friend who wanted to tip them off about the whereabouts of bin Laden, there was a young woman who came to my office seeking help. Her name is Julie Sears. She was an analyst at the

Defense Intelligence Agency. She knew I was the only one who understood what was going on in Afghanistan, and was seeking my help because she had been fired from the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Julie Sears has an interesting story. She had worked at the Defense Intelligence Agency for 3 years. She was an Afghanistan analyst. That was her specialty. She went to Afghanistan and was permitted to go to the Taliban areas only. When she returned, she did her study and realized there was information in Northern Afghanistan that was vital for the Pentagon to know if they were to understand the threat that might be taking place and building in Afghanistan. Julie Sears was forbidden to go to the non-Taliban areas of Afghanistan, so she decided to go on her own.

She told her boss she was taking leave, then reported where she was going, officially to the Agency's office that approves that. It was approved that she could go, and she went to Northern Afghanistan on her own and met with Commander Masood and others and came back with some information that was vital. That information was that Commander Masood was telling her that he was capturing troops from the Taliban who were from all over the world and that apparently bin Laden was bringing in huge numbers of people into Afghanistan, training them for terrorist activity, and then letting them fight Masood's forces to get wet behind the ears in battle. And when he captured these people, they were from all over the world. He was talking about the creation of al Qaeda.

Julie Sears came back with that information and she was fired on the spot, and the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency even refused to let her brief other members of the government and refused to have her report be officially put forward, and no one got that information.

I called in the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. I called him to my office and he came there. He was a general, and we will not go any further than that. He had been in charge of the DIA for several years during the Clinton administration. I told him General, this woman risked her life in order to get this information. She is a hero.

His answer was, She is insubordinate.

I said General, I think she risked her life and spent her own money to try to get information for the safety of our country, let us compromise at the very least. Give her back her job, I will not call her a hero, you will not call her insubordinate, we will leave it the way it is.

He said, No, I cannot do that.

I said General, do it and if you blame somebody, blame me. Blame this politician who is politically interfering with the way you manage your operation.

He went back to his office and fired Julie Sears. That is the type of arrogant, bureaucratic attitude that ended up with 9/11.

Finally, there are two other instances that have colored my view of how we ended up with this war in terrorism which could have been avoided, but we were ill-served.

A few days before September 11, my friend anti-Taliban leader Commander Masood was murdered by al Qaeda. After the shock of seeing that my friend had been murdered, I figured it out. Bin Laden had sent his people to kill Masood because he knew the United States would rally behind Masood if there was a major terrorist attack against our people. Bin Laden's terrorist army planned to attack us. It was not hard for me to figure out. They killed Masood so we could not counter-attack against them by supporting Masood. Bin Laden's terrorist army was going to attack us. Perhaps Masood's death was a signal to move the plan that was already put in place forward.

The day before 9/11, I called the White House and asked to see National Security adviser Condoleezza Rice, it was an emergency. The purpose was to warn her of an imminent terrorist attack on the United States. One of her assistants came on the line and apologized, she was really busy that day but she made an appointment to see me the next day. Yes, on 9/11 I had an appointment to see Condoleezza Rice in the early afternoon to warn her of a major terrorist attack that was about to happen.

The question that needs to be asked was how was I able to figure this out. I have one staff member who is my foreign policy military staff member who helps me with foreign policy issues, why I was able to figure it out but the CIA was not able to figure it out. We know why the DIA was not, but why would the CIA, with billions of dollars at its disposal, hundreds of analysts and bin Laden the number one target, that they could not figure it out.

Incompetence. We need to blame people for their failures, and we need to blame the policies that brought about the problem. Finally on 9/11, once the planes started slamming into buildings, I knew right away what was going on. It did not take a genius at that point, but what also dawned on me, without Masood, there was only one person left on this planet who the Taliban and al Qaeda knew threatened their base, and that was the old king of Afghanistan in Rome. The exiled king, they knew without Masood, he was the only man the Afghan people could rally behind in order to launch a counter-attack.

I called the king. I was dumbfounded to hear there was no one there to protect him. This is hours and hours after the planes slammed into the buildings. He was totally exposed. Our number one asset in a war that we were just entering was totally exposed.

I called the American Embassy in Rome and then I called one of the top leaders of the CIA who concurred with me that the king was a primary target

of the band of terrorists with whom we were now at war. Yes, he needed to take care of that, and the king would be protected. Five hours later, by chance, I had the opportunity to speak with this very top CIA official again, one of the top leaders of the CIA. And when I asked him if the king was now protected, he said, "You do not expect us to act that fast?"

So there you have it. We are at war. Thousands of Americans were being slaughtered and the CIA official in charge of protecting us does not take the initiative to try to protect our number one asset that we needed to thwart the Taliban and thwart the people who were murdering our people.

Why did we have 9/11? There you go. Let us remember George Tenet was appointed by Bill Clinton, and he is still the director of the CIA. People tell me that since 9/11, he has been doing a better job, and that some people who were not doing a good job over at the Agency are doing a superb job now. Let me note that.

But when we talk about why 9/11 happened and who was responsible, especially when we have a committee who is trying to besmirch our President who is now taking care of business, let us look at the policies that people who created this.

□ 2245

The committee now investigating 9-11 can tell us about lack of information sharing; but we know that within the FBI itself, there were agents who were begging higher-ups to pay more attention to the possible threat of suspected terrorists who were receiving pilot training. No, there was not an obstruction there. There was not lack of communication or agencies did not talk to each other. That was right within the FBI. But, no, someone in that line of command was arrogant and told them to forget it. There was no absolute proof that this was going to happen. This is called bureaucratic arrogance and bureaucratic inertia or perhaps maybe the arrogance of officialdom or just plain incompetence. Couple that with the policies of the Clinton years that created and nurtured the Taliban and turned Afghanistan into a terrorist training base and a staging area for terrorism, take those things together, that is what brought us into this situation that we find ourselves in today.

Those who run our government should be held accountable for the policies that they advocated that created this Frankenstein monster, and they must have the commitment and be held responsible and accountable for their lack of commitment of getting their job done if their job was to thwart attacks on the United States. 9-11 happened because of the actions or lack of actions of certain people with authority and because of fundamentally bad policy.

Today we have a fundamentally good policy at hand when our President is taking care of business in Iraq. He is

not kicking the can down the road like they did during the last administration. He is going to see that the people of Iraq develop an alternative to radical Islam, and by doing that he has a strategic vision that will build a better tomorrow rather than ignoring any potential threats and permitting the Frankenstein monsters that appeared in the late 1990s to reappear.

If America is to be secure, we must do our job, and that is our job in Congress, and that is to hold people who fail accountable, and we should quit whining about it and quit playing politics. That is our job in Congress, to hold people accountable, to oversee what is happening in the other branches of government and to pass rules and regulations and to make sure that our military is equipped and doing the right job.

We too have to be held accountable perhaps in the 1990s for not stepping forward but instead being focused on other things. The United States Congress was not focused on Afghanistan. It was not focused on these problems as well. And today I think we have a chance to make up for that. We have a chance to work with our President and, instead of playing politics, make sure we win this battle in Iraq and help create a better world.

I am very proud of our President, and I am very confident that our children will not have to suffer another 9-11 because we are doing what is right today.

IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, we are back here this evening for another installment of our weekly Iraq Watch. Tonight I am joined initially by the gentleman from the State of Washington (Mr. INSLEE); and I expect, as the hour proceeds, other members of Iraq Watch will join us for our weekly discussion.

The revelations of the past several days concerning abuses of detainees or prisoners under the auspices of American military have shocked and appalled the world. And as many have indicated, including the President, Secretary Powell, and Secretary Rumsfeld, this is unacceptable, unconscionable, and un-American. It is an embarrassment to our country, to our military; and it is my understanding that a variety of congressional committees intend to address this particular issue.

But what concerns me is something that is fundamental to what we have been talking about these past months about our policy in Iraq and the Middle East in the war on terror, and that is credibility, competence, and the willingness of this White House, this administration, to consult with Congress. I think that there is a growing realiza-

tion that this President, this Vice President, and this administration have failed on all accounts.

There was a report today in the media which quoted President Bush regarding these appalling revelations. And I would like to read to my friend and to the Speaker and to those who might be viewing us this evening as we have our weekly conversation excerpts from those reports in the international as well as the American media:

"The first time I saw or heard about pictures was on TV," the President," referring to President Bush, "said, leaving open the question of when he first learned about the substance of the allegations that prompted an initial investigation in January of this year. But General Peter Pace, Deputy Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that 'Everyone was kept apprised orally of the ongoing investigation.' Asked whether Bush and General Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, his direct supervisor, were well aware of the situation, General Pace responded, 'Yes.' Myers, the country's top general, raised eyebrows over the weekend when he said that he had not read a report completed in early March that documented the widespread abuses in Abu Ghraib. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had also not read the report that was completed in March by this Monday," by this past Monday, "5 days after the damning photographs were first shown on the CBS television program 60 minutes, a spokesman said."

I find that absolutely incredible. The Secretary of Defense had not read the report until this past Monday, and the report was completed in March. What is going on? One can only describe this as ineptitude of the highest order.

Let me continue: "Congressional leaders have bitterly complained that they were kept out of the loop and were particularly incensed after the Pentagon reported Tuesday the deaths of 25 prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan including at least two confirmed homicides. The Congress has not been notified of the murders that took place. 'There have been no reports of these abuses,' Republican Senator John McCain, himself a prisoner during the Vietnam War, told ABC television on Wednesday."

From the Cox News Services, Senator MCCAIN went on: "The Congress should have been notified of this situation a long time ago. It's a neglect of the responsibilities that Secretary Rumsfeld and the civilian leaders of the Pentagon have to keep the Congress informed of an issue of this magnitude."

I agree with Senator MCCAIN. Even the majority leader of this House, this body, who certainly has taken the most hawkish position possible when it comes to the issue of Iraq and Afghanistan had this to say: "We are being briefed all the time. If we are going to be a part and a partner in this war on terror, then we are to be completely briefed, not just briefed on those things

they want us to hear." Of course, the majority leader of this body is the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY).

I see the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), and he has a look in his face that he wants to make a comment.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, it is difficult, while our proud men and women are serving in the field in Iraq, to tell some very unfortunate truths about the failure of the executive branch of this government to live up to their service in Iraq. It is difficult to say the truth, which is there has been gross incompetence, deception, manipulation of the truth, failure to recognize reality in Iraq which has got us in such an unholy mess by the executive branch of the Federal Government. That is not pleasant to say given what our troops face in Iraq tonight. But it is necessary to say it.

And the reason it brought hope to me when I was visiting a family that lost a son and a husband in Iraq while serving in an incident where he earned the Bronze Star posthumously, a man who will not be coming home to his children, when I talked to his widow, the one thing she impressed upon me that she wanted me to do is to not fail to blow the whistle on executive branch incompetence which has created such problems in Iraq or at least not responded to them the way they should. And this body, the people's House, has an obligation to blow the whistle on these multiple failures, and they are multiple. And tonight I think we are going to talk about 10 failures of the executive branch of the government, which has been responsible in part for some of the difficulties that we face in Iraq.

And the first one I would like to mention is the one that leads in part to some of the problems we face with handling prisoners of war. The public is well aware of what happened here. I heard a conservative commentator yesterday just describe this as the soldiers just having a good time, just blowing off steam. It is that kind of attitude that apparently permeated our command and control structure in our prisoner of war camps, and that kind of attitude has the potential to inflame the Arab world and create more enemies of the war we are fighting against al Qaeda right now. It is a gross mistake.

□ 2300

It is a failure of a command and control structure.

One of the problems this Congress needs to get right to the bottom of is this scandal regarding private contractors in Iraq. We have heard of multiple scandals involving overpayments to the Halliburton Corporation, multiple scandals involving mispayments and overpayments for oil to these corporations, many of whom are great political donors, I might add, in the United States political system.

But there is another one we need to get at, and that is why we have private contractors doing interrogation of prisoners of war in Iraq, who are outside