

provide an agenda. I don't know where they have been for the last 4 years. This is absolutely unacceptable. We pushed for a Homeland Security Department. We wanted a secretary to sit at the table and be part of the Cabinet. The independent 9/11 Commission gave President Bush failing grades on America's preparedness. Dirty bombs and other deadly materials are still able to enter the United States through unsecured ports and airports. The administration has failed to meet the basic needs.

Democrats have a plan. We will implement all of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. We will improve border security; invest in mass transit security; fully man, train and equip first responders; and we will screen 100 percent of the containers before they come into this country.

Mr. Speaker, we will make America safer.

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WAR PLANS LEAKED TO SADDAM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, last week a disturbing report was released showing evidence of a security breach at U.S. Central Command in Doha, Qatar.

According to the report, Iraqi documents now in our possession show that Russian officials provided Saddam Hussein with intelligence on U.S. strategic planning during the lead-up to the war in Iraq. The documents say Russians provided the intelligence through "their sources inside the American Central Command in Doha," specific details 2 weeks before our troops entered Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a small matter. U.S. CENTCOM in Qatar is the nerve center of our operations in Iraq. That's why it is absolutely vital that we have full confidence in the security of our operations there. With troops on the ground and in harm's way, it is essential that we seek to find out how this information was leaked and whether or not such leaks could still be happening.

While military officials have been slow to investigate, Congress should not be. Getting to the bottom of this should be a top priority of the House and Senate Intelligence and Armed Services Committees. Nothing less than the security of our troops is at stake.

ATTACK ON STUDENT AID

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, student aid is under serious attack. As I look at the 100 amendments that were blocked from being considered later on

today, we saw amendments that would have extended the Pell Grant to qualifying prisoners. That is an attack on student aid; an amendment that would have provided forgiveness for teachers who go into rural communities, that is an attack on student aid; amendments that would have restored \$12 billion to the student aid pool.

If those are not attacks on student aid, then I need to be educated.

CONGRATULATING KRISTINA SLATER

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to bring to the attention of the U.S. House a wonderful recognition of one of my constituents, Kristina Slater, and what she has just received. Just yesterday she was honored at the Pentagon with the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service Award at the Secretary of the Army's annual awards ceremony.

This award stands for more than a certificate or a pin. It stands for superior commitment to excellence. It stands for dedication. It stands for remarkable pride in doing one's job day in and day out.

Kristina Slater's work exemplifies this. She was instrumental in helping transition various information, technology functions, finances, and manpower to meet current and future needs of the Army. The results of this are being met with strong operational success, vital to everyone involved.

We are all extremely proud of Kristina Slater and congratulate her on this wonderful honor. As the highest honorary award bestowed upon a civilian employee by the Army, this worthy achievement is a testament to Ms. Slater's diligent and loyal service to our Nation.

I know the House joins me in thanking Kristina Slater on this award and her selfless service and dedication to our Nation.

DEMOCRATIC PLANS FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

(Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Democrats rolled out a plan for emergency and energy independence by 2020.

Mr. Speaker, as the spring arrives, gas prices are once again on the rise. America's dependence on foreign oil is up to 60 percent. Dependence on foreign sources of energy compromises our national security and makes families and businesses less secure because of high energy costs.

To free America from dependence on foreign oil, Democrats pledge to achieve energy independence for America by 2020 by eliminating reliance on oil from the Middle East and other un-

stable regions of the world. We will increase production of alternative fuels from America's heartland, including bio-fuels, clean oil, geothermal and fuel cells. We will also promote hybrid technology and enhance efficiency and conservation incentives.

During consideration of an energy bill last year, the Republican majority rejected many of these proposals when they were offered by Democrats. Under a Democratic majority, energy independence would finally become a reality. That is what people want.

TIP FOR DEMOCRATS ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, after many months, the Democrats have managed to release their so-called national security agenda; and one of the things their agenda calls for is improving border security.

Last year, House Republicans passed the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act as well as the REAL ID Act. How do these bills protect our borders?

First, the Border Security Act increases penalties for illegal immigration and holds violators accountable to restore the integrity of our Nation's borders, reestablishes respect for our laws, and helps ensure that terrorists cannot enter the United States.

Second, the REAL ID Act federally standardizes the requirements for applying and issuing State identification cards because the 19 hijackers responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attacks carried between them 13 valid driver's licenses and 21 State-issued ID cards.

How did the Democrats vote on these issues? 164 of them opposed the Border Security Act and 152 opposed the REAL ID Act. So Democrats now want to improve border security? Here is a tip for them: start voting for legislation that does exactly that.

SEAL OUR BORDERS

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the issue is not hard to understand. The American people understand this issue and we are getting lots of calls into our offices.

We have the immigration debate. As we talk about illegal immigration, as we discuss the problem of illegal entry into this country, we all know that you have to begin with the very first step. It has to be a priority and that priority is seal our borders.

We all learned in kindergarten that the beginning is a very good place to start. As we have this debate on illegal immigration and illegal entry into this country, let's begin at the very beginning by sealing the borders to this great Nation.