

from China and they are here complaining about all this government is bad stuff, well, you are cutting this program and that program. That is why I think they have lost a lot of credibility with the American people, Mr. Speaker, is because there is no consistency with their argument.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Consistency.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. No consistency. What they said last year, they did not do this year. What they did last year, they do not want us to do. There is no consistency to their argument at all. Consistency is the word for today, the lack thereof on the Republican side.

As we close, because I know we just have a few minutes left, and I want to yield back to my friend from Florida, I think it is very interesting what we are seeing happening already. We talked a lot in the last couple of years about oversight and that when the Democrats were in charge, Mr. Speaker, we were going to provide oversight.

Now, we start seeing things open up in Iraq, with all these contracts, from all these big corporations who were getting all these big government contracts, all of the sudden you are starting to see come out of these committee hearings exactly what has been going on. Now you are starting to see maybe the administration was strong arming some scientists to spin global climate change data. You are starting to see this all percolate up.

I think one of the other things we said we are going to do is execute our constitutional obligation to provide oversight, and we are seeing that, and we are seeing the results of that with the global warming, with the war in Iraq, things happening, that didn't happen in Katrina, all starting to rise up.

I want to thank the gentleman from the Pittsburgh area and the gentleman from Connecticut, my two favorite people from Florida. I want to thank you and I yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ for her closing remarks.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I think your comments are a good segue to where we should close which is that the Congress has now finally reasserted our constitutional role to be a check, a check and a balance over the other branches of government, particularly over the executive branch in which that authority and oversight was completely ceded over the last 12 years.

I sit on the House Judiciary Committee. We had an oversight committee today on the presidential signing statement where the President, this President in particular more than any other President combined, has issued signing statements, his opinion and his interpretation of legislation which is really the judicial branch's responsibility, that he would just choose not to implement or implement in the way that he wanted to, a particular section of law, wholly inappropriate.

Congress is back in our appropriate role, and I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania to talk about our Web site, but first to the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I just want to warn the gentleman from Pennsylvania that you need to say both the e-mail address and the Web site or you will be scolded by some of the more veteran Members of the 30 Something Group. So I want to give you that piece of advice as you close.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I appreciate the gentleman from Connecticut alerting me to that.

For the Members who would like to tell the constituents how they can learn something more about the 30 Something Working Group, I would encourage them to e-mail us at 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov or they can visit the Web site at www.speaker.gov/30something.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, the 30 Something Working Group appreciates the hour granted to us by Speaker NANCY PELOSI.

APPOINTMENT OF HON. STENY H. HOYER AND HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH FEBRUARY 5, 2007.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARE) laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 31, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STENY H. HOYER and the Honorable CHRIS VAN HOLLEN to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through February 5, 2007.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, there is a question that often comes to my mind. I wonder to how many Americans this comes to their mind.

We are a great superpower, the undisputed economic and military superpower of this world. Have you ever asked yourself why? What is so special about us that we have this privileged position in the world?

We no longer have the most oil in the world or gold or silver or diamonds. We no longer have the best work ethic in the world. We no longer have the most respect for technical education. We no longer have the most respect for the nuclear family. Nearly half of our children are born out of wedlock. What makes us so special?

I have asked myself that question a lot of times, and I think there are two

reasons. There may be others, but I have noted for myself two reasons I think. One of those is the enormous respect that this country, that this government, has for our civil liberties. There is no other Constitution, there is no other government, that has this great respect for civil liberties.

The Constitution written in 1787 was hardly dry before our Founding Fathers wondered if it was clear that most of the rights, most of the power, should belong to the people, and so they wrote what we call the Bill of Rights, those first 10 amendments which delineated very clearly that most of the rights belonged to the people.

Civil liberties are always a casualty of war. Abraham Lincoln, my favorite President, violated our civil liberties in the civil war. In World War II, we interned the Japanese Americans. I served here with Norm Mineta, former Secretary of Transportation. Japanese Americans. He told me, "ROSCOE, as a little boy, I remember holding my parents' hands when they ushered us into that concentration camp in Idaho."

Those wars were ended and we got back the habeas corpus that was denied during the civil war, and the Japanese Americans were released from those internment camps.

We are now engaged in a great war, a war like no other that we have ever fought. I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, that in our zeal to catch terrorists that we may threaten the civil liberties that I think are largely responsible for making us this great, free Nation.

I think these civil liberties have established a climate and milieu in which creativity and entrepreneurship can flourish, and I think we put at risk who we are in our superior position in the world if we put at risk these civil liberties. We need to be very careful, and actions like the PATRIOT Act, warrantless wiretaps, detention without either charging or giving counsel to the accused, we must be very careful, Mr. Speaker, that we do not put at risk those things that have made us such a great Nation. But this is a subject for another day.

A second reason, which is the subject for today that I believe that we are such a great, free Nation, undisputed superpower in the world, I believe that our Founding Fathers understood that God sat with them at the table when they wrote the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

I have here in the front of the little Constitution that I carry a statement from Alexander Hamilton one year before they wrote the Declaration of Independence, and I think that it kind of epitomizes the belief that most of our Founding Fathers had.

The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written as with a sunbeam in the whole volume of human nature by the hands of the divinity itself and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.