

## November 3, 2006 - Nation and War Effort Endangered by Republican-Controlled Congress

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Nation and War Effort Endangered by Republican-Controlled Congress  
Release of Nuclear Documents and Removal of Inspector General Undermine National Security and Troops in Iraq

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, today responded to reports that Iraqi nuclear secrets may have been released on a federal website, as well as news that the office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction will be closed by October of 2007:

"Today we can clearly see how this Republican Leadership is failing in its pledge to protect the homeland and undermining our chances for success in Iraq," Rep. Slaughter said.

"Congressional Republicans were so anxious to prove the President's case for war that they pushed for the release of documents which could have served as primers for the construction of a nuclear weapon. Republicans constantly attack reporters for writing about national security programs, saying that our national security is being undermined. Where is their outrage now?"

Rep. Slaughter also issued a renewed criticism of a provision in the recently signed Defense Authorization bill which will eliminate the office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction by October of 2007.

"The Republicans leadership has shown how uncommitted it is to providing any form of accountability in Iraq. Stuart Bowen's office has exposed the waste, fraud, and abuse making this war more costly and more dangerous both for our troops and for Iraqi civilians. His ongoing work is critical to our remaining chances for success in Iraq."

"But top Republicans have decided to arbitrarily terminate Mr. Bowen's organization. They willfully refuse to recognize what the American people have long understood: that accountability in Iraq is critical if we want to protect our troops and give them a chance to succeed. It is long past time for this Congress to institute a modern-day Truman Commission to oversee the war."

Rep. Slaughter fist called for a contemporary Truman Commission in May of 2005.

"At home and abroad, oversight is not a priority for this Republican, rubber-stamp Congress. It cares far more about backing the President than it does about asking tough questions. It's the wrong way to govern if you really care about national security."

**BACKGROUND: REVELATION OF NUCLEAR SECRETS**

Leading Congressional Republicans, eager to support President Bush's claim that Iraq had an active nuclear program, pushed for a federal website to publish recovered documents from the Hussein regime. It now appears that some of those documents, available world-wide until their recent removal, could have served as a primer for construction of a nuclear weapon.

Congressional Republicans Led Campaign For Website Hoping to Prove Saddam Had WMD. A website that Congressional Republicans insisted on making public in order to prove the already discredited fallacy that Saddam Hussein had restarted his WMD program has endangered national security by posting a primer on how to build an atom bomb. The website, "Operation Iraqi Freedom Document Portal," was an archive of Iraqi documents captured during the war that conservatives hoped could be mined for proof that Saddam had reconstituted his unconventional arms program after the first Gulf War. Conservatives were led in their campaign for the website by Representative Peter Hoekstra, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, who along with Pat Roberts, chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, wrote a letter to DNI Negroponte asking him to post the materials. [New York Times, 11/3/06]

Materials "a Cookbook" for Making An Atom Bomb. Arms control experts said that the materials could help countries develop nuclear weapons. The documents included three diagrams showing cross sections of bomb cores, and their diameters and an array of reports submitted by Iraq to UN inspectors prove that it had given up its unconventional arms program after the first Gulf War. [New York Times, 11/3/06]

Bush Administration Ignored Protests That Materials Could Help Iran and Others Build Nukes. Officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency "were shocked" at the public disclosures and complained privately last week to the U.S. ambassador to the agency that the materials posted constituted a threat. [New York Times, 11/3/06]

Peter Hoekstra's Spokesman: Complaints "Didn't Sound Like a Big Deal." When asked for comment regarding the materials, Jamal Ware, a spokesman for Hoekstra, said that "We were a little surprised when they pulled the plug." [New York Times, 11/3/06]

- Source: National Security Network, [http://www.nsnetwork.org/press\\_room](http://www.nsnetwork.org/press_room)

#### FURTHER BACKGROUND: KEY FINDINGS FROM STUART BOWEN

Stuart Bowen, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, currently supervises 55 auditors and inspectors in Iraq, and has issued approximately 300 reports since the war began. Among Mr. Bowen's most important findings have been the following:

Iraq is losing \$4 billion a year to corruption. "Corruption in Iraq is endemic. We call it a pandemic," said Stuart Bowen, special inspector general to Iraq, before a Senate committee in August. "[A]ccording to the inspector general, one recent poll found that one-third of Iraqis said they had to pay bribes to get basic services." [Pierre Thomas, ABC News, "Corruption Rivals Violence As Threat to Iraq," August 2, 2006]

Inspector general audit find \$300 million taxpayer dollars spent on "suspect" reconstruction projects. U.S. investigators identified more than \$300 million of tax dollars that have been spent on reconstruction projects that are suspect. As of August 2006, 82 investigations were underway looking into American government officials and contractors working in Iraq, who have been accused of overcharging for projects and pocketing kickbacks. [Pierre Thomas, ABC News, "Corruption Rivals Violence As Threat to Iraq," August 2, 2006]

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