ABLE DANGER FAILURE -- (House of Representatives - October 19, 2005)

[Page: H8979]

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. *Reichert*). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. *Weldon*) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk to our colleagues and through our colleagues to the American people about an issue that troubles me greatly.

I have been in this institution 19 years, and during those 19 years I have been on the Committee on Armed Services. Currently, I am the vice chairman of that committee and chairman of the subcommittee that oversees the purchase of our weapons systems. In the past I have chaired the research subcommittee. I have chaired the readiness subcommittee, and I have spent every available hour of my time working to make sure that our military troops were properly protected and have the proper equipment and training.

I am a strong supporter of our military. Whether it was in the last 2 years of the Reagan administration, the four years of the Bush administration, the 8 years of the Clinton administration, or the current administration of President George W. Bush, I have been a strong supporter of our military. I am a strong supporter of President Bush. I campaigned for him. I am a strong supporter of Secretary Rumsfeld. I say all of that, Mr. Speaker, because tonight I rise to express my absolute outrage and disgust with what is happening in our defense intelligence agencies.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1999 when I was Chair of the defense research subcommittee, the Army was doing cutting-edge work on a new type of technology to allow us to understand and predict emerging transnational terrorist threats. That technology was being done at several locations, but was being led by our Special Forces Command. The work that they were doing was unprecedented. And because of what I saw there, I supported the development of a national capability of a collaborative center that the CIA would just not accept.

In fact, in November 4 of 1999, 2 years before 9/11, in a meeting in my office with the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Deputy Director of the CIA, Deputy Director of the FBI, we presented a nine-page proposal to create a national collaborative

center. When we finished the brief, the CIA said we did not need that capability, and so before 9/11 we did not have it.

When President Bush came in after a year of research, he announced the formation of the Terrorism Threat Integration Center, exactly what I had proposed in 1999. Today it is known as the NCTC, the National Coun ter ter ror ism Center. But, Mr. Speaker, what troubles me is not the fact that we did not take those steps.

What troubles me is that I now have learned in the last 4 months that one of the tasks that was being done in 1999 and 2000 was a top-secret program organized at the request of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, carried out by the general in charge of our Special Forces Command, a very elite unit focusing on information regarding al Qaeda. It was a military language effort to allow us to identify the key cells of al Qaeda around the world and to give the military the capability to plan actions against those cells so they could not attack us as they did in 1993 at the Trade Center, at the Khobar Towers, the U.S.S. *Cole* attack, and the African embassy bombings.

What I did not know, Mr. Speaker, up until June of this year, was that that secret program called Able Danger actually identified the Brooklyn cell of al Qaeda in January and February of 2000, over 1 year before 9/11 every happened. In addition, I learned that not only did we identify the Brooklyn cell of al Qaeda, but we identified Mohamed Atta as one of the members of that Brooklyn cell along with three other terrorists who were the leadership of the 9/11 attack.

I have also learned, Mr. Speaker, that in September of 2000, again, over 1 year before 9/11, that Able Danger team attempted on three separate occasions to provide information to the FBI about the Brooklyn cell of al Qaeda, and on three separate occasions they were denied by lawyers in the previous administration to transfer that information.

Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday on ``Meet the Press,'' Louis Freeh, FBI Director at the time, was interviewed by Tim Russert. The first question to Louis Freeh was in regard to the FBI's ability to ferret out the terrorists. Louis Freeh's response, which can be obtained by anyone in this country as a part of the official record, was, Well, Tim, we are now finding out that a top-secret program of the military called Able Danger actually identified the Brooklyn cell of al Qaeda and Mohammed Atta over a year before 9/11.

And what Louis Freeh said, Mr. Speaker, is that that kind of actionable data could have allowed us to prevent the hijackings that occurred on September 11.

So now we know, Mr. Speaker, that military intelligence officers working in a program authorized by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general in charge of Special Forces Command, identified Mohammed Atta and three terrorists a year before 9/11, tried to transfer that information to the FBI were denied; and the FBI Director has now said publicly if he would have had that information, the FBI could have used it to perhaps prevent the hijackings that struck the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the plane that landed in Pennsylvania and perhaps saved 3,000 lives and changed the course of world history.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because we have been trying to get the story out about Able Danger and what really happened. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I have to rise tonight to tell you that as bad as this story is, and as bad as it is that the data was not transferred to the FBI, and as bad as it is that the 9/11 Commission totally ignored this entire story and referred to it as historically insignificant even though it was authorized by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, even though Louis Freeh has now said it could have provided information to prevent the attack against us, the 9/11 Commission ignored it. Not because the commissioners ignored it, but because someone at the staff level on the

9/11 Commission staff decided for whatever reason that they did not want to pursue the Abel Danger story.

Mr. Speaker, in August and September I met with the military officials involved with Abel Danger and one by one they told their story, until, Mr. Speaker, leaders in the Defense Intelligence Agency, including the deputy director, decided they do not want the story told. I think because they perhaps are fearful of being embarrassed and humiliated.

So what direction had they taken, Mr. Speaker?

They have gagged the military officers. They have prevented them from talking to any Member of Congress. They have prevented them from talking to the media. And the Defense Intelligence Agency has began a process to destroy the career and the life of Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Shaffer.

Now, it might be easy for us to ignore this, Mr. Speaker. We all have busy careers and worry about reelections every 2 years and worry about our own families and our jobs. But I cannot do that in this case and neither can this body, and neither can the other body. You see, Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer took an oath to defend our Constitution. He took the words ``duty, honor, country'' seriously and devoted 23 years of his life in four deployed intelligence operations of our military to protect America.

During the time he served our country, he has received the Bronze Star, an award that does not come easily, for showing acts of courage, leadership, and bravery in the course of his activities.

[Time: 20:30]

He has received public commendations from previous directors of the Defense Intelligence Agency, including General Patrick Hughes, including generals at Special Forces Command, and including Admiral Wilson of the Defense Intelligence Agency. He has received dozens of letters and commendations for his work. The laudatory comments I reviewed in his files are unbelievable.

But, you see, Mr. Speaker, there is a problem. The Deputy Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency was in a meeting with Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer almost a year before 9/11, and Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer showed him a disk in his office with information about al Qaeda and Mohammed Atta, and the Deputy Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency stopped the briefing and said, you cannot show me that. I do not want to see it. It might contain information I cannot look at.

Now, Tony Shaffer was not in the room alone, Mr. Speaker. There were other people, and we know their names. So we have witnesses. Now, the Deputy Director has denied that meeting and denied he was there and denied this particular story, but the fact is he knows that we are going to pursue it.

So what has happened to Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer, Mr. Speaker? The Defense Intelligence Agency has lifted his security clearance. One day before he was to testify before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, in uniform, they permanently removed his security clearance. And now our Defense Intelligence Agency has told Colonel Shaffer's lawyer that they plan to seek a permanent removal of his pay and his health care benefits for him and his two children. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer, like Commander Scott Philpot of the Navy, like J. D. Smith, and like a host of other Able Danger employees, has told the truth.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I sat here in the 1990s and I sat here during the 9/11 investigation and watched a ridiculous situation develop with Sandy Berger, the National Security Adviser under President Clinton. He walked into the National Archives before he was to testify before the 9/11 Commission looking through

documents. He took documents out of the archives and stuffed them in his socks and pants so that no one would see them as he left the National Archives. Now, that is a felony, tampering with Federal documents and removing classified information regarding our security and information that the 9/11 commission needed to see.

Sandy Berger initially lied about it. He said he did not do it. Then he admitted it, and he was given a punishment. And, oh, by the way, his security clearance was temporarily lifted, but he will get it back again, for lying, for stealing, and for committing an act of outrage against our country's security. Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer, a Bronze Star 23-year military veteran, simply told the truth and now his life is being ruined.

His career is ended. He is no longer in military intelligence. They have taken his security clearance, and they are about to destroy him as a person. They are about to deny him the basic health care and the salary that he has earned, and they are doing it in this way. This is outrageous. It is evil. They do not want to fire Tony because they also do not want him to talk to the media. So by suspending him and removing his pay and his health care, they hurt him bad, but he cannot talk because he is under suspension and his lawyer has advised him that to talk to the media, to talk to Members of Congress, even when he is not being paid, would cause him further problems and totally prevent him from ever having this gross problem reversed. Mr. Speaker, this is outrageous. Mr. Speaker, this is not America.

Over my 19 years in Congress, I have led 40 delegations to the former Soviet Union. I have sat in the face of the Soviet Communists and confronted them on full transparency. I sat at the table with President Lukashenko of Belarus, who has been called by our Secretary of State the last dictator in Europe. I took both delegations to North Korea, Mr. Speaker, and sat across the table from Kim Gye Gwan and I told him we abhor the way they treat their people, the way they lie about what is happening, and the way they distort information.

Mr. Speaker, I took three delegations to Libya to meet with Qadhafi, and I told him that we are absolutely outraged at what Libya did in helping complete the Lockerbie bombing and the bombing of the Berlin nightclub.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I never thought I would have to take the floor of this Chamber and make the same statements about the Defense Intelligence Agency. As a supporter of the President, as a supporter of the military, Mr. Speaker, if we allow this to go forward, then we send the signal to every man and woman wearing a uniform that if you tell the truth, you will be destroyed if a career

bureaucrat above you does not like what you are saying. If you tell the truth, we will take your health care benefits away from your kids. If you tell

the truth, we will ruin you.

Mr. Speaker, this is not America. Mr. Speaker, this is not what I have been told by Secretary Rumsfeld that we are doing with our troops in protecting them, in giving them the best equipment and the best training. This is not what I spend hours in committee hearings on. This sends the wrong signal to America's troops. It tells them, do not be honest. Do not respect the fact that you have to be truthful. If there is somebody that the truth offends, then you better be silent.

Mr. Speaker, I have today asked for an independent investigation of the Defense Intelligence Agency and their efforts at destroying Tony Shaffer's life. This is outrageous, Mr. Speaker. They trumped up charges against him. They said while he was overseas in Afghanistan, forward deployed, that he forwarded cell phone calls from his official phone to his personal phone; and when they checked that out, it ran up a cost to the taxpayers of about $60. The second verbal charge they gave him was that he went to a course at the Army War College and he got reimbursed for his travel, his mileage and tolls, 100-some dollars. And they said he received a commendation for which he was not entitled, even though it was signed by his commanding officer and the acting Secretary of the Army.

But they went beyond that, Mr. Speaker. They went beyond that with this man. They said he had $2,000 of debt, personal debt. Well, I would like to have every Pentagon employee tomorrow, I would like to have the senior leadership show us what debt they have in the Defense Intelligence Agency so we can make that public.

They even went to this length, Mr. Speaker: the Defense Intelligence Agency wrote in an official document that Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer stole public property. A serious charge. Well, when you check what that public property was, it was an assortment of pens, government pens. But what they did not say in the Defense Intelligence report was that he took those pens when he was 15 years of age and was with his father when he was on assignment at one of our embassy outposts. He took the pens to give to other students at the school when he was 15 years of age. And by the way, Mr. Speaker, it was Tony Shaffer himself who admitted to that thievery when he applied for his security clearance. So the Defense Intelligence Agency knew that during his entire career of 23 years, but they put that in the document against him.

This is a scandal, Mr. Speaker. It is an outrage. It is a travesty. Everyone that

worked with Tony Shaffer, the Navy officers, the private citizens have all said the same thing. This is a scandal to get Tony Shaffer because he has told the truth.

Now, this Defense Intelligence Agency and this Deputy Director had the audacity to have their legal counsel send Tony Shaffer's lawyer a letter on September 23. I cannot put that letter in the **RECORD** because it is privileged information, but it will eventually come out. But in that letter, in the second to last paragraph, the legal counsel for the Defense Intelligence Agency says to Mr. Shaffer's lawyer, he cannot receive any more classified information from the Defense Intelligence Agency because I checked and his security clearances have all been removed. Therefore, he is not allowed to look at anything that is secret or confidential.

Now, that is a letter sent by the general counsel of the DIA on September 23 of this year. Two weeks later, Mr. Speaker, to show the stupidity of the Defense Intelligence Agency, they send seven packages to Mr. Shaffer's lawyer

[Page: H8981]

of his personal belongings, which the Deputy Director of the DIA told my staff 3 months ago did not exist any more. And in those seven boxes, Mr. Speaker, were five classified memos. The Defense Intelligence Agency sent five classified memos to Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer, which they told him on September 23 he was not allowed to have access to.

Mr. Speaker, that is a felony; and I have asked the Inspector General and the legal officials to investigate and prosecute the Defense Intelligence officials who sent five classified documents through the mail or by hand delivery to Tony Shaffer.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the Defense Intelligence Agency, in its absolute total stupidity, included in those boxes $500 worth of Federal property, including a multi-hundred dollar GPS system owned by the Federal Government, which they sent to Tony Shaffer, I guess to keep. They also sent, Mr. Speaker, 25 pens, brand new, and marked on them is ``Property of the U.S. Government.'' The Defense Intelligence Agency, in its absolute utter stupidity, sent Tony Shaffer Federal property which they accused him of taking when he was 15 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, there is something desperately wrong here. There is a bureaucracy in the Defense Intelligence Agency that is out of control. They want to destroy the reputation of a 23-year military officer, Bronze Star recipient, hero of our country, with two kids because people in defense intelligence are embarrassed at what is going to come out.

And what is going to come out, Mr. Speaker? Well, we are going to find out, Mr. Speaker, that that unit, Able Danger, not only identified Mohammed Atta before 9/11, not only did they try to pass that information to the FBI, not only was that large data destroyed in the summer of 2000, but now, Mr. Speaker, I can add a new dimension to this whole story. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I met with another Able Danger official. I was not aware of this official's knowledge because he does not live within the Beltway.

This official, Mr. Speaker, has impeccable credentials. I cannot reveal his name today. I will to any Member of this body, any of our colleagues that want to come to me, I will tell you privately who this official is, and you will agree with me when I tell you his name that he has impeccable credentials. This official yesterday, Mr. Speaker, in a meeting in my office, told me that he has never been talked to by the Pentagon. He has never been talked to by the Defense Intelligence Agency in their supposed investigation. He has never been talked to by the 9/11 Commission staff in their investigation; yet this official had a leadership position in Able Danger.

This official told me that there is a separate cache of information collected from over 20 Federal agencies in 1999 and 2000 on Able Danger that still may exist. Now, the Pentagon has told us all this material was destroyed, and now I have a senior official telling me there is a second pot of information that may well still exist.

Furthermore, at the hearing over in the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, when Senator *Specter* asked why this data was destroyed, the witness who destroyed the data said, well, I was told that we could not keep this data for more than 90 days because it might involve information that contains U.S. persons, so we had to destroy it.

[Time: 20:45]

Well, I found out that is not the story. The reason the data was destroyed was because Special Forces Command asked the Army for that data and within a matter of days, that data was destroyed so the Army would not pass it to Special Forces Command. Yet there still is, was and I hope still is a massive pot of data.

But furthermore, that official that I talked to yesterday will also say that there was no 90-day requirement, as was testified before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. He said on a regular basis they kept information from Able Danger data

mining for months and months and months. In fact, he will say he had a discussion with a lawyer in DOD named Schiffren who told him do not worry about it, just fill out a document, sign your name that you need it, put it in the box, and you can keep it as long as you want.

Mr. Speaker, that is entirely contradictory to what the Defense Intelligence Agency has been telling us, to what DOD has been telling us. Now we have someone who is willing to come forward and say that 90-day period is not real, they kept Able Danger information for months and months and months.

Mr. Speaker, there is something desperately wrong here. A sitting President of the United States resigned his position because he tried to cover up a third-rate burglary when some low-level operatives from the Republican committee to reelect him broke into the Democrat headquarters in Washington, D.C. No one was killed. No money was stolen. No State secrets were stolen. It was a third-rate burglary, but it caused the resignation of President Richard Nixon.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the deaths of 3,000 Americans.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about 2.5 terabytes of data about al Qaeda. That is equal to one-fourth of all of the printed material in the Library of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about Mohammed Atta and three of the terrorists that attacked us on 9/11.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about military intelligence officers, including an Annapolis graduate who will command one of our destroyers in January of 2006 who risked his entire career to state on the record I will swear until I die that I saw Mohammed Atta's face every day starting in January of 2000, a year and a half before 9/11.

Mr. Speaker, this is not somebody off the street, this is a graduate of Annapolis, a 23-year Naval officer who will command one of our destroyers in January who is agreeing with Lieutenant Shaffer. We have three other people who have testified under oath that they saw the same photograph, and the person I met yesterday will testify that he had the name of a Mohammed Atta before 9/11 but not the face.

Mr. Speaker, this is not some third-rate burglary coverup. This is not some Watergate incident. This is an attempt to prevent the American people from knowing the facts about how we could have prevented 9/11 and people are covering it up today. They are ruining the career of a military officer to do it and

we cannot let it stand. I do not care whether you are Democrat or Republican, you cannot let a lieutenant colonel's career be ruined because of some bureaucrat in the Defense Intelligence Agency. If we let that happen, then no one who wears the uniform will ever feel protected because we will have let them down. Anyone who wears the uniform of this country who is serving today expects us to back him or her up and that is not happening. We are seeing lying, distortion.

Mr. Speaker, do you know, Wolf Blitzer on CNN told my staff that a Department of Defense employee told him that Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer was having an affair with one of my employees. How low can we go, Mr. Speaker? How low can we go to allow this Defense Department to try to ruin the reputation and the personal life of a lieutenant colonel with a Bronze Star? To Wolf Blitzer, Mr. Speaker.

We need to know the name of that defense official who told Wolf Blitzer who told my staff, and he is not the only one. I have other media people who will come forward in this grand effort to destroy the reputation of a uniformed military officer, to create scandalous accusations. He does not even know my staff, to accuse him of stealing pens when he was 15, to take away his health care benefits for his two kids because he is telling the truth.

What do we stand for if not the truth? Is it more important that we be politically correct? Is it more important that I not rock the boat because my party is in the White House, because I campaigned for Bush, and support Don Rumsfeld. Is that more important? If that is more important, I do not want to be here. I will leave. I will leave my post, but I will not do it until we get justice for this man and for these people who the 9/11 Commission called historically insignificant.

Mr. Speaker, there is something wrong inside the Beltway.

Mr. Speaker, there is something desperately wrong when a military officer risks his life in Afghanistan time and again, embedded with our troops under

[Page: H8982]

an assumed name with a false beard and a false identity, forward deployed with our troops, gets castigated, gets ridiculed, gets some low life scum at the Pentagon spreading malicious lies about this individual, and then say to his lawyer, we are going to take away his health care benefits, we are going to take away his salary.

Mr. Speaker, if we allow this to stand as Democrats and Republicans, then none of us deserve to be here. When we all go overseas and meet the troops, we tell

them how proud we are of them. We provide funding for them. We give them training and take care of their families. What we are allowing to happen right now is the Defense Intelligence Agency to ruin the career and the life of a man who spent 23 years protecting his Nation. If Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer was telling this story alone in a vacuum, that would be one thing. But he has been corroborated over and over again. I have met with at least 10 people who fully corroborate what Tony Shaffer says. Those meetings with the FBI, the FBI employee still works there and she told the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, I set those meetings up with the FBI to transfer information about al Qaeda and Able Danger. So she is still there and she testified.

What we have here, I am convinced of this now, is an aggressive attempt by CIA management to cover up their own shortcomings in not being able to do what the Able Danger team did: They identified Mohammed Atta and the al Qaeda cell of Brooklyn 1 year before Ð9/11. But even before that, as the story unfolds, you are going to hear the story that they also identified the threat to the USS *Cole* 2 weeks before the attack, and 2 days before the attack were screaming not to let the USS *Cole* come into the harbor at Yemen because they knew something was about to happen.

Mr. Speaker, bad news never comes easy; but in a democracy, the bad news has to come out so we can make sure it does not happen again.

Mr. Speaker, this whole thing started, not to embarrass anyone, this whole thing started because none of us knew that Mohammed Atta was identified before 9/11. It started because this Congress, this body in particular, tried to establish what is now in place back in 1999, a national collaborative center, but the CIA said we did not need it. The American people deserve to

have the answers here. They deserve to know why 3,000 people died. They deserve to know what we could have done and should have done to better prepare ourselves and to work to prepare for the next incident. The American people need to know where those multiple terabytes of data is. Is it still being used? We know in January of 2001, General Shelton was given a 3-hour briefing on Able Danger. So even if they destroyed the data back in the summer of 2000, in January of 2001 there was enough material to give General Shelton, Commander of the Joint Chiefs, a 3-hour briefing.

Mr. Speaker, there is something here. I am not a conspiracy theorist, but there is something desperately wrong, Mr. Speaker. There is something outrageous at work here. This is not a third-rate burglary of a political campaign headquarters. This involved what is right now the covering up of information that led to the

deaths of 3,000 people, changed the course of history, led to the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, and has disrupted our country, our economy and people's lives.

Mr. Speaker, we could ignore this. I cannot. If it means I have to resign from this body, I will resign. I will not allow, after 19 years in this body and as a vice chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, bureaucrats in the Defense Intelligence Agency to concoct stories, to talk about the theft of pens when this lieutenant colonel was 15 years old, to talk about this man's personal debt of $2,000. I would hate to check the indebtedness of Members of Congress. I know mine is more than $2,000.

Mr. Speaker, this is not America. I had a group of college students down from Drexel University. There were about 20 of them, including representative students from eight other nations. We talked about this. Of course we have talked about all of the problem countries in the world. We talk about our values as a Nation, the need for a democracy to have people involved, to have transparency, to have people who respect the rule of law and the Constitution.

How do I tell them that is what is working here, Mr. Speaker, when the Pentagon says that these people who simply want to tell the truth are not allowed? They are saying it is for classified purposes, yet the DOD lawyer on the Senate side there is nothing classified about any of the information. It is not about classified programs. I would be the last to want to see anything classified revealed. I have seen many, many instances where I have been given sensitive information that only a few people in the Congress and the country had. I would never reveal it. It is not about that. This is not about the DIA, this is not about the CIA, this is about CYA. It is about CYA by bureaucrats in the Defense Intelligence Agency and possibly some political operatives that do not want the facts to come out about Able Danger and the information that the Able Danger team put together. And in the process, they are going to destroy a man, a man who has been recognized by his country, who has a family, and who simply wants to do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, I hated to take the floor tonight, but I did not know what else to do. We have committees of Congress working on this. I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. *Wolf*), chairman of the FBI Appropriation Committee on Oversight. He is as outraged as I am. I want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. *Sensenbrenner*), who is looking at this, and the gentleman from California (Chairman *Hunter*). The Committee on Armed Services has a full-time staffer assigned to get to the facts of this. I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. *King*), chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, because he is looking at this. I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Chairman *Hoekstra*) and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. He has met with

Tony Shaffer and has offered to get more information. I want to thank my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for standing up and beginning to ask questions, and I want to thank Senator *Specter* and Senator *Biden*, who attended a Committee on the Judiciary hearing and expressed their outrage. I want to thank Senator *Sessions*, Senator *Kyl*, and Senator *Grassley*, who were all there. In fact, Senator *Grassley* called it a coverup.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you the number of Members who have come to me and said this is unacceptable. I would hope that as a result of what we have heard tonight every Member of Congress will ask for an inquiry. The gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. *McKinney*) wrote a letter to the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services asking for an investigation. We have from Republicans to Democrats, left to right, conservatives to liberals. What is happening here is unacceptable. It is unimaginable. It is un-American. All over the world tonight, young Americans are wearing our uniforms. They are doing a great job. They make us all proud when we travel overseas. They make us proud because of the pride they have. When I talk to them, they say I am glad to be doing what I am doing. I am doing the right thing for our country. I will go any place the Commander in Chief sends me. Whether I am in Afghanistan or Iraq, they will tell me that.

[Time: 21:00]

Whether we are in Kosovo or Somalia, they will tell us that. Whether we are at Hurricane Katrina, whether we are at Hurricane Andrew, or whether we are out in California, the earthquake, or the Midwestern floods, our troops are all the same. They respect our country. They respect our Constitution. If we allow this travesty to continue, Mr. Speaker, then we have let all of those people down for some nameless, faceless bureaucrat who is fearful that the information will finally come to light, that the DIA just did not get it.

Back in 1999 and 2000, they did not have a clue. They had millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars, and could not do what a 20-member team did in being able to identify Mohammed Atta before the 9/11 attacks. DIA does not want that to come out, Mr. Speaker. They do not want that to come out. Heaven forbid the Defense Intelligence Agency, with hundreds of millions of dollars, would have a 20-member team do what they could not

[Page: H8983]

do because they were using new technology and new software. They do not want that to come out. That is why that Deputy Director, when he was at that meeting, said, I do not want to see this. Do not show it to me. And that is why today that Deputy Director is trying to ruin the career of Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer.

The only way to resolve this, Mr. Speaker, is to have a full independent investigation by the Inspector General of the Pentagon. I have asked Secretary Rumsfeld today to do that. I would ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in that request. Let the independent inspector for the Pentagon go in, not DIA. DIA cannot investigate itself. It does not have the capability to do that. It does not have the integrity to do that. Let the Inspector General do the investigation and while that is being done, protect Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer. He does not deserve to have his career ruined or destroyed for telling the truth.

And while we are at it, Mr. Speaker, if DIA is going to continue to press this ridiculous set of facts, then as I said earlier, I want DIA prosecuted for the five felonies they committed in sending classified documents to a person that 2 weeks earlier they said was incapable of receiving classified information. And if this continues, I want DIA held responsible for illegally transferring $500 of public assets to a person, that in the process of sending that stuff to him, DIA committed fraud against the taxpayers. I want them held accountable: DIA's stupidity; DIA's incompetence.

We have a new nominee for the head of DIA, and I am going to ask every Senator to fully explore each of these issues before that person is confirmed. I will meet with every Senator personally and go over all of this information. And I would encourage the Senators and the House Members to interview the other people who worked with Lieutenant Colonel Shaffer and to get their assessments of what is going on there. They will all tell them the same thing: Shaffer is being abused and used as a scapegoat. If they can ruin Shaffer, they can silence the story.

It cannot happen, Mr. Speaker. We cannot let it. That is not what America is about. That is not what we say to our enlisted personnel when they sign up for duty. That is not what we say when we pass our defense bills every year.

This man is being maligned and mistreated. He is being harassed. The most scurrilous accusations, totally unfounded, have been given to the American media; and I will name names, and I will ask for an investigation of the people who made those statements to these media people because it all needs to be put on the record.

And as someone tomorrow who will chair another hearing on our defense oversight to try to get the best value for the dollars for our military, I ask all of our colleagues, Mr. Speaker, on both sides of the aisle to join us. This is not Republicans or Democrats. It is about what is fundamental to this country. I would ask our constituents across America we represent to join us, to express their outrage, to e-mail, make phone calls, write letters to the Secretary of Defense, the President of the United States, to Members of Congress to simply let the story be told. Let the Able Danger story finally come out to the American people. Let them understand what really happened. Let Scott Philpott talk. Let Tony Shaffer talk. Let the others who have been silenced have a chance to tell their story to Congress and openly to the American people. In the end, the country will be stronger.

END