

American Progress Action Fund



State of the Union Blogging
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SOTU: How the Bush Administration Changes the Tone

Bush said: “[E]ven tough debates can be conducted in a civil tone, and our differences cannot be allowed to harden into anger. To confront the great issues before us, we must act in a spirit of good will and respect for one another – and I will do my part.”

VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY: “F*** yourself.” — speaking to Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT).
[Washington Post, [6/24/04](#)]

PRESS SECRETARY SCOTT MCCLELLAN: “It is baffling that he is endorsing the policy positions of Michael Moore and the extreme liberal wing...” — speaking about decorated Marine veteran Rep. Jack Murtha (D-PA). [[11/17/05](#)]

KARL ROVE: “Liberals saw the savagery of the 9/11 attacks and wanted to prepare indictments and offer therapy and understanding for our attackers.” [[6/24/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:08 pm

SOTU: Bush Rebuked Coretta Scott King’s Call on Affirmative Action

Bush said: “We are grateful for the good life of Coretta Scott King.”

FACT — BUSH REBUKED KING’S CALL ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: Coretta Scott King on 2001 MLK day called for opposition to the “attack on affirmative action.” On MLK’s birthday in 2003, Bush announced his opposition to an affirmative action program.
[CNN.com, [1/15/01](#), [1/16/03](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:13 pm

SOTU: What Bush Doesn’t Mention About Iraq’s Elections

Bush said: “In less than three years, that nation has gone from dictatorship, to liberation, to sovereignty, to a constitution, to national elections.”

FACT — WHITE HOUSE WAS AGAINST IRAQI ELECTIONS BEFORE IT WAS FOR THEM:

Before deciding to support Iraq elections, the Bush administration wanted to turn control over to the now-discredited Ahmad Chalabi. The Washington Post remembers, the White House “resisted the idea of holding elections...and only succumbed under pressure from Iraq’s most powerful cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani.” Iraq expert Juan Cole noted, “It was Sistani who demanded one-person, one-vote elections. So to the extent it’s a victory, it’s a victory for Iraqis. The Americans were maneuvered into having to go along with it.” [Washington Post, [1/30/05](#)]

Filed under: [State of the Union](#)

Posted January 31, 2006 9:15 pm

SOTU: Terrorist Attacks Have Intensified

Bush said: “We remain on the offensive against terror networks. We have killed or captured many of their leaders – and for the others, their day will come.”

FACT — GLOBAL TERRORIST THREAT HAS INTENSIFIED: More than four years after 9/11, Osama bin Laden is still alive, al Qaeda has spawned new terrorist networks, and global terrorism is on the rise. According to the Bush administration’s own statistics, the problem of international terrorism is worse now than it was in 2001. The sum of global terrorist attacks in 2005 was 3991, up 51% from the previous year’s figure of 2639. According to State Department data, the number of international terrorist attacks tripled to 650 in 2004. In May 2004, the London-based Institute for Strategic Studies reported that “al-Qaeda’s recruitment and fundraising efforts had been given a major boost by the U.S. invasion of Iraq,” and the Afghan Defense Minister recently claimed that al Qaeda had “increased its activities in Afghanistan.” [Time, [5/26/04](#); Reuters, [4/26/05](#); AP, [11/16/05](#); [tkb.org](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:15 pm

SOTU: Terrorist Threat Remains Strong In Afghanistan

Bush said: “We remain on the offensive in Afghanistan.”

FACT — AL QAEDA RESURGING IN AFGHANISTAN: “Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida network has increased its activities in Afghanistan , smuggling in explosives, high-tech weapons and millions of dollars in cash for a resurgent terror campaign, the [Afghanistan] defense minister said.” [AP, [11/16/05](#)]

FACT — SUICIDE BOMBINGS EMERGE IN AFGHANISTAN: “The new Taliban are deploying tactics that have torn Iraq to shreds and Afghanistan is seeing a surge in the previously unknown practice of suicide bombings - 25 in four months. This is seen as the re-introduction of al-Qa’ida into Afghanistan - a devastating example of how over-extending the ‘War on Terror’ into Iraq is rebounding on the West with vengeance.” [Independent, [1/17/06](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:16 pm

SOTU: Bush's 'Strategy' For Iraq Failing On All Three Fronts

Bush said: “First, we are helping Iraqis build an inclusive government, so that old resentments will be eased, and the insurgency marginalized. Second, we are continuing reconstruction efforts, and helping the Iraqi government to fight corruption and build a modern economy, so all Iraqis can experience the benefits of freedom. Third, we are striking terrorist targets while we train Iraqi forces that are increasingly capable of defeating the enemy. Iraqis are showing their courage every day, and we are proud to be their allies in the cause of freedom.”

FACT — VERY LITTLE PROGRESS ON SECURITY FRONT: Since the March 2003 invasion, 2,242 U.S. troops have died and more than 16,000 have been injured. More than 500 Iraqis have died since the December 15 elections. While the administration claims that Iraqi security forces are taking the lead, more than 130,000 U.S. troops remain in Iraq. (Question: If the Iraqi security forces are so competent why can't any U.S. troops go home?) [icasualties.org, [1/30/05](#); AP, [1/13/06](#)]

FACT — VERY LITTLE PROGRESS ON ECONOMIC FRONT: A new study shows that one-fifth of the Iraqi population lives in poverty, up since the 2003 invasion. Reconstruction efforts are floundering. According to a new report by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, “American-financed reconstruction programs in Iraq will not complete scores of projects that were promised to help rebuild the country.” [AFP, [1/25/06](#); NYT, [1/27/06](#)]

FACT — LITTLE PROGRESS ON POLITICAL FRONT: Despite recent elections, the political situation is highly unstable. Shiites are threatening to unite with Kurds and exclude Sunnis from political power. The New York Times reports “[a]nything short of a unity government, Iraqi and American officials here say, would be tantamount to disaster, with the Sunnis the most likely losers. Leaving them out of the government could very well prompt them to turn away from democratic politics again, and give the insurgency a fresh shot of energy.” [NYT, [1/22/06](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:16 pm

SOTU: Bush Has Failed To Support The Troops

Bush said: “We must keep our word, defeat our enemies, and stand behind the American military in its vital mission.”

FACT — THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S FAILURE TO PROVIDE BODY ARMOR HAS COST LIVES: The New York Times reported that a “secret Pentagon study has found that as many as 80 percent of the marines who have been killed in Iraq from wounds to the upper body could have survived if they had had extra body armor.” Body armor “has been available since 2003, but until recently the Pentagon has largely declined to supply it to troops despite calls from the field.” Additionally, the Pentagon has refused to reimburse troops who purchased their own armor. [New York Times, [1/7/06](#); AP, [9/30/05](#)]

FACT — PENTAGON WORKING ON PROPOSAL TO TRIPLE COSTS OF MILITARY HEALTH INSURANCE (TRICARE): The Pentagon is proposing to “triple some Tricare insurance costs for military retirees and their families.” “Increases would be substantial — as much as \$1,200 more a year by 2009 — with no end in sight because the plan calls for annual rate hikes in 2010 and beyond that would match inflation.” [Army Times, [1/26/06](#)]

FACT — BUSH ADMINISTRATION NOT PREPARED TO DEAL WITH TROOPS RETURNING FROM THE BATTLEFIELD:

“US soldiers returning home from tours in Iraq, meanwhile are initially showing a higher incidence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) than in other American conflicts. Around 317,000 veterans who received a primary or secondary diagnosis of PTSD were treated at medical centers” run by the Department of Veterans Affairs. “Experts say the sharp increase does not begin to factor in the potential impact of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.” The Bush administration has consistently underestimated the level of resources needed. [AFP, [1/27/06](#); Washington Post, [12/27/05](#), [6/24/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:20 pm

SOTU: Bush Approach to Iran Has Weakened U.S. Position

Bush said: “The Iranian government is defying the world with its nuclear ambitions – and the nations of the world must not permit the Iranian regime to gain nuclear weapons. America will continue to rally the world to confront these threats.”

FACT — BUSH MIDDLE EAST POLICY HAS WEAKENED OUR HAND: By invading Iraq [without enough troops](#) and [without a plan for stabilizing the country](#), the administration allowed an [historic expansion of Iranian influence](#) westward into Iraq, even as the country’s new leadership has drifted further towards [radicalism and rabid anti-Semitism](#). The Bush administration substituted a policy of dual containment (of Iran and Iraq) for something more dangerous: a single-minded focus on Iraq that has hampered our efforts to fight global terrorism and strengthened Iran’s influence.

FACT — BUSH OPPOSITION TO NEGOTIATIONS WEAKENED OUR HAND: The Bush administration [dismissed three separate invitations](#) to open back-channel communications with Iran’s government under the more moderate President Khatami. It refused to participate directly in the talks involving Britain, France, and Germany, despite warnings from [diplomats](#) and the [International Atomic Energy Association](#) (IAEA) that the talks were likely to fail without U.S. involvement. Instead of being an active player, the Bush administration sat on the sidelines and ceded leadership to others. As Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-NE) stated last November, “The United States is capable of engaging Iran in direct dialogue [without sacrificing any of its interests or objectives](#).”

Posted January 31, 2006 9:25 pm

SOTU: Bush Administration Flunking on Homeland Defense

Bush said: “Our country must also remain on the offensive against terrorism here at home.”

FACT — FLUNKING OUT ON HOMELAND SECURITY: The 9/11 Public Discourse Project (formerly the 9/11 Commission) has given the administration failing grades on its efforts to improve homeland security. Former Gov. Thomas Kean (R-NJ), former chair of the 9/11 Commission, said that homeland security is “not a priority for the government right now. You don’t see the Congress or the president talking about the public safety as number one, as we think it should be, and a lot of the things we need to do really to prevent another 9/11 just simply aren’t being done by the president or by the Congress.” [NBC Meet the Press, [12/4/05](#)]

FACT — FIRST RESPONDERS A LOW PRIORITY FOR BUSH: Just 6 percent of national security spending is devoted to homeland security and the administration still has “no system in place that allows emergency personnel to communicate reliably and effectively in a crisis.” The government has also cut funding for state and local law enforcement and first responders by more than \$2 billion from FY 2005 to FY 2006. “While the terrorists have been learning and adapting, we have been moving at a bureaucratic crawl,” said James Thompson of the 9/11 Project.[Chicago Tribune, [12/16/05](#); American Progress, [10/27/05](#); American Progress, [9/9/05](#); [American Progress](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:27 pm

[SOTU: House Conservatives Are Holding Up Bipartisan Compromise On Patriot Act](#)

Bush said: “These men and women are dedicating their lives to protecting us all, and they deserve our support and our thanks. They also deserve the same tools they already use to fight drug trafficking and organized crime – so I ask you to reauthorize the Patriot Act.”

FACT — HOUSE CONSERVATIVES HOLDING UP PATRIOT ACT RENEWAL: Sixteen provisions of the Patriot Act were set to expire at the end of 2005. Last summer, the Senate unanimously passed a bipartisan compromise bill to reauthorize the expiring provisions of the Patriot Act and include amendments to guard against government overreach. The bill was rejected by House conservatives and altered significantly in conference. [American Progress, [11/17/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:28 pm

[SOTU: Bush Pushes Two Hijacker Myth](#)

Bush said: “We now know that two of the hijackers in the United States placed telephone calls to al-Qaeda operatives overseas. But we did not know their plans until too late.”

FACT – WE KNEW THE TERRORISTS WERE THERE BEFORE THE ATTACKS. BUREAUCRATIC PROBLEM, NOT SURVEILLANCE LAW, WAS THE REASON THEY WERE NOT DETAINED: Cheney made the same claim a couple of weeks ago, and the [Washington Post debunked it](#):

But Cheney did not mention that the government had compiled significant information on the two suspects before the attacks and that bureaucratic problems — not a lack of information — were primary reasons for the security breakdown, according to congressional investigators and the Sept. 11 commission. Moreover, the administration had the power to eavesdrop on their calls and e-mails, as long as it sought permission from a secret court that oversees clandestine surveillance in the United States.

The bigger problem was that the FBI and other agencies did not know where the two suspects — Cheney’s office confirmed that he was referring to Nawaf Alhazmi and Khalid Almihdhar — were living in the United States and had missed numerous opportunities to track them down in the 20 months before the attacks, according to the Sept. 11 commission and other sources.

Posted January 31, 2006 9:29 pm

SOTU: Bush Falsely Claims That Previous Administration Did The Same Thing

Bush said: “Previous presidents have used the same constitutional authority I have.”

FACT – BUSH IGNORE THE LAW, OTHER ADMINISTRATIONS FOLLOWED IT: The White House has made this claim before and the [AP debunked it](#):

McClellan said the Clinton-Gore administration had engaged in warrantless physical searches, and he cited an FBI search of the home of CIA turncoat Aldrich Ames without permission from a judge. He said Clinton’s deputy attorney general, Jamie Gorelick, had testified before Congress that the president had the inherent authority to engage in physical searches without warrants.

“I think his hypocrisy knows no bounds,” McClellan said of Gore.

But at the time of the Ames search in 1993 and when Gorelick testified a year later, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act required warrants for electronic surveillance for intelligence purposes, but did not cover physical searches. The law was changed to cover physical searches in 1995 under legislation that Clinton supported and signed.

Posted January 31, 2006 9:29 pm

SOTU: Bush Did Not Inform Appropriate Members of Congress

Bush said: “Appropriate Members of Congress have been kept informed.”

FACT – BUSH BROKE THE LAW BY NOT INFORMING APPROPRIATE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: The non-partisan Congressional research service concluded that the Bush administration broke the law by not informing the full Intelligence Committees. The New York Times [reports](#):

A legal analysis by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service concludes that the Bush administration’s limited briefings for Congress on the National Security Agency’s domestic eavesdropping without warrants are “inconsistent with the law.”

Posted January 31, 2006 9:30 pm

SOTU: Bush Job Growth Lowest Since WWII

Bush said: “Tonight I will set out a better path – an agenda for a Nation that competes with confidence – an agenda that will raise standards of living and generate new jobs.”

FACT — JOB GROWTH UNDER BUSH LOWEST SINCE WORLD WAR II: Even since the 2003 tax cuts, job growth has been historically weak, growing at less than half the average rate for similar periods in comparable post-war recoveries. [Center for American Progress, State of the Economy, [1/26/06](#)]

FACT — FEDERAL SPENDING ON WORKER EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS LOW: Federal spending on employment and training for dislocated workers in 2005 was just \$1.5 billion, less

than the amount spent on highway aid and less than was spent in 2000 (\$1.6 billion), when the unemployment rate was lower. [Detroit Free Press, Bruce Katz Column, [1/23/06](#)]

FACT — WORKERS ARE LOSING PENSIONS: The share of workers with a pension declined from 50.3 percent in 2000 to 40.6 percent in 2004. [Congressional Research Service, [Pension Sponsorship and Participation](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:33 pm

SOTU: Tax Cuts Didn't Help Economy

Bush said: “In the last five years, the tax relief you passed has left 880 billion dollars in the hands of American workers, investors, small businesses, and families – and they have used it to help produce more than four years of uninterrupted economic growth.”

FACT — DEFICITS CAUSED BY TAX CUTS NEGATE ANY POTENTIAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS: Studies by the Joint Committee on Taxation (JTC), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Congressional Budget Office (CBO) all confirm that deficits undermine economic benefits of the cuts. In their analysis of the 2003 tax cuts, JTC found that any economic benefits of the tax cuts would “eventually likely to be outweighed by the reduction in national savings due to increasing Federal government deficits.” [American Progress, [1/26/05](#); CBO, [October 2005](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:34 pm

SOTU: Making Bush's Tax Cuts Permanent Would Be Costly

Bush said: “Because America needs more than a temporary expansion, we need more than temporary tax relief. I urge the Congress to act responsibly, and make the tax cuts permanent.”

FACT — TAX CUTS WILL COST \$3.4 TRILLION OVER TEN YEARS: The cost of making the tax cuts permanent will be \$3.4 trillion through fiscal year 2015. This includes the cost of extending the Alternative Minimum Tax relief associated with these tax cuts. [Congressional Budget Office, [1/26/06](#)]

FACT — PERMANENT TAX CUTS OVERWHELMINGLY FAVOR THE WEALTHIEST: If Bush's tax cuts are made permanent, the top one percent of households will gain an average of \$71,420 a year when the tax cuts are fully in effect. By contrast, people in the middle of the income spectrum would secure average tax cuts of just \$870. [Urban Institute-Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center, [12/20/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:35 pm

SOTU: Bush Has Overseen Massive Deficits

Bush said: “Keeping America competitive requires us to be good stewards of tax dollars.”

FACT– BUSH HAS PRESIDED OVER SUSTAINED, RECORD DEFICITS: In his 2002 State of the Union address, Bush promised that “our budget will run a deficit that will be small and short-term.” Bush has not kept his promise. The 2005 U.S. budget deficit was \$319 billion, the “third-largest ever.” Goldman Sachs predicts \$5 trillion in deficits over the next 10 years and Federal Chairman Alan Greenspan argued last April that “the federal budget is on an unsustainable path. ... Unless that trend is reversed, at some point these deficits would cause the economy to stagnate or worse.” [Bush, [2002 State of the Union](#); Fox News, [1/25/06](#); Center for American Progress, State of the Economy, [1/26/06](#); Alan Greenspan, [4/21/05](#)]

FACT — BUSH TAX CUTS WOULD WORSEN THE DEFICIT: The President’s tax cuts would only “expand the deficit over the next five years,” despite his promises to the contrary. [Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, [Press Myths](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:36 pm

[SOTU: Health Savings Accounts Fail To Provide Savings Or Address Costs](#)

Bush said: “We will strengthen Health Savings Accounts – by making sure individuals and small business employees can buy insurance with the same advantages that people working for big businesses now get.”

FACT — HSA USERS MORE LIKELY TO HAVE DIFFICULTY PAYING MEDICAL BILLS: Individuals with high-deductible insurance plans (HDHPs), which are mandatory with health savings accounts, are “more likely than those with traditional medical coverage to have difficulty paying their medical bills. Forty-nine percent of consumers with deductibles above \$500 per year wound up with outstanding medical debt, vs. 32% with regular coverage.” [WebMD Medical News, [1/27/05](#)]

FACT — HSA COST SAVINGS ARE ILLUSORY: HSAs are supposed to save costs by discouraging people from obtaining unnecessary health care. But about 70 percent of costs in the U.S. health system are for the top 10 percent most expensive people. These people’s costs are well above the deductible, and they usually require hospitalization or are chronically ill. A high deductible won’t change their behavior. [New Yorker, [8/29/05](#)]

FACT — HSA USERS PAY MORE OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS: According to one study, “more than two-fifths (42 percent) of individuals with HDHPs [high-deductible insurance plans] and 3 in 10 (31 percent) in CDHPs [”consumer-driven” health plans] spent 5 percent or more of their income on out-of-pocket costs plus premiums in the past year, compared with about 1 in 10 (12 percent) in comprehensive health plans.” [Commonwealth Fund/Employee Benefit Research Institute, [December 2005](#)]

FACT — HSA USERS MORE LIKELY TO AVOID, SKIP, OR DELAY HEALTH CARE BECAUSE OF COSTS: Individuals in health savings accounts were “significantly more likely to avoid, skip, or delay health care because of costs than were those with comprehensive insurance, with problems particularly pronounced among those with health problems or incomes under \$50,000.” Over 30 percent of individuals in these programs “reported delaying or avoiding care, compared with 17 percent of those in comprehensive health plans.” [Commonwealth Fund/Employee Benefit Research Institute, [December 2005](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:41 pm

SOTU: Dependence on Foreign Oil Has Increased Under Bush

Bush said: “Keeping America competitive requires affordable energy. Here we have a serious problem: America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world.”

FACT — BUSH HAS INCREASED DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL: Sixty-six percent of oil consumed in the United States comes from foreign sources, up from 58 percent in 2000. Americans now spend \$200,000 a minute on foreign oil and more than \$25 billion annually goes to Persian Gulf states for oil imports. [Energy Information Administration, [1/06](#); American Progress, [2004](#)]

FACT– BUSH ENERGY BILL WILL NOT REDUCE RELIANCE ON FOREIGN OIL: The energy bill signed and supported by President Bush “rejected a Senate provision that required reduction of oil consumption by one million barrels per day by 2015.” Under the bill, “our need for imported oil will continue to grow for as long as models are able to project.” [U.S. House Committee on Government Reform, [7/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:42 pm

SOTU: Bush Wanted Renewable Energy Cuts

Bush said: “The best way to break this addiction is through technology. Since 2001, we have spent nearly 10 billion dollars to develop cleaner, cheaper, more reliable alternative energy sources – and we are on the threshold of incredible advances.”

FACT — BUSH PUSHED FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY CUTS IN LATEST BUDGET: President Bush’s FY06 budget request for the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) energy efficiency and renewable energy programs envisioned “reductions totaling nearly \$50 million - an overall cut of roughly four percent.” [Renewable Energy Access, [2/28/05](#)]

FACT — BUSH REJECTED BIPARTISAN PLAN TO SET GOALS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY: Last year, President Bush “oppose[d] efforts to include a national renewable energy requirement for utilities in Congress’ broad energy legislation.” According to the Union of Concerned Scientists it “is a cost-effective, market-based policy that requires electric utilities to gradually increase their use of renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, and bioenergy,” to between 10 and 20 percent by 2020. A 10 percent standard “would have virtually no impact on electricity prices and could save consumers as much as \$13.2 billion.” [Reuters, [2/10/05](#); [Union of Concerned Scientists](#); [Union of Concerned Scientists](#)]

FACT — BUSH ENERGY BILL CONTAINED LITTLE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY: The energy bill supported and signed by President Bush dropped a provision that would have required utilities “to generate at least 10 percent of their electricity through renewable fuels by 2020.” [New York Times, [7/26/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:43 pm

SOTU: Bush Wanted Biofuel Cuts

Bush says: “The best way to break this [oil] addiction is through technology. ... We will also fund additional research in cutting-edge methods of producing ethanol, not just from corn but from wood chips, stalks, or switch grass. Our goal is to make this new kind of ethanol practical and competitive within six years.”

FACT — BUSH PUSHED FOR BIOFUELS CUTS IN LATEST BUDGET: In President Bush’s FY06 budget, “the RBS Renewable and Energy Efficiency Grant/Loan Guarantee Program would be scaled back to \$10 million from \$23 million in FY05, the NRCS Biomass Research and Development Program would be cut by \$2 million to \$12 million, and the CCC Bioenergy Program would be slashed \$40 million from \$100 million in FY05 to \$60 million in FY06.” [Renewable Energy Access, [2/28/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:43 pm

SOTU: Bush Has Cut Science Education Funding

Bush said: “We need to encourage children to take more math and science, and make sure those courses are rigorous enough to compete with other nations. We have made a good start in the early grades with the No Child Left Behind Act, which is raising standards and lifting test scores across our country. ... If we ensure that America’s children succeed in life, they will ensure that America succeeds in the world.”

FACT — BUSH PROPOSED FIRST CUT IN EDUCATION SPENDING IN A DECADE: Bush’s budget for FY 2006 proposed the “first cut in overall federal education spending in a decade.” The administration requested a reduction of a half billion dollars, or 0.9 percent, from the current spending plan. [Washington Post, [2/7/05](#)]

FACT — SCIENCE EDUCATION HAS SUFFERED UNDER BUSH’S TERM: No Child Left Behind has actually hurt science education, by testing exclusively on math and reading. Some “teachers are being told to stop teaching science and get back to reading and math,” complains Gerald Wheeler, executive director of the National Science Teachers Association. [Business Week, [3/16/04](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:46 pm

SOTU: Media Reported Bush Would Focus Speech On Health Care; Only 1 Paragraph Devoted To It

Bush devoted only one paragraph to the topic of health care.

Media Erroneously Claimed Bush Would Focus His State of the Union On Health Care:

“Health care will be the centerpiece of the White House’s domestic agenda for 2006. In Tuesday’s State of the Union, the president will focus on rising health costs, with more detailed policy announcements to follow in the weeks ahead.” [Weekly Standard, [2/6/06](#)]

“The State of the Union address this year is to focus on health care, illegal immigration and the nation’s international economic competitiveness.” [NYT, [1/30/06](#)]

“President Bush’s State of the Union address will attempt to shift focus from the polarizing war in Iraq to a more popular domestic priority: taming health care costs.” [AP, [1/19/06](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:49 pm

SOTU: The Bush Administration Has Betrayed The Public Trust

Bush said: “Each of us has made a pledge to be worthy of public responsibility – and that is a pledge we must never forget, never dismiss, and never betray.”

FACT – BUSH HAS REFUSED TO COOPERATE IN LEAK INVESTIGATION: Bush reportedly knew about Karl Rove’s role in the leak investigation two years ago, yet has not come public with the information, despite his repeated promises “to get to the bottom of this.” [NY Daily News, [10/19/05](#); Washington Post, [9/30/03](#)]

FACT — BUSH ADMINISTRATION IS STONEWALLING ON ABRAMOFF CONTACTS: The White House continues to stonewall on Jack Abramoff’s contacts with the administration. President Bush refuses to release records of meetings and photos with Abramoff, which Bush has confirmed do exist. A growing bipartisan list of lawmakers have called for the White House to come clean. [White House, [1/26/06](#); Los Angeles Times, [1/30/06](#)]

FACT — BUSH HAS STRONG CONNECTIONS TO INDICTED CONSERVATIVES: Bush’s election campaign has received over \$100,000 in campaign contributions from guilty lobbyist Jack Abramoff and halted a federal investigation into Abramoff’s activities in Guam. Two of Bush’s administration officials — Scooter Libby and David Safavian — have also been indicted and are no longer in serving in federal office. Rep. Tom DeLay, who had to step down in Sept. 2005 as Majority Leader on criminal charges, has been a critical ally to President Bush in pushing his agenda. [Washington Post, [1/5/06](#); Los Angeles Times, [8/7/05](#); Washington Post, [9/20/05](#); CNN, [9/29/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:53 pm

SOTU: The Bush Administration Continues To Bungle Katrina Reconstruction

Bush said: “A hopeful society comes to the aid of fellow citizens in times of suffering and emergency – and stays at it until they are back on their feet.”

FACT — KATRINA RECONSTRUCTION HAS BEEN SLOW AND BUNGLED: “[I]n certain respects, little has changed” in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina, according to the Wall Street Journal. Only one-fifth of the city’s original population has resettled. “The Crescent City largely has shriveled to ‘the sliver by the river,’ as residents now call the thin ribbon of neighborhoods near the Mississippi River that didn’t flood,” and “neighborhoods still are abandoned wastelands of uninhabitable homes and sidewalks piled with moldy garbage.” [WSJ, [1/13/06](#); AP, [1/12/06](#)]

FACT — ADMINISTRATION REJECTED RECONSTRUCTION PLAN: The White House rejected a Louisiana reconstruction plan — the “most broadly supported plan for rebuilding communities,” and instead backed \$6.2 billion in block grants that Congress provided last year, which Rep. Richard Baker (R-LA) called “unacceptable.” [Times-Picayune, [1/25/06](#); New York Times, [1/30/06](#)]

FACT — KATRINA RECONSTRUCTION FUNDING HAS BEEN TAINTED BY POLITICS: The \$29 billion in aid passed last month was tainted by politics: the package “gave Mississippi about five times as much per household in housing aid as Louisiana received,” a “testimony to the clout” of Bush’s political ally, Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour (R). [New York Times, [1/5/06](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:54 pm

SOTU: Poverty Has Worsened Under Bush

Bush said: “In New Orleans and in other places, many of our fellow citizens have felt excluded from the promise of our country.”

FACT — POVERTY RATES HAVE INCREASED UNDER BUSH: The poverty rate has risen each year since 2001, with 12.7 percent of the population now living in poverty. African-American poverty has risen from 22.7 percent in 2001 to 24.7 percent in 2004, and child poverty has gone from 16.3 percent in 2001 to 17.8 percent (1.3 million children under the age of 18). [U.S. Census Bureau, Aug. 2005, [Tables B-1 and B-2](#)]

FACT — BUSH TAX CUTS TARGETED AT HIGH-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS: The tax bills enacted since 2001 “have helped high-income households far more than other households,” according to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. Households with incomes exceeding \$1 million have received average tax cuts of \$103,000, “an increase of 5.4 percent in their after-tax income.” But in 2005, the bottom fifth of households “will receive an average combined tax cut of \$18 from these bills, raising their after-tax income by 0.3 percent.” [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [10/17/05](#)]

Posted January 31, 2006 9:55 pm

SOTU: The White House Is Set To Repeat Its Mistakes After Katrina

Bush said: “As we recover from a disaster, let us also work for the day when all Americans are protected by justice, equal in hope, and rich in opportunity.”

FACT — WHITE HOUSE STONEWALLING KATRINA INVESTIGATIONS: Congressional investigations into the administration’s inadequate response to Katrina have stalled because the “Bush White House is now refusing to turn over Hurricane Katrina related documents or make senior officials available for testimony.” [MSNBC, [1/26/06](#)]

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