

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 20, 2006

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301


Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

We write today to express our deep concern regarding the Administration's hiring practices in the immediate aftermath of the military intervention in Iraq and during the initial stages of reconstruction. We call your attention to the book *Imperial Life in the Emerald City*, released yesterday by Rajiv Chandrasekaran, which paints a shocking picture of the questionable hiring practices carried out by Department of Defense officials during the critical 14-month period that the Coalition Provision Authority (CPA) ran Iraq's government. We believe these hiring practices contributed heavily to the waste, fraud and abuse that took place during this critical period, including the loss of \$9 billion in reconstruction funds.


In his book, Mr. Chandrasekaran chronicles the stories of numerous senior CPA employees who were hired by the Department of Defense not because they were qualified but because they expressed simple loyalty to the President. According to Mr. Chandrasekaran, the lead Pentagon official in charge of hiring "sought resumes from the offices of Republican congressmen, conservative think tanks and GOP activists," sometimes requiring candidates to pass a political litmus test on issues wholly unrelated to the Iraq effort. Among the candidates to make it through this dubious process were a 24-year old with no finance experience who was put in charge of the Baghdad Stock Exchange and a social worker with ties to a prominent Republican governor who was tasked with rehabilitating Iraq's healthcare system. Not surprisingly but regrettably, one CPA staffer was quoted as saying to a reporter over lunch: "I'm not here for the Iraqis, I'm here for George Bush."

It is difficult to understand how this sort of overt cronyism serves our nation, our troops, or the Iraqi people. There should be an independent investigation by the Department's Inspector General of the Department's hiring practices during this critical period, which addresses what role the officials mentioned in the article may have played in the loss of \$9 billion. In addition, we encourage you to discipline the appropriate officials under your command, so that the American people can rest assured that this sort of abuse will never happen again.

Sincerely,



STENY H. HOYER
House Democratic Whip



HENRY A. WAXMAN
Ranking Democrat
House Committee on Government Reform