

JUNE 8, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY: BUSH ADMINISTRATION MISSTATEMENT OF THE DAY -
DEFENSE SECRETARY RUMSFELD**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued "The Bush Administration Misstatement of the Day" on Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

The Bush Administration continues to support Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld even though he "is under fire for the prisoner abuse scandal and his treatment of the uniformed military at the Pentagon." (Washington Post, June 6, 2004)

For example, Vice President Dick Cheney labeled him "the best secretary of defense the United States has ever had," and that "people ought to get off his case and let him do his job." (May 8, 2004) And President Bush praised Rumsfeld as "a strong Secretary of Defense," adding that he is "doing a superb job." (May 10, 2004)

However, conservative Fox News Channel host Bill O'Reilly disagrees with the Bush Administration's assessment of Secretary Rumsfeld's performance. O'Reilly writes in his June 4, 2004 column:

"Clearly, something is very wrong when inexperienced, poorly trained military reservists are allowed to run wild and abuse prisoners. Clearly, something is wrong when enormous mistakes are made in the occupation of a country whose defeat was a foregone conclusion. I mean everybody knew the USA would defeat Saddam, so why was the aftermath of the war so screwed up? Is this another intelligence failure? Is this a strategic failure on the part of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his team? We don't know because Mr. Bush rarely holds anyone publicly accountable for doing his or her job poorly." O'Reilly concludes, "Enough with the chaos and foolish mistakes like Abu Ghraib. Clean house, Mr. President. There are smart, tough and experienced people who realize what's at stake here. Find them and protect us."