

A Reader Says

Chabot's claims unsubstantiated

In his never-ending quest for political office, Paul Chabot once again (as he did so often in his debate with now-Congressman Pete Aguilar last October) throws out unsubstantiated claims about President Obama's foreign policy in the belief, like propagandists of yore, throwing out such canards without proof somehow gives them the seal of accuracy when, in actuality, they show that Chabot is much more interested in scoring political points with the Tea Party than in engaging others with solid evidence about his less-than-valid ideas.

Thus in a recent letter to this newspaper ("Foreign policy important in next election," July 13) he made the surprising and false claim that "America won in Iraq and Obama lost it, period."

I was one of millions who saw President Bush make the wholly false statement on an aircraft carrier that we had succeeded in achieving our goals in Iraq. "Mission Accomplished." Even Jeb Bush now admits that we should not have gone into Iraq knowing (or re-

ally, not knowing) what we now know were the false premises on which Bush sent thousands of troops who would spend over a decade and billions of dollars on a goal which our leaders either knew could not be accomplished or, worse, told falsehoods to the American public, i.e, that we could and would make Iraq a democratic and stable country.

When we look at Iraq now, a country that lacks any kind of stability and is riven by Shia and Sunni killing one another for sectarian gain, and a country in which many parts are in the control of ISIS, (a group, by the way, that came about because, in part, the U.S. failed to bring Shia, Sunni and the Kurds together), to claim, as does candidate Chabot, that President Obama is responsible for these problems is to deny the realities that came about after we deposed the dictator but failed to bring all the groups that make up Iraq to work together for the betterment of its government.

Chabot goes on to talk about President Obama's failure to put American "boots on the ground," an idea that is opposed not only by a majority of Americans, (to the tune of at

least 55 percent according to a recent poll), but by the Department of Defense and our nation's military leaders. Though some contenders for the presidency want Americans to fight (again) in Iraq, (one being Donald "Mexicans are rapists" Trump), even such hawks as candidate Lindsey Graham use caution in this regard.

Candidate Chabot is circumspect when talking about this possibility and just takes gratuitous whacks at a president who realizes that we should not rush headlong into every area in which our ideals are threatened but must carefully calculate when and where to put American "boots on the ground."

Finally, though the candidate seems to be in favor of the use of American troops in the Middle East, I would ask if he thinks that our armed forces are up to this task, since he said in the debate with now-Congressman Pete Aguilar last October that "we do not have the strongest military anymore," a point of view which would be challenged by many analysts who believe that we have the strongest fighting forces in the world.

— Donald L. Singer, Redlands