Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman, I hadn’t planned on making an

opening statement. I will be very brief, but in light of some of the

things that I have heard from some of my friends across the aisle,

I just want to say very briefly that much of the blame is now being

heaped upon the Bush Administration for the difficulties that we

see ourselves face with respect to North Korea, and I think it is

very important to keep in mind that the previous Administration

and the agreement that they reached, I think, is one of the principle

reasons that we find ourselves in this dilemma.

I think when Jimmy Carter has gone over there, just as he has

gone in many other parts of the world to try to make things better,

it has ultimately resulted in making them one heck of a lot worse

than they were before he got there.

I was at the demilitarized zone awhile back and talked with an

awful lot of high-ranking officials, both Americans and South Koreans,

and I oftentimes hear this comparison of our action in Iraq

and Afghanistan and a so-called lack of reaction to what is perceived

as a greater threat in North Korea.

I think one thing one has to take into consideration is that North

Korea has thousands of artillery pieces in the mountains, within

about 30 miles of Seoul, South Korea, which could essentially,

within a matter of a couple of days, kill hundreds of thousands,

possibly millions of people and lay Seoul in ruins.

That is a factor that we have to take into consideration. That is

a very serious situation. I think the Administration, whereas not

perfect in the way they have handled this, has handled it with

great care and with considerable attention.

I do agree with one of the things that my friend Mr. Sherman

mentioned with respect to pressuring China. I think that is one

thing that we need to do a lot more of, because they are the key

to this and we absolutely have to have their cooperation, because

they are the one country that can pressure North Korea and anything

that we can do to put pressure, and if it does affect business

here, then so be it.

I would be pleased to discuss that particular aspect of his statement

with him and work and cooperate and perhaps move forward

on that particular issue. Thank you.

Let me just say one other thing. I think the President was absolutely

right in naming the so-called ‘‘Axis of Evil,’’ just as Ronald

Reagan was correct in calling the former Soviet Union the ‘‘Evil

Empire,’’ and we are seeing that right now.

I would say perhaps we might want to add Syria to that list. I

yield back the balance of my time.