Mr. Speaker, I first want to praise the gentleman for his

continuing efforts in this often, and previously, ignored region of the

world. He has been an expert in Russia for a long time. I believe he

said 33 different trips to Russia, someone who is a familiar face

there, who will go nose to nose with the Russians, and at the same time

the Russians know he will be back again and again and again. He is our

friend while he is also arguing with us.

I have watched the gentleman practice that in tough negotiations with

Russia and prepare himself for the other types of things that he has

been working with in this troubled region of the world.

He has spent time in the Ukraine, in Georgia. His commitment to

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and the so-called ``Stans'' was there long

before we had the focus in the recent post-9/11 issues. The gentleman

was interested in this for a long time since the Republicans came into

control in Congress and even before that in his career.

His efforts in North Korea. He has been in the world hot spots before

they were known as the world hot spots; therefore, the particular trip

that we were able to do, as the gentleman has explained tonight, we

cannot overstate the gentleman's role and the connections and how these

things are connected.

Because the gentleman is involved in the energy, he got to know

Mohammar Khadafi's son, who would enable us to get into places we were

never able to get in and help facilitate the breakthrough that we are

having in Libya. The gentleman deserves that credit. No matter how many

times it is said, the fact remains that we were able to get into places

that we were not able to get into, that Americans would not have been

able to get into had the gentleman not been spending a lot longer than

just the most recent time, but time way before that. I thank the

gentleman very much for that.

Let me kind of reinforce a couple of things that the gentleman said.

First, I would like to start with Libya because there were many of us,

and let me just in my little piece that I got to say to the leader, Mr.

Khadaffi, it was very clear. I said, look, I am a fundamentalist

Christian. I am a strong supporter of Israel. I am one of your critics.

But at the same time, and I did not particularly like some of the

things he was claiming to be, this great democracy and how great

socialism was working. We did not agree. But he said it in a debating

type of way, probably a little nicer than some of the debate we had

here earlier this evening. It was a good discussion. He seems to want

to start to communicate.

While I found some of the things he said offensive or in

disagreement, the bottom line is he took a huge step to open up a

country that was previously and still is on our terrorist list, that

may be networking; and those of us who have seen all sorts of

classified things know we have Libyan suspects all over the world for

potential networks suspects. If he shuts this down, if he shuts this

nuclear development down, look, I am willing to sit through a few

lectures. I am willing to talk. If somebody can be moved off the

terrorist list, if somebody can be moved off the nuclear list, we can

sit down and talk. It does not mean that we are apologizing or that we

are agreeing with past things. Okay. What is done is done.

If we have a chance at a time when we are under assault all over the

world to find a friend who wants to fight al Qaeda, who wants to take

on bin Laden, who wants to dismantle, and on the whole I would just as

soon they did health research and tried to figure out how to put their

nuclear research into desalinization of water. They want our help to

try to figure out how to get more water in Libya so they can irrigate.

And that is a lot better than developing bombs to blow up our people.

His comment that you referred to where he said, we do not know much

about Libya, partly we will never know that much about Libya. And some

of it was rhetoric and frustration we hear all around the world. But

you know what, we did just not know much about Libya. I love to study

history. We did not know hardly anything about Libya. Apparently, our

government does not either.

They were telling the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Weldon) that

we cannot land there. We do not know how we will be received. They will

be hostile. There will be no press coverage. And we landed, and there

is not any other way to state this, it was the friendliest place I've

even been on a CODEL.

Everybody was so excited to see us. Once the leader said, this is

okay, all this Americanism is pouring out. The gentleman mentioned the

university. They want to get our education. The 38 of the top 40 people

have been educated in America. The U.S.-Libyan Friendship Society,

there is hundreds of people waiting 3 hours to have lunch with a few

Congressmen.

The excitement of the whole trip there, you go, something is a

disconnect. We do not understand. And at one of the dinners where the

Libyan husband of an American citizen asked me, Are you guys over here

just to tick off the French? And I said, What? I said, I hate to be an

ignorant American here, but why would we be ticking off the French? He

said, You do not understand. In North Africa, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria,

the French and the Italians are viewed as the occupiers. The Americans

came in World War II and liberated us. We like America. And I am

thinking, no, no, these are the guys that hate us.

It is not that we just do not know much about Libya; we do not know

anything. We had it backwards. If they

are willing to work with us, hey, look, it is trust but verify. They

could have taken us into a nuclear facility.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Weldon) knew more than I did

because he has been to Russia so many times, he goes, oh, that is a

Russian system. Were you working with this university? Were you working

with that university? It is clear that the pressure that President

Reagan put on communism to get the fall of the Berlin Wall and the

change in Russia meant that it also dried up a lot of the assistance

they were getting in Libya. And then they had to go into the market to

pick up a few things. That knowledge, while the gentleman knows a lot,

quite frankly, he said repeatedly, look, there is only so much we can

do. The President makes these decisions. We can input. We can help once

it goes through, how to put these plans together, but the bottom line

is we want nuclear scientists to look at their nuclear facilities. We

want experts to verify what we have heard.

What we see is they need it economically. His son, who is the next

potential leader, wants to change the country. He is being schooled at

the London School of Economics. When you go into Tunisia, you can see

the differences between there and Libya. So can all their people next

door. They have reasons to want to change. He does not want to be

caught in a spider hole like Saddam was.

All the evidence suggests that this is real. What the chairman said,

to go up to Libya, was a huge breakthrough. The administration is

moving rapidly and this may be one of the biggest things in our life

time that saves lots. And it is much to the gentleman's credit, and it

was a great stop in Libya.

I only want to mention one thing about Iraq because I agree with

everything the gentleman has stated about that, from everything to

morale to others; but I supported and the gentleman mentioned about

getting General Dayton in here and the weapons of mass destruction,

trying to understand that the consultants somehow got more high profile

than the people that are actually running the weapons of mass

destruction program, that there are multiple directions here; but what

I wanted to comment on particularly was the spider hole itself.

It taught me something else with this that I have been trying to

communicate back home as well. That hole was not very big. I am not a

particularly big person, maybe a little overweight but not that much,

but I did not fit into the hole very well. The bigger you were, the

tighter it was. The taller you were, the tighter it was. It was a very

small hole.

What we heard was that there was inside information, we had already

been to that farm twice looking for it, looking for him. Saw nothing.

Then inside information, not voluntarily given, told them where it was.

They went in with Special Forces and still did not find it. Found a

different hole. Then they had to go back and get a drawn map to go.

First off, if you think of the hole as very small and the part where

he would go down into basically like a casket with a higher ceiling,

there was not much room when you got down in there. You could not move

barely at all.

No wonder he was disoriented. If he had American troops tromping

around above him while they are making several visits with a little

tube going down, he was probably getting very little oxygen, it was

dark, there was no food, it is not like it is a lighted well-structured

cell. It was a little dirt box that he was in. And if it is that hard

by the time they put the grass over the top of it and something over

the top of that, there was no way even Special Forces with a map could

find it. Put this in the context of weapons of mass destruction.

If you cannot find Saddam when you have a map from his top staffers,

and you have your top forces searching for it with a map and it takes

you two runs, we may never find some of this stuff. Just because we do

not find it does not mean it does not exist. We have already proven it

was worthwhile to go in there because they were clearly developing.

The other thing was in going down to the Believer's Palace at the

bottom, when we went down and saw the supposed place where he would

feed back all this stuff to us and we were one of the first groups, I

believe they had just opened up the basement there, and you saw the

ability to put 200 of his special guards and his cabinet and himself in

there. What we saw was not only the masks that you always hear about,

chemical and biological masks, but they had controls on the wall for

different types of chemical and biological weapons to control the air

systems and other things. This guy was not preparing for conventional

war.

Whether he was preparing now or a year from now or 2 years from now

may be debated, but he was getting ready to fight an unconventional

war.

In Afghanistan, which was one of my primary goals to talk again to

President Karzai, who I met here as well as the former King, about

narcotics. Afghan heroin is again flooding the market. We have major

obligations here with Afghanistan. As the King said in Rome, the

gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Weldon) took the first delegation in.

We followed shortly after that, and the King told me at that time, we

used to grow all sorts of crops where they now do poppy, and

Afghanistan is often remembered when there is trouble, but then you

forget us because we are a poor country that gets run over by all the

major powers. My people are hungry.

I have never seen a country without a middle class or even nice

hotels. It was a suburb of hell, quite frankly, in Kabul. They need

help. Yet at the same time, I think 85 percent of the people turned out

in a recent election even though al Qaeda was threatening to kill them.

They are excited. They have a multiparty system, multi-candidates

running.

We have to figure out how to get them off the heroin because their

farmers are not making that much from heroin. It is going to middle

men. And these middle men that are making the money are often tied to

the terrorist networks. They use narcotics, human trafficking and other

illegal substances to fund it. So what I was trying to explain and

President Karzai has been helpful, the general, the nephew I think of

the King, said that we need Special Forces, Afghani Special Forces to

go in after the heroin because the RPGs and the bombs and the suicide

bombers are getting funded in Afghanistan largely by the fact that when

the heroin poppy goes into market, that money then gets to middle men

who take that money to buy armaments and to build al Qaeda and other

terrorist networks around the world.

It is a very close link between drugs and terrorism, a very close

link to reestablishing the control in Afghanistan. They have the will.

They are turning out to vote at greater rates than we are. They are

excited about the freedom. Women have their first freedom. We have an

American-educated leader who really is dynamic in what he wants to do

in Afghanistan, a King who has shown his commitment for 40 years and

then transferring it to democratic power there.

I was hopeful for Afghanistan even though it is a very tough country

that has been abused by every major power through world history for

hundreds and hundreds of years. This was an eye-opening trip. It was a

tremendous privilege to be allowed on it.

I commend the gentleman for leading a breakthrough in Libya, major

steps in Iraq, and showing the courage to go into Afghanistan even when

people were telling us, the day we were still going in, do not go in

there. It is not safe right now; we went in. President Karzai was able

to go in front of his media and say, look, the Americans are here. They

are backing us up. They are not bailing out just because two suicide

bombers hit us in the last few days and somebody hit an ammunition

dump. We are not retreating. This is real. It is not just the

President; it is the Congress that is behind you.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership.