Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman very much.

We all intended to come down to the floor tonight and speak about

Iraq and the successes that are taking place in that region, having

been there myself, planning to go back there in August again on behalf

of the committee.

But I do think attention needs to be drawn, as my good friend, the

gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Hoekstra) and the chairman have already

alluded to, the fact that the information that was provided to most of

us today and some last night that Sandy Berger has in fact admitted

that he did take information out of a secure area.

It has already been alluded to that we can take notes while we are in

an area looking at specific Top Secret information, but we by no means

are allowed to take any of that information out, much less the notes

that we make to take out, and the facts that are coming to light now

that he apparently used his jackets, his pants and possibly his socks.

And I would tell my good friend that I understand today that while they

all were original documents, there may, in fact, have been three

different drafts of a single document that were there. And apparently,

Mr. Berger went back and got all three drafts of that particular

document. For what reason, I do not know.

Exactly, and I think that the additional

question that needs to be asked, and apparently now the presumed

Democratic nominee, Mr. Kerry has accepted Mr. Berger's resignation as

his national security adviser in regards to his political campaign.

Interestingly enough, I think it should have been the reverse. I

think that the good Senator probably should have immediately, once he

found out what was going on, should in fact asked Mr. Berger to step

aside instead of waiting for Mr. Berger to make that decision. Again, I

think it shows a lack of leadership on the Senator's side in regards to

how he would handle an issue in regards to Top Secret information.

I would be glad to yield to our chairman.

And I appreciate the chairman's remarks, and

in

fact, President Bush has been working diligently, as the chairman

knows, for months and months trying to rebuild that Intelligence

Community that has been decimated so terribly.

Looking for that great peace dividend that was out there and slashing

the intelligence budget was a foolish thing to do, and we now see, and

in fact people are telling us, that it will take 1, 2, 3, maybe 5

years, in order to rebuild that human intelligence. You do not just

rely on all of the whiz-bang things that we have now and the great ways

that we have to gather intelligence, but you certainly have to take the

opportunity to get the human intelligence.

But what bothers me even more is the fact that it appears that the

information that Mr. Berger took out of that Top Secret room in that

area where he should not have taken anything out of that room possibly

dealt with very credible information in regards to our vulnerability at

airports and seaports and what was going on in those general areas; and

I think it is very coincidental, at best, that Mr. Kerry, Senator

Kerry's advertisements, as he has been running for the Democratic

nomination and has in fact been beating on our President time and time

again, have in fact been homed in on our vulnerability at our airports

and our seaports. And I am just concerned as to what Mr. Berger did

with the information once he removed it from that Top Secret classified

room and took it supposedly to his home, who may have seen it, who

gained from the information that was there; and in fact, is there any

type of tie that can be made to the campaign of Mr. Kerry, because it

is beginning to appear we have a very convoluted web at this point in

regards to some of the issues that the Senator has been raising.

I understand that it was not just papers that

were taken, but there possibly were bound books or folders of some type

that you, in fact, could not just crunch up as a bunch of papers. You

would know, in fact, that you were disposing of them; and you had to do

it deliberately, if, in fact, you did dispose of it.

So to say that it was sloppy and inadvertent kind of stretches the

imagination. But, of course, a lot of this has been done in this House

over recent months, unfortunately; and it is being done out on the

campaign trail, so it is certainly to be expected.

I thank the Chairman. I would say that all

indications, I think for most Members, they would say that Baghdad is

returning to normal. Yes, there still are some problems. We see them on

a daily basis, but the fact of the matter is children are attending new

schools, new universities, playgrounds are up. Children are actually

going there. Their parents feel comfortable to allow them to go. Where

the statue of Saddam Hussein was pulled down some 15 months ago in

Firdos Square, adults are sitting around playing games of bingo.

Now, that sounds pretty silly, but the fact of the matter is if you

are comfortable enough to sit on the ground or under the shade of a

tree and play bingo, things are getting back to normal.

At the northern end of Iraq in Mosul, security forces are in almost

total control up there. It has been divided into sectors. They have

been going house to house, neighborhood to neighborhood; and they have

got a lot of insurgents out and a lot of weapons caches there in that

area to make sure our troops and coalition forces remain safe. We have

thwarted hundreds of different types of IED attacks on our troops. On

the banks of the Tigress River I would say that nightlife is returning

to normal as well.

You look in the background of all of these TV scenes that you see of

some of the car bombs that are exploded and burning. If you look in the

very back, you will see that traffic is moving and progress is still

going on. Commerce is taking place. People are walking in the streets.

Certainly the target is coalition forces. And recently we have seen

where they have begun to target those members of the coalition that

have the smallest numbers of troops because it makes them easy for them

to pull out by going in and taking some of their people captive and

holding them hostage and threatening to cut their heads off. Of course,

the press might show that for maybe 1 or 2 days on television, but they

are going to over and over and over again show the fact of our troops

and the coalition forces that are being killed.

It goes back, I think, to the old adage, and I hate to be overly

descriptive of this but I am a journalism major. And I can tell you

that one of the things we learned, if it bleeds, it leads. That is

exactly what the press want to do right now is to continue to try to

turn the American situation or the American feelings and opinions

against what is going on. Our opponents know that. They have been

working it.

Saddam Hussein is not a dumb man. He had his people well prepared,

and he thought that the American citizens and the coalition forces

would be so afraid when these things started that we would pull out,

and leave or we would be willing to give in to whatever demands that he

may actually put out there. And that, in fact, is not what is

happening.

President Bush has been very strong in his resolve. I will never

forget, totally different subject, but I had an opportunity to travel

to North Korea over a year ago. When we were in North Korea, the North

Koreans absolutely could not understand why this American Commander in

Chief would not negotiate with them. They were used to dealing with the

Clinton administration who would give them whatever they asked for in

order to keep the peace.

Now, the things that have been welling up inside and swelling up for

so long have come to pass. We have had 9/11. We have had attacks on our

soil. President Bush is doing whatever he can to make sure that does

not happen in the United States again on our own soil, making sure that

we take the war to the terrorists where they live and root them out,

and it is not going to happen over night. I mean, Saddam Hussein ruled

for over 25 years. Longer than Tojo was in Japan. Longer than Hitler

was in power in his time in Germany.

So the fact of the matter is for years Saddam Hussein ruled. He

killed the Kurds in the north and those in the south, and we are

continuing to try to root out those people in whatever hole they may

have climbed into.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say I think a little

perspective probably needs to be added to some of the discussions

tonight, and I would imagine there is not a person that looks at that

hollow Manhattan skyline that does not think of the Twin Towers and

where they stood. There are some that remember before the towers were

ever built. Certainly, there are those that now know the towers were

there and one day something will be built in its place, but I say this

just to say that it is far easier to destroy something than it is to

rebuild it. And rebuild is, in fact, what America and the coalition

forces have been doing in Iraq and in Afghanistan as well, but tonight,

we are mostly focused on Iraq.

Our military forces have been engaged in a very complex not only war

on terror, but also the process of going through and rebuilding. They

have been looking for weapons of mass destruction. We keep hearing

people saying that it is a failure because the weapons of mass

destruction have not been found.

I am more concerned because of the fact that they have not been

found. Where are they? We know that they existed at one point. We know

that Saddam Hussein used them on his own people. We have not found them

yet. David Kay said, all we are looking for from a biological

standpoint is a vial that is about this big and a two-car garage-size

building that could hold 500 chemical warheads in a country, as you

have already related, the size of California.

We are working on restoring basic public services: electricity,

water, sewer. We hear some on the other side say, we went in and we

broke it. We did not break it. It was already broken, but what is

happening out of all of this is something that I think is truly

revolutionary, and that is, the verge of democracy breaking out in an

Arab region.

The fact of the matter is, Iraq now has a new government. They are

preparing for election, but of course, the press does not want to tell

the positive story that is there to be told. They want to continue to

focus, as you have already said, on those car crashes in a loop over

and over again, those burning cars. They want to focus on those lives

that have been lost, and we are all focused on the lives that have been

lost.

Not a single Member of this Congress does not mourn the loss of an

American military man or woman, nor a Coalition force person; but the

fact of the matter is, they are doing again, as the chairman has

adequately stated tonight, very, very difficult work in a difficult

region and in an area where people want to kill us. We are the enemy to

them, and we understand that, and the soldiers that are there and the

Marines that are there know they are there to do a job.

A great number of individuals have chosen to travel to Iraq. Some

have not been yet, but they want to go to Iraq, and they are working on

scheduling trips over there. And when they sit down and they talk with

the soldiers, bar none, every one of them will tell them they are there

for the right reason. They have, in fact, been welcomed as liberators.

They have had the arms

of young Iraqi children, men and women around their neck thanking them,

hugging them for what they have done relieving them of the brutal

regime of Saddam Hussein; and now we are helping, along with the

Coalition forces, to rebuild their country.