Mr. Speaker, today, I am joined in this special order

by my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Pence). As my

colleague from California just indicated, we come to the floor of the

House recognizing the tragedy of the terrorist attacks in Spain. We are

not quite sure who was responsible, but we know there was a significant

loss of life.

We know that Spain has been an ally in the war on terrorism. Their

soldiers have fought with our troops in Iraq. Their prime minister was

here a couple of months ago indicating their strong support and their

partnership, whether it was al-Qaeda, whether it was domestic

terrorism, or whatever.

But we join in expressing our sympathy to the government and the

people of Spain for the loss that they suffered today and reaffirm our

commitment to the people of Spain that we will continue to work and

fight with them in this war on terrorism that in so many different ways

has reared its ugly head not only in Spain, the United States, but in

Africa, in Saudi Arabia, and with the USS Cole and a number of other

attacks throughout the world.

Today, we want to talk a little bit about the situation that has gone

on in Iraq and kind of put that in context. We have recognized this war

on terrorism. We have recognized the threats from Saddam Hussein and

others for a long period of time. It was back in 1992 that Senator Gore

was talking about what a threat Saddam Hussein and Iraq was.

Here is a quote from a speech he gave in 1992. Senator Al Gore:

``He,'' meaning Saddam Hussein, ``had already launched poison gas

attacks repeatedly, and Bush looked the other way. He had already

conducted extensive terrorism activities, and Bush looked

the other way. He was already deeply involved in the efforts to obtain

nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Bush knew it,

but he looked the other way. Well, in my view,'' and the ``my'' was

Senator Gore, ``the Bush administration was acting in a manner directly

opposite to what you would expect with all the evidence it had

available to it at the time. Saddam Hussein's nature and intentions

were perfectly visible.''

Already in 1992, Senator Gore had identified Saddam Hussein and Iraq

as a threat to American Security and to the security of the Middle East

and as a danger to his own people. And I think that goes on to

President Clinton, who, during the 1990s, identified Saddam Hussein and

Iraq as a threat. And I think my colleague from Indiana may have some

of the statements that President Clinton was making.

This is not to say what should or not have been in the 1990s, this is

saying that through the last 10 to 15 years we knew Saddam was a

threat.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Indiana.

Mr. Speaker, what we know is through the 1990s, there

was a consensus that there was a war on terrorism that was being

fought, that there were issues dealing with Iraq and dealing with

Saddam Hussein. It was not only the President; it was the Clinton

administration. Madeleine Albright said ``Hussein's weapons will not

discriminate if and when they are used, and therefore it is important

for the region to understand that he is a threat.''

In September 1998 she said, ``Our adversaries are likely to avoid

traditional battlefield situations because there American dominance is

well-established. We must be concerned instead about weapons of mass

destruction and by the cowardly instruments of sabotage and hidden

bombs. These unconventional threats endanger not only our Armed Forces,

but all Americans and America's friends everywhere.'' That is September

9, 1998.

So the threat of weapons of mass destruction, but most importantly

the larger threat not specifically identifying what terrorist

organizations would use, but recognizing the emergence of a different

kind of threat to American, to Western Europe as the Cold War collapsed

of unconventional threats that would endanger not military folks, but

that would target civilians.

Mr. Speaker, I think the quotes go well on to other

folks in 2000. So this is a continuing story of intelligence. As we

move through this process, on a bipartisan basis, this is what we

believed the threat was to the United States. One of the things that we

are going to focus on here today, not what we think about here in

Washington, when we put this in context, we will talk about the threat

that Saddam Hussein was, not to America, not to the Middle East, but

most importantly to his own people.

Mr. Speaker, during much of the 1990s this was done on

a bipartisan basis, which is maybe different than what we see today;

but here is Vice President Gore talking on May 23, 2000: ``The classic

challenges of war and peace, of course, extend beyond Israel's

immediate neighborhoods to Iraq and Iran. In 1991, I broke with many in

my own party and voted to use force to stop Saddam Hussein's aggression

in the Middle East. I believe in bipartisanship most of all when our

national interests are at stake.'' Going on, he wants to build

bipartisan bridges to bring Democrats and Republicans together in

support of policies that would promote what is in our Nation's best

interest.

As my colleague has gone through and read some of the quotes, there

was a bipartisan understanding about Iraq and the threat that it posed.

Here again is Al Gore, the Vice President, in May of 2000: ``Despite

our swift victory and our efforts since, there is no doubt in my mind

that Saddam Hussein still seeks to amass weapons of mass destruction.

You know as well as I do that as long as Saddam Hussein stays in power,

there can be no comprehensive peace for the people of Israel or the

people of the Middle East.''

One of many palaces.

Right. And we knew that he used these weapons, and so

he had them at one time. The interesting thing about what Vice

President Gore said in May of 2000, ``We have made it clear that it is

our policy to see Saddam Hussein gone,'' that became the official

policy of the United States, was to remove Saddam Hussein, not only

because of the weapons of mass destruction, but because of the threat

that he posed to his own people, to the Middle East, and to the rest of

the world.

We can go on and there are lots of quotes by other folks who have

talked about that. This morning we had the opportunity to meet with Dr.

Kay again, the original head of the Iraqi survey group, taking a look

at exactly what was going on in Iraq. He has said, and I tend to agree

with him after having met with him a number of times and after having

gone to Iraq, we may not find the weapons of mass destruction. They may

actually not be there. But what he has said is take a look at what was

going on. He was developing the capability to go into quick production

of weapons of mass destruction. He said I am not going to inventory

this stuff, but as soon as the U.N. inspectors are gone, as soon as the

sanctions are lifted, I will have the capability that 3 to 6 months I

will be able to produce all of the chemical or biological weapons I

need, so why store them. Get rid of the inspectors, develop the

capability under what appear to be legitimate purposes; but they are

dual-use capabilities. I will use them to make this, but just with the

flip of a switch and fine-tuning, I can use those to make weapons of

mass destruction. We know that he was developing those capabilities.

There is evidence that he was doing human testing to fine-tune the

capabilities that he would have and the weapons and products that he

would eventually produce. We know that he was doing research on UAVs,

unmanned aerial vehicles, potentially to be the means for delivering

weapons of mass destruction.

We know that he was developing a missile capability well beyond the

authorized levels that had been established by the U.N. So in all of

these areas, he was either moving his program forward secretly or

moving them beyond what the U.N. sanctions had said. So there is no

doubt, and that is the message through the 1990s.

We are not sure exactly what was there because it was a very

secretive society. He was very good at deceiving others when we were

trying to penetrate into what was going on in Iraq. But there is no

doubt about what his plans and intentions were. This is why Dr. Kay

will say we may not have found exactly what we were expecting to find

when we got into Iraq; but what we found was as dangerous, if not more

dangerous, than what we had anticipated that we would find.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a very valuable debate to

have here in the United States about what did we find versus what we

expected to find; and that will force us to seriously look at our

intelligence capabilities, what do we need to do to improve our

intelligence capabilities to give us as policymakers better information

on which to make decisions in the future; and we will have that

discussion and debate. The President is fully cooperating with the

various commissions that are out there to do an investigation of the

intelligence community.

The Senate Intelligence Committee is doing it, the House Permanent

Select Committee on Intelligence is doing it. We all recognize that the

intelligence business is a very, very difficult business; that we do

not get all the information we would like to have; that when we go into

a place like Iraq or try to take a look at what is going on in North

Korea, Libya or Iran, as we are trying to look in and figure out what

is going on, these folks are trying to hide and deceive us so that we

do not understand what is going on.

I get a little nervous talking about saying we got it

wrong, because I have had the opportunity, having served on the

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence now for 3 years, to have met

a lot of our men and women involved in this process.

The first thing we have to recognize is they got a very important

thing right, Saddam was a threat. It is not like we got into Iraq and

it is like, wow, there is nothing here; he was not doing anything, he

was just trying to build the country for his people. He was focused on

delivering them quality healthcare, education. You guys got it all

wrong.

That is not the Saddam Hussein we see and this is not the Saddam

Hussein that his own people saw. They got it right, that this guy had

every intent of restarting a weapons of mass destruction program, and

we missed that he changed his strategy, from stockpiling to producing

these things on demand.

So we got some of those things wrong.

But overall, the strategic analysis, because these men and women we

have in our Intelligence Community, this is an art, and Saddam Hussein

was a master at deceit, and we did not necessarily give our intel folks

everything they needed to figure it out.

Let us go to where the gentleman wanted to go today. I

was in Iraq last year in August, I went back in September of last year,

and then I was there 3 weeks ago. You were there last week. If there is

any question about whether Saddam was an instrument of mass

destruction, I think you and I were most touched when we actually had

the opportunity to talk to the people of Iraq and their response. Then

you talk to the next group that has had the most interaction with the

Iraqi people on a personal level, and that is our troops. Then you talk

to the policymakers and all of those kinds of things.

But the closer you get to the people who were closest to Saddam, I

think my colleague will agree, that, by and large, the vast majority of

those folks, and I will admit and recognize that Iraq continues to be a

very dangerous place; there are people there who want to kill our

troops; there are people there who want to kill the Iraqis that are

working towards building a new Iraq; but for the average person in

Iraq, they are absolutely thrilled and thankful that Saddam Hussein is

gone.

What we forget is the rich tradition of Iraq. I do not

know whether you have got it, but I have some things that have been

posted on the Internet by folks who recount the history of this part of

the world. It is a rich cultural heritage, the cradle of civilization,

and that is what the people of Iraq want to be recognized and

remembered for. They want to forget about the days of Saddam Hussein,

because he robbed them of that great history and tradition.

I experienced some of the same stuff when I met with

the Iraqi people. You went right to where I was going. They are

learning the ability to speak out, because under Saddam Hussein, if

they had spoken out, they would be dead. So they are aggressive, and

sometimes you kind of say look, you cannot say it that way or whatever.

But, wait a minute, they have only had the opportunity to speak out for

the last 8 months. You are right, they do not know everything they have

to do to be politically correct.

But what a wonderful experience for them for the first time to be

able to speak out, to meet with Members of the U.S. Congress or of the

Parliament from Britain or members from Spain, but representative

government, and for the first time, to have the ability to express

their opinions and their vision for their own country and communities.

It is the same experience I had. In September I had the

opportunity to spend a day with one of my constituents who is kind of

heading up the healthcare rebuilding in Iraq, Jim Hoveman. I spent the

day, and we went through one of the facilities where they are

rebuilding an administrative building.

Again, I am just kind of walking through the building, and I stopped

and talked to two of the construction workers. It was not long, and I

had about 40 of them around me, kids, maybe 18 years old, and then

individuals that were probably getting closer to 45 or 50. But they

wanted to talk, and they wanted to ask questions. But you could see the

excitement that they felt, to have the opportunity to talk with people,

to express their views and express their appreciation.

Then we went to one of the hospitals. The doctors and everybody

focused finally on equality of healthcare, meaning it was going to be

available all across the country. In Basra, they did not have much at

all. This is a country that spent like $1 per individual.

A couple of weeks ago, I had the opportunity to be at the White House

where the First Lady introduced the program that they are going to do

with Project Hope to build a highly technical state-of-the-art

Children's Hospital in Basra.

There is some debate as to whether this hospital should be built or

whether the money should be spent in a different way. Again, we will

have that debate. But what it says is is it not awesome that for the

first time, rather than seeing a high quality healthcare system that

deteriorated for 30 years, now there are people that are looking at

going into Iraq and creating a state-of-the-art children's hospital so

that not only all the kids from Iraq, but that children from around the

Middle East will now go to Iraq for quality healthcare and special care

for the kids.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding; and I

think he has it exactly right, because we have to recognize how far

these people have to go and where they are coming from. I mean, whether

it is in Afghanistan where they were under the control of the Russians

and the Taliban for 12 years and their per capita income is $150, where

they do not have the rule of law, they do not have police agencies in

place, they do not have a judicial system in place, they do not have

transparent government agencies, so they have to go through that whole

building process and they have to learn about representative

government.

It is unrealistic for America, for Congress, or for anyone else to

expect that by July 1 they will be like us, that they will fully

understand representative government. That is going to take a

tremendous amount of work; and we are doing this work in a very

difficult environment, because there are still folks there who, if they

saw and could identify the Iraqis that were meeting with the gentleman

from Indiana (Mr. Pence), those folks will become targets. There are

groups out there, this is still a very deadly environment, but the

gentleman is absolutely right. These people are going to be at the

leading edge of building a new country.

Mr. Speaker, some ask, are you winning the war on

terror, and the level of violence in Iraq is something that we are

very, very disappointed in. But the gentleman is absolutely right. We

should not be surprised. There was a letter that we intercepted and

captured a couple of weeks ago that clearly indicates we are making

progress, because the letter indicates that, Hey, we need to kill

Americans and coalition forces; but where we really now need to move

to, because we know that they are being successful, we need to target

Iraqis, either to discourage them from moving forward to building a new

Iraq, and to try to create divisions between the Shiites and the Sunnis

and the Kurds and try to incite civil war. The terrorist organizations

and individuals who feel that they will be disenfranchised because they

are associated with the former regime will do just about anything to

keep power, and that anything right now means that they will target and

kill Iraqis.

When we were there, we had the opportunity to meet with 600, 500, 600

police cadets, and we went there because the week before we were there,

again, two bombings and over 100 either police recruits or policemen

were killed. They are the first step in building a civil society,

keeping law and order on the streets. And we talked to them; we laid a

wreath at the academy and spoke with them about how we were going to

stand with them. Because we know that these young men and women, men

and women in their police academy, the day they leave that academy,

they

are going to go into an environment where the police are going to have

a price on their head. But when we went through, and I mean the

gentleman had the same experience with the folks that he saw, the first

thing you did is you looked in their eyes. They were glad that we were

there. You looked in their face and there was a smile on their face.

You heard what they had to say, and I think there was appreciation in

what they had to say. You shook their hands, and it was a firm

handshake.

Something that I had not experienced in my previous trips: when we

were at the police academy, after just about every handshake and every

thank you, they put their hand over their heart and then put it at

their side. I said, What does that mean? I got it wrong; sometimes I

would start with that. And they said, no, no, no, you end with that.

What they said when they explained, they said, that demonstrates the

intensity and the sincerity with which they are expressing their

appreciation and their feelings to you for being there. So we had six

Members of Congress who went to their academy and said, thank you, and

as the gentleman states, our chairman was very eloquent when he talked

to them, saying that you are the generation that will create the

foundation for a new Iraq, and people will remember you because of what

you are doing and the risks and the sacrifices that you may take. I

yield to the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, let us take a look at a different layer,

because the gentleman and I know that when we are in Iraq, we do not

get to go to all of the places we would like to go. I mean, when I have

been in Baghdad, it is kind of like there is a lot of commerce, there

is a lot of cars, the roads are busy, there is lots of people; and you

want to just grab your driver and say stop, let me out, and let me

spend the next half hour, hour just walking down the streets and

talking to the people of Iraq, because I want to find out whether you

are giving me the straight scoop. I think I am getting good input from

the Iraqis, but are you selectively feeding me people that will only

come with a smile on their face and those kinds of things.

The gentleman and I have both had the opportunity to talk to another

layer of people who have interacted with the Iraqi people, and that is

the American and coalition troops. When I was there last time, I had

the opportunity to have dinner with 10 soldiers from Michigan, and my

colleagues had dinner with 10 to 15 troops from their States. So we are

talking to 75, 80 troops. And then I also had the opportunity to talk

to parents or spouses whose husbands or wives are over in Iraq; and the

American troops and the coalition troops, they are the ones, the ones

that I met with. They are the ones that are patrolling the streets of

Baghdad. Baghdad is divided into sectors, and the group that I had

dinner with, they are patrolling four segments. So you ask them and

say, What are the Iraqi people saying to you? And our troops, although

I have not spoken to all of them, so I cannot say all of the troops,

but the ones that I have spoken to have no doubt that we are there for

the right reasons.

The gentleman from Indiana is right, they are not worried about

whether we found weapons of mass destruction. Again, they have heard

the stories of the torture, the killings, the brutality they have seen,

how Saddam took care of himself and did not take care of his own

people. They know all of this stuff. And they will tell us we are there

for the right reasons. The Iraqi people are thrilled that we are there.

The Iraqi people are frustrated that some of the rebuilding is not

going as quickly as they would like it, that the security is not where

they would like it, it is not where we would like it. But at the end of

the day, they are glad we are here, they are glad Saddam is gone, and

they are going to help us rebuild. They will tell us great stories

about interacting, handing out books, rebuilding schools, digging

wells, cleaning up irrigation trenches, getting the power going, and

doing all of these things to help the Iraqis on a personal level.

I think the gentleman from Indiana had an opportunity to meet with

some of the troops, and I yield to my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, I have not had the opportunity to go to

Basra, but the gentleman from Indiana talked about the Third World

conditions. Again, I spent more time in the health care area in talking

on a pretty regular basis with Mr. Haveman, talking about

what is going on there and what existed before. This is actually what

the first lady talked about when she was talking about the new hospital

we want to build in Basra. Decades ago Iraq had one of the strongest

systems. But here are some of the stories.

Mothers tell stories of watching their children die because doctors

do not have a small enough tube to give them oxygen. When parents bring

their children to the hospital, they must also bring food, bedding and

clothing, even their own blood supply. Under Saddam Hussein, one in

eight children died before the age of 5. One in three was malnourished.

Infant and child mortality rates doubled in 10 years while low birth

weights increased from 4.5 percent to 30 percent. Today, infant

mortality rates, and this is when the coalition came in, infant

mortality rates in Iraq are similar to those in much less developed

countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The prevalence of leukemia has also

increased dramatically in the past decade and continues to grow at an

alarming rate. Children in the United States with leukemia have a 90

percent survival rate.

In Iraq, the rate is less than 10 percent. Saddam took care of

himself, his family, and a core group of Baathists, but other than

that, the country just totally slid. And those folks received very

little health care, very few benefits from the government.

Mr. Speaker, I will yield to my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr.

Pence) for bringing it up. It reinforces the amount of work that needs

to be done there: Getting a constitution, establishing a law, getting

the police force in place, getting the judiciary, getting government

institutions in place, and then also practicing the art of

representative government.

But there is no doubt that I believe the people of Iraq are thankful

that we are there, that we are making progress in that. And we have

talked about the people in Iraq that my colleague and I have personally

had the opportunity to meet. We have talked about our second hand

accounts that are told to us by our troops who are interacting with the

Iraqi folks on a daily basis.

Then there is one other level that I just want to get to before we

run out of time, and that is before I went to Iraq the last time we

spent a day in Libya. And for those who do not believe that we are

making progress in the war on terrorism, there are a lot of folks who

are believing that we are not winning or making progress in the war on

terror, or that we are not serious about it, Muammar Qaddafi, Colonel

Qaddafi believes that we are making progress, that we are serious about

winning this war on terrorism.

The changes that have happened in Libya are dramatic, going from

somebody who had a weapons of mass destruction program, a nuclear

program all under development, all secret, to where we are today, fully

exposing it, telling us not only what he has, but how he got it and

these types of things.

We do not fully understand exactly why, but I do not doubt that there

is some relationship to what we did in Iraq and where we said we are

going to be focusing on, a war on terrorism, focused on it like a

laser, we are going to go after it, and however he got to where he is

and however Libya got to where they are today, we ought to be thankful

that in this element of the war of terrorism, we have made that much

progress in a very short period of time.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt we are making progress.

I want to read a couple of quotes from a speech that we heard in Libya.

And if it becomes the role for the Middle East, we will have made great

progress. Think about this quote. This is one of the Libyan

parliamentarians. ``I believe God created man on this earth. Therefore,

they have natural needs and natural rights. These are not bestowed by

anyone else and they cannot be taken away by men.'' This is in Libya.

Now, think if they move that that direction. ``Every person has the

right to develop to their full potential to live in peace, security and

prosperity.'' ``How can you enslave people who are born free?''

There is something that is inside of all of us that we recognize

these types of rights as being basic rights. And as we help bring those

rights to Libya, as we help bring and foster those rights in

Afghanistan and Iraq, we do not light the spark or the flame in these

peoples, we give the flame the opportunity to grow and flourish. It is

there. That is something that is in all of us, the right to be free, to

be secure. And what we are doing is we are giving them the right to do

that. But we also, at the same time, recognize the difficulty and also

the number of people who want to extinguish that flame and enslave

these people one more time just like Saddam did.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time. I thank

my colleague for joining me today.