Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be back on the House floor

with my colleagues, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Delahunt) and

the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. Abercrombie), and I think others will

join us, for another installment of Iraq Watch. We have been coming to

the floor one evening a week since, I believe, last May to talk about

our policies in Iraq, to raise questions about the policies when we do

not understand those policies, to suggest alternatives, to try to get

information before the Members of the Congress and the members of the

general public about what is happening in Iraq.

Before turning to my colleagues for this week's installment of Iraq

Watch, let me review a little bit what has been happening, and the last

few weeks have been tough weeks for President Bush regarding his

policies in Iraq. We know that the chief CIA weapons inspector, Dr.

David Kay, returned from Iraq and said that stockpiles of weapons of

mass destruction do not exist. He could not find weapons of mass

destruction themselves. He doubts that such stockpiles existed before

we went to war. He doubts they existed in 2002 or 2003. This, of

course, is completely contrary to the White House assertions in the

fall of 2002 and in the spring of 2003 that these weapons of mass

destruction existed.

The President continued to advocate his case and, in my judgment,

hype the

situation regarding weapons of mass destruction in the State of the

Union Address where he talked about weapons of mass destruction-related

program activities. I am still trying to figure out exactly what is a

weapons of mass destruction-related program activity, but I can tell my

colleagues what it is not. It is not a weapon of mass destruction,

because we have not found those in Iraq, according to our chief CIA

weapons inspector David Kay.

Then, in his Face The Nation interview recently, the President talked

about Dr. Kay's report and said that Dr. Kay came home and, number 1,

made an interim report and, number 2, suggested that things were worse

in Iraq than we thought.

Well, in fact, may I say to my colleagues, Dr. Kay came back from

Iraq not to make an interim report, but to quit. He said he has had

enough. He is frustrated. He says he is not getting the support that he

thinks the Iraq Study Group should get in order to focus on the search

for weapons of mass destruction. He believes those weapons do not

exist. And far from saying things were worse over there than he

thought, he said we could not find the things that we were told we

would find.

Then, the President finally appointed a commission to study the

intelligence regarding Iraq and the weapons of mass destruction. And I

am glad that he appointed such a commission, but he made two big

mistakes, in my judgment. One, he limited the time, or maybe I should

say he expanded the time so that the Commission will not complete its

work until well after this fall's election. Secondly, he limited the

scope of the Commission. He asked them to look into the accuracy of the

intelligence gathering. And I agree that accuracy must be reviewed, but

he did not ask the Commission to review the use of that intelligence by

the White House itself.

Mr. Speaker, if I may interrupt the gentleman for a

moment, I am proud of the fact that last April in one of our very first

Iraq Watches, I identified Mr. Chalabi in the words that my grandfather

would have used as a four flusher. I have to explain what a four

flusher is. A four flusher is a man whose word you cannot accept, and

if it was good enough for my grandfather, it is good enough for me.

If the gentleman will yield, as bad as the situation is

that the gentleman from Massachusetts has just described, it could be

even worse, the impact of this faulty intelligence on this country.

Think back on the military strategy that our Armed Forces used. We all

understand that our Armed Forces fought bravely, with great courage.

But remember that they rushed to Baghdad because they believed that

weapons of mass destruction were there, in large measure because of the

representations made by Chalabi and others, and the very false and

misleading information that the gentleman from Massachusetts has

identified tonight.

Our troops did not protect their flanks. They figured the most

important thing they had to do was get to Baghdad and stop any

potential use of these weapons of mass destruction against the American

troops or the British troops or against the Iraqi citizens; that the

key was to get there as quickly as possible. And in that rush, which

they successfully did, very bravely and courageously, they left their

flanks exposed. The insurgency started, and we began to lose soldiers

right away because they were not taking their time, they were not

protecting themselves. They thought they had to rush in.

I think you can put onto the heads of these folks that gave us bad

information the loss of life, the loss of American life by our brave

soldiers whose leaders thought they had to adopt one strategy based

upon incorrect information, when it would have been a little safer for

our troops to protect the flanks, move more carefully and cautiously,

which I am sure they would have done if they were not worried about

these weapons of mass destruction that did not exist.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked quite a bit tonight about

Ahmed Chalabi, and rightly so; but he is not apparently the only

favorite of the American government involved in positioning themselves

for leadership in Iraq.

In today's Roll Call, one of the Hill newspapers, a fascinating

front-page story titled ``Iraqi Money Flows'' detailing how four

different Iraqis seeking power in Iraq are paying over $100,000 a month

for lobbying costs and public relations costs here in the U.S. capital.

It is a million-dollar-plus annual industry.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have a clue. Ahmed Chalabi and

three others listed in the article are paying up to a combined $100,000

a month.

The principal source I know of is U.S. Government.

Before we get too carried away with Chalabi, let me just

make the point that is in the Roll Call article. There were three

others doing this. One of them is the favorite of the CIA to be the new

Iraqi leader and a third the favorite of the State Department to be the

new Iraqi leader. The gentleman from Massachusetts is right, the

Defense Department has long wanted Chalabi to be the new leader of the

Iraqi Government.

The favorite of the State Department is Adnan Pachachi,

who is another member of the current interim government in Iraq as

Chalabi is. And, according to Roll Call, the favorite of the CIA is

Ayad Allawi, also a member of the Iraqi Governing Council.

We have got a three-headed monster here. The administration itself

cannot agree on who should be the next leader of the Iraqi Government.

There are three different agencies pushing three different people.

The gentleman from Massachusetts is making a lot of

sense here, but the situation is made that much worse by the fact we

are not just trying to hand-pick the next leader from Washington, but

the Bush administration has three different favorites, one from the

Defense Department, one from the State Department, one from the CIA.

Yes. All the firms are identified, the monthly

retainers. It is an interesting article. It is a million-dollar

industry.

I will be delighted to do it.

Mr. Speaker, there is something else troubling about

this. The gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. Abercrombie) is correct and he is

right to be personally offended by the lack of disclosure. And it is

also clear from this article that a lot of money is being spent to

influence the gentleman from Hawaii and me and the gentleman from

Massachusetts (Mr. Delahunt) and every other Member of Congress, and we

have a right to know who is being paid to influence us and what the

subject matter is.

But the fact that this article also demonstrates that the Bush

administration is pushing three different people to be the next leader

of the Iraq government leads to the following question: What does come

next in the larger governance question? We know that Paul Bremer has

been advocating on behalf of the Bush administration this concept of

caucuses, that when the Bush administration leaves Iraq on June 30, at

least the civil authority is pulled out, that Paul Bremer has been

pushing for caucuses to take the place of direct elections and somehow

lead to a representative form of self-government for Iraq.

The problem is none of the Iraqis like that idea. The head of the

majority

Shiite Muslims do not like that idea. The Kurds do not like that idea.

That is not going to happen. What is going to take the place of the

American-appointed 25-member group of what most Iraqis think are

American puppets, the Iraqi Governing Council, what is going to take

their place, particularly if the Bush administration has three

different favorites to lead the next government? What comes next? We

have got an arbitrary deadline set by the President of June 30 to

withdraw the civilian authority, a date that seems more based upon the

upcoming election than any ability of the Iraqi people to actually

conduct a self-government.

I could not have said it better. There is clearly no

exit strategy. In fact, there are three different strategies, if the

Roll Call article is correct, about who is supposed to lead the next

government, and all of this is supposed to come to fruition by June 30.

Iraq Watch has to come to fruition in 5 minutes tonight. I want to

give my two colleagues an opportunity to make any closing comments.

Mr. Speaker, if I can add to the gentleman's comments,

specifically about what appeared to be the distortions of information

in Iraq. I am not speaking of Mr. Woolsey. I am speaking of the Iraqi

Governing Council representatives, Mr. Chalabi and others. I do not

want to see them benefit any more than they already have from their

relationships if they have misled this country and this government, and

I hope that Congress can figure out a way to deny those individuals, if

we can show they intentionally misled us, from any further contract

with the U.S. Government, benefit from the U.S. Government, promotion

by the U.S. Government. If we have been intentionally misled, if we had

gone to war in part under their false comments and under false

pretenses, and particularly, as I believe happened, there have been

additional American deaths because of that faulty information, we need

to cut off those relationships and prohibit any further financial

relationships with these malfeasors.

I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Delahunt).