I think the gentleman from Indiana missed that last

comment. You might want to repeat it.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could prevail upon my

good friend, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Burton), who, I might say

this evening is in sartorial splendor, as well as a good friend, if we

might prevail upon him to maybe come back at another time when we can

have a conversation on this, because it is vital to America's

interests.

I know the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Burton) has spent his entire

congressional career addressing precisely that.

I will be happy to do that.

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to

yield, I think what is important here then to get across this evening

is that calling people to account is what we do. The oversight function

of the Congress has a long history. I can go back to the time in which

some people wonder how Harry Truman got to be chosen as Vice President

of the United States just prior to Franklin Roosevelt's death, before

his last campaign. Of course, he had made his reputation on an

oversight committee in the Senate looking into war profiteering, is

what he had done, trying to hold people to account. That is what this

is all about.

If someone wants to take up the position that this is a concentration

on

President Bush for partisan activity, he is the President. He is making

the decisions, and those decisions are subject to scrutiny.

As the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Burton) very well knows, back at

the time when Mr. Clinton made decisions about Bosnia and Kosovo, I

found myself in opposition to him and said so. I think at least as far

as this Member is concerned, I do not have to take a back seat to

anybody in trying to bring anybody to account in the executive,

Democrat or Republican, if I think that is in order.

If I know my friend, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Burton), well,

and I think I do, he does not stand for anybody telling him who should

be brought to account either. He has stood up on more than one

occasion, perhaps even singularly, calling for an accounting on various

issues. I think that is his function and our function, and that is what

this Iraq Watch is all about, I can guarantee you that. If we think

somebody is doing the right thing, we are going to say so; if we think

somebody is not acting necessarily in the best interests of the United

States, regardless of what their motivation might be, it is up to us to

say so and engage in a dialogue to try to illuminate where the

interests of the American people are.

I know that the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Burton) agrees with that,

and I look forward to any discussion we might have in the future along

those lines.

Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman yield?

All this points up to the fact that this is ideologically driven.

This has nothing to do with those facts. This is ideologically driven

by people who are generally termed neoconservative. I am the

conservative here. And my colleague should be the conservative here. He

is conservative. It is the conservative position not to get trapped in

these foreign conflicts, not to go off charging around the world to try

and do these things.

The ideology behind this is that Iraq was the key to being able to

move into Syria, being able to move into Iran, that this is somehow a

defense of the Likud version of what is in Israel's interest. The so-

called neoconservatives that are behind this ideological thrust have

wanted this war for years. It is not hidden. It is not a conspiracy. It

is not some kind of subterfuge. It is an announced policy and

possession philosophically they have had for years.

The sad part is after Mr. Bush became President, was appointed

President, they came into the forefront in terms of their appointments

in the Defense Department where they were able to bring their

philosophy forward. That is what is driving this. That is what the

President has to face up to. This is where his difficulty is.