Mr. Speaker, we are here again this evening. As I am

sure many of our colleagues are aware, during the course of the past 8

months, several of us have taken to the floor to discuss issues

surrounding Iraq, Afghanistan, and other issues of concern related to

the war on terror, particularly as it is focused in the Middle East.

I am joined tonight by two members of that group. We call ourselves

the Iraq Watch, my colleague who is sitting to my right, the gentleman

from Washington (Mr. Inslee); and I know that the gentleman from Ohio

(Mr. Strickland) will soon join us.

Earlier today before the House Committee on International Relations,

Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared and testified concerning the

budget proposal put forth by the Department and by the administration

for the coming year. The Secretary had to leave earlier than some of us

would have hoped, but I commend him for bearing up, if you will, for

some 3 hours before the House Committee on International Relations.

During the course of his testimony, he mentioned the tragedy that

occurred in the town of Halabjah, a town he well knows because during

the course of President Reagan's last 4 years he served in the capacity

as the national security adviser and during the administration of

George Herbert Walker Bush he served in the capacity of chief of staff

of the Joint Chiefs. So he was very familiar, obviously; and many of us

remember his service to the country during the Gulf War and prior to

that what was occurring in the region.

If I had had an opportunity to question him, I was going to indicate

to him that I have a profound concern about what we are currently doing

in terms of establishing alliances and relationships with some

extremely unsavory regimes that very well might come back to haunt us.

Some can only be described as extremely harsh dictatorships with

abysmal human rights records. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan come to mind

immediately.

Now we have a base in Uzbekistan where last year the Department of

State used the following language in describing the abuse of human

rights in that particular Nation. Let me quote, ``The security services

routinely torture, beat and otherwise mistreat detainees. They

allegedly use suffocation, electric shock, rape and other sexual

abuse.'' The list goes on and on and on.

Of course, the budget proposal put forth by the Department of State,

under the leadership of Colin Powell, directs millions of dollars to

Turkmenistan, whose leader has created a Stalinist personality cult

that rivals anything we saw with Saddam Hussein. He even went so far as

to rename the month of January after himself and the month of April

after his mother.

I remember observing the interview between Mr. Russert and President

Bush this past Sunday; and the President described, appropriately so,

Saddam Hussein as a madman. I might have used a different word. He

might be crazy but he is not stupid, I guess is what I would say; but

the new President, if you will, of Turkmenistan, who has changed his

name to Turkmenibashi certainly seems to fit that particular

description, and Karimov in Uzbekistan is nothing more than a thug with

ambitions for regional power, again, very similar to Saddam Hussein.

When the Secretary of State alluded to Halabjah, it provoked me to

think that, are we repeating the same mistakes that we made in the

1980s when the United States Government supported Saddam Hussein? Let

us remember, it was the United States Government that removed Saddam

Hussein from the terrorist list. We now hear that he supported

terrorist groups. He was doing that in the 1980s, but the Reagan-Bush

administrations removed him from the terrorist list, but they did not

stop there. They went further. They restored full diplomatic relations

with Saddam Hussein. In fact, they provided him credits and loan

guarantees and, in fact, provided him intelligence during the course of

his war with Iran.

What I found particularly disturbing, and later when one of my

colleagues speaks, I have a chart that shows just a minuscule number of

transfers of dual-use technologies that were approved by the Reagan-

Bush administration, the Reagan-Bush White Houses, if you will, that no

doubt became the building blocks of the tools for Saddam Hussein to

develop that nuclear program that was discovered in the aftermath of

the Gulf War. I mean, it was those White Houses, those administrations,

that allowed the transfer of those dual-use technologies.

Let me tell my colleagues where I received that information: not from

a newspaper report, not from a think tank with a particular bias, but

with an institution that everyone in this Chamber would acknowledge is

free of bias, is what we all rely on to do our research, the

Congressional Research Service.

That particular report was authored and produced in June of 1992. But

I guess what is particularly disturbing is when I hear the Secretary of

State refer to Halabjah and say that we know he used chemical weapons

against his own people. In this case, it was the Iraqi Kurds in the

north who had aligned themselves with the Iranian forces with which

Iraq was at war at the time.

The only action that I can discover in terms of my research was mild,

off-the-record condemnations by the United States Government. And when

this Congress back in 1988, 1989 and 1990 passed legislation, both

branches independent of each other, that would have imposed sanctions

on Saddam Hussein, it was the administration of George Herbert Walker

Bush that blocked it. I agree obviously with the Secretary of State, he

did use these weapons against his own people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Strickland).

Mr. Speaker, not only were we silent, and it is very

important that the historical record be revealed to the American

people, and that is why we are tonight. If any viewer has any questions

about the accuracy of what we state, I am sure that the gentleman from

Ohio (Mr. Strickland) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. Inslee)

and any other member of Iraq Watch, we would be happy to respond and

see that the reports, unbiased, that were authored back in 1992, would

be provided to anyone who has an interest. They can contact our office.

But it was not just silence. It was absolutely, according to this

report, action to block the imposition of sanctions at that point in

time. I dare say what would have happened if in 1988 and 1989 and 1990

there were sanctions on Iraq, that would have been a message to Saddam

Hussein. We can speculate that maybe we would have avoided the first

Gulf War if we had taken on that thug then. But, no, we were not

sending that message. We continued after the conclusion of the war. I

have heard the argument while we tilted towards Iraq, that was the

language that was used, we tilted towards Iraq because of our concern

with Iran and the Ayatollah Khomeini.

As I said earlier, what are we doing now? We are allying ourselves

with two more despots, two more thugs who I dare say years from now

could very well be the new Saddam Husseins.

Mr. Speaker, to point out two other facts, the initial

approach to Saddam Hussein in 1983 at the direction of President Reagan

was done by a special envoy.

Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

In 1988, 1989, and 1990 the United States Congress took

action.

Both the House and the Senate passed legislation that

would have imposed sanctions, and it was the White House of George

Herbert Walker Bush that blocked it.

Pausing again, going back in memory, who was the Secretary of

Defense?

The Secretary of Defense was Mr. Cheney, the current Vice President.

His Under Secretary of Defense was Paul Wolfowitz.

So, again, the dots here have to be connected. It is important, I

believe, to present that historical record to the American people to

give them the information that they need to conduct their own analysis.

I challenge anyone from the administration or a Member of Congress to

come to the floor and debate that particular unfortunate reality. If

congressional action had been approved and the President, this

President's father, had signed a bill that would have imposed

sanctions, we can only speculate what would have happened.

What I would have suggested, if we knew it and we speak again of

human rights and how bad and claim a certain moral authority, what

should have occurred is the President of the United States should have

stepped up and requested an international tribunal and brought that

thug, Saddam Hussein, before it for a trial, for a prosecution, and let

justice happen.

Has the Attorney General responded? Has he identified

those officials that were responsible?

I can tell of a very sad moment when I attended a

funeral in my hometown of a young man, 36 years old. His widow was

there; his parents were there. His dad, Charlie Caldwell, taught my

daughter in the local public school. He was killed. He was killed in a

humvee. When we pause and think of it, the pain that this has caused.

We have had this discussion before. Not only is it causing pain today;

but in very real terms with the cost of this effort, if you will, we

have already spent $187 billion. And while it is not in the President's

budget, because clearly he has an interest in not increasing the

deficit any more than it is and it is absolutely out of control, we

know that and I think the American people know that, but we hear, and

it has been reported that there is an additional $50 billion that will

be in a supplemental. Of course, it will not happen before the

election. But if I can just for one minute, because I want to go back,

I want to let those who are watching, and maybe it is impossible, they

cannot see this list; but this is just a small piece of exports to Iraq

by U.S. companies from the year 1985 to 1990.

That is absolutely the correct definition. I think

sometimes when we speak among ourselves because we know the terms, we

seem to forget that oftentimes viewers and constituents and others,

really, I am sure they are wondering, what are we talking about. I

really thank the gentleman for making that clear. Yes, dual use means

they can be used for peaceful purposes, or they can be used for the

development of programs such as the nuclear program that Saddam Hussein

began, started. It was well along the way in terms of its development

when in 1990 during the Gulf War he was defeated, and under the

agreement, the U.N. inspectors went in and found that, yes, he did have

a nuclear program at that point in time. Actually, the United Nations

inspection team did a superb job. But where did the technologies come

from for the development of Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapon program? It

is right here.

Let me just read several. There are computers for possible use in

nuclear weapons development. Computers useful for missile development.

Computers that U.N. inspectors believed monitored uranium enrichment

for atomic bomb fuel. Computers useful for graphic design of atomic

bombs and missiles. Computers for manufacturing tool design and

graphics. Computers for possible use in atomic bomb or missile

development. This is the moneys that were paid to American firms under

a license approved in the first Bush administration.

From 1985 to 1990. Again, I just do not think that we

can overstate the historical record because I think it provides the

American people, particularly those who are watching us here tonight,

with information

for them to reach their own conclusions. The reality is, he did have

chemical weapons; and as Secretary Powell indicated today, they knew he

had chemical weapons when they launched Desert Storm in the first Gulf

War and our soldiers were prepared; but, of course, he did not use

them.

He did not use them. He only used them against his own people.

In 1988 in Halabja, and he murdered somewhere between

5,000 and 10,000 Iraqi Kurds, and we were silent then when we should

have imposed the sanctions and insisted that he be brought to trial. So

that is the full story. That is the full story.

Again, today, Secretary Powell continued to talk about intent. And

there was evidence of intent, and I hear Dr. Rice, Condoleezza Rice, we

know he used them. Yes. Back in 1988 and 1989, and we did nothing then,

and here we are in 2002.

Mr. Speaker, just to pick up on the gentleman's point

that in terms of the work that the U.N. teams did, respectively it has

been established that there were no stockpiles. There were no weapons

of mass destruction. In fact, David Kay, appointed by President Bush,

came back and told the American people, to use his words, we were all

wrong. I think it is so important to analyze and understand all of the

dots here and what lies in the future. As I said in my opening remarks,

we are now creating alliances and working with people who rival Saddam

Hussein in terms of their tyranny, their abuse of human rights, and

their willingness to do anything to enhance their power.

I mentioned earlier we have a military base in Uzbekistan. And the

President of Uzbekistan, here he is with our Secretary of Defense. The

gentleman, if the Members will, to Secretary Rumsfeld's right, his name

is Karimov, Islam Karimov. He is a tyrant. He is a thug, and we are in

bed with him. The American people should know that. In Turkmenistan, I

had mentioned earlier the leader of Turkmenistan, and we are sending

him millions of dollars. Talk about a madman. He is a certifiable nut,

changing the names of the calendar, April for his mother and January

for himself. What are we doing? We are making the same mistake, and

that is why it is important that those that are watching Iraq Watch

tonight take this information, read on their own, and look to the

future and understand that we are now or could be planting the seeds

for another Saddam Hussein that will wreak havoc in the region, that

obviously these two will continue to abuse human rights and what about

our claim to moral authority when we are losing prestige in the world

today?

I should interrupt the gentleman to say that Secretary

Powell made that statement again. And not having had the opportunity

because he left early, I was stunned by that particular remark. I do

not know any Member in this body that had these different reports. With

the caveats and the qualifiers, what we got was something different,

Mr. Speaker.

You know what I would like to do? I would commend for

reading, to those that are watching us have this conversation tonight,

this Newsweek article. It is the publication of November 17, 2003, 4 or

5 months ago. Obviously, this is a picture of the Vice President, and

it is entitled ``How Dick Cheney Sold the War: The Inside Story.''

Again, I think we and the citizens have an obligation to do as much

homework as we can to fully understand the reality. Those points that

the gentleman made, I have heard them on the floor today. Earlier the

President went to Poland and spoke about those two mobile trailers that

allegedly were being used in a bio-weapon program. The CIA refuted

that. Again, it is important to be accurate.

It is interesting, everybody in Washington at least knows and the

American people should know that there has been tension within the

administration between the Vice President on one side and Secretary

Powell on the other side. If I had had an opportunity today, I was

going to ask the Secretary if this story in The Washington Post was

accurate.

There was a lengthy article; and it was, again, published on February

1 of this year. If you remember, when Secretary Powell went before the

United Nations, what the article relates is that he was very careful

and thorough in terms of what he believed to be accurate intelligence,

and he had this CIA analyst come in and discuss it with him.

The CIA originally drafted his speech, which then went to the White

House. But when it emerged, it looked entirely different. The Vice

President's chief of staff, one individual by the name of Scooter

Libby, and his National Security Advisor, Stephen Hadley, and other

national security staffers had produced draft language for Powell, 45

pages on weapons of mass destruction, 38 pages on alleged links to

terrorism, and 16 pages on Iraq's human rights abuses. Within 1 day,

Powell's task force had largely abandoned the 45-page document on

Iraq's weapons of mass destruction produced by Cheney's office and the

National Security Council, using instead a classified National

Intelligence Estimate assembled by the CIA in October.

Again, let me suggest this: a vision and a view and an ideology that

had a conclusion and was looking for facts. We all know in the

selection of facts, and, again, this can be done without even a

conscious intent to deceive, but the attempt to make the case like

lawyers do in a courtroom. But this is not a courtroom; this is not

advocacy.

But, again, I was going to ask the Secretary, was that report true.

When that speech that he had prepared had come out of the White House,

out of the Vice President's office, changed so dramatically, did he

abandon it and go and rely on the National Intelligence Estimate?

Do you know what? The American people have a right to know that

process, the world has a right to know that process, because that was a

presentation to the world by the representative of the United States to

the world.