Mr. Speaker, last week the Associated Press reported

that Iraqis are paying 5 cents a gallon for gas in Iraq, 5 cents. Why

are Iraqis getting such a good deal? Because the American taxpayer is

subsidizing the Iraqis to the tune of $167 million a month,

approximately $500 million over 3 months.

Here in the United States on average Americans are paying over $2 a

gallon for gas, up approximately 50 cents since the beginning of the

war in Iraq. Fill up a car with gas, a little north of $50; yet in Iraq

to do the same costs you about a dollar, what would cost us here $50.

We are subsidizing them, the American taxpayer, to the tune of $167

million a month. Here in the United States, what have we done? Nothing.

I am not against building and rebuilding Iraq after the war, but I am

opposed to providing Iraqis with a better opportunity than we provide

Americans, and I am not just talking about gas prices.

Take health care. They have health care. We have opened up 150 health

clinics and hospitals throughout Iraq, providing 100,000 with prenatal

and infant coverage costing Americans taxpayers $1 billion. In the

United States, 44 million Americans are without health insurance; 33

million Americans work full-time without health care; 10 million

American children are without health care. What do we do?

In the area of jobs, in Iraq we provide universal job training. In

the United States, under the President's budget we cut $238 million

from job training programs.

Veterans in Iraq, $60 million is being spent to train the Iraqi

veterans from past wars.

In the United States, under the President's budget, we are cutting

$257 million from American veterans medical care.

In the area of education, in Iraq, we built 2,300 schools. In

America, under the President's budget, we have underfunded by $8

billion the Leave No Child Behind Act. In Iraq, universities are

receiving $20 million for higher education partnerships. In America, we

have cut Perkins loans by $90 million and frozen the Pell grants for 3

years in a row. That is the President's budget.

Police. In Iraq, we are spending $500 million to retrain the police

on security. In the United States, the COPS program for community

policing throughout our country, supporting police officers, we have

cut in the President's budget by $659 million.

In the area of housing, in Iraq, we are spending $470 million for

public housing. In the United States, under the President's budget, we

cut $791 million from section 8.

The environment, $3.6 billion in Iraq for water and sewer. In

America, the President's budget cuts $500 million from the revolving

fund.

For roads, in Iraq, we are spending $240 million on new roads and

bridges. In America, the Army Corps of Engineers' budget is cut by 10

percent.

We could go on and on with program after program. My colleagues know

that in the election of 2000, then Governor Bush, now President Bush,

declared he was opposed to nation-building. Who knew it was America he

was talking about when he said he was opposed to nation-building? But

the good news is that in the 2004 reelection, President Bush can say he

kept his commitment in opposition to nation-building. The problem is,

it is here at home.

What do we have here at home? We have a higher unemployment rate than

when he took office; more uninsured; college costs soaring now by 10 or

12 percent a year, on average. Health care costs for a family of four

was $6,500 3 years ago; today it is $9,000. Yet in Iraq in the areas of

health care, education,

job training, housing, and the environment, we are making investments

that we do not promise here at home.

This administration has two priorities, two sets of values, two sets

of books: one for Iraq and one for America.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are the most generous people in the

world, but we can no longer afford to be so generous if our hope for a

prosperous tomorrow for our children is diminished and less than the

one we promise the people overseas. We cannot deny Americans the same

dreams of affordable health care, quality education, a safe place to

live that we promised the Iraqis, but denied the American people. The

same values that we hold for Iraq we must pledge for every American as

well.

It is time that we look at the energy crisis we have in this country

and ask the American taxpayers to subsidize 5 cents a gallon in Iraq

while we pay north of 2 bucks a gallon here in the United States, while

we say to our children, you should graduate college with a $16,000 bill

and yet provide universal health care and higher education to Iraqis.

We can do better; we need to do better.