Mr. Speaker, my friend, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr.

Abercrombie), is present here with me tonight; and we anticipate that

we will be joined by several of our colleagues to continue our weekly

hour where we discuss events in the Mid East, with a particular focus

on Iraq and Afghanistan and, hopefully, reveal to the viewing audience

some information that they may be unaware of. Mr. Speaker, I yield to

the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. Abercrombie).

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I

would concur with the gentleman's analysis. He is absolutely correct.

We secured a military victory in Afghanistan against those, the

Taliban, that allowed, on their territory, in Afghanistan, the training

and a safe haven for the real enemy of the United States, the al Qaeda

terrorist network. It has been more than 2 years, more than 2 years

since we secured that victory. And as the gentleman mentioned, we were

distracted, if you will. We were distracted by an ideological

conclusion that the defeat of Saddam Hussein would create a new

democracy in the Middle East.

Would that it be so. But as my colleague has mentioned, not only has

Osama bin Laden not been captured, and I have a sense he will be

captured, and the sooner the better, and if he is not captured, may he

be killed because he is the enemy of the United States, I think it is

important, however, given the distraction, if you will, based on a

rationale that was put forth by this President, President Bush, that

Saddam Hussein not only was in the possession and had a stockpile of

weapons of mass destruction, and it was suggested, if you remember,

that the threat of Saddam Hussein's possession of a nuclear weapon was

very real, was very real, according to what the administration was

saying, in that Saddam Hussein somehow had this murky relationship with

these terrorists who had designs directly on the United States, that

this information has turned out to be utterly without substance.

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield for a moment.

We have heard much relative to criticism of the intelligence services

of the United States. But when one examines the reporting by the CIA,

by the Defense Intelligence Agency, by the appropriate agencies within

the Department of State and the Department of Defense, their reporting

was characterized by conditionality, by caveats, by suggestions that

there was more to it than simply a conclusion. It was described in

terms of likelihood, probability, maybe, what have you. But it was

presented to the American people and to the people of the world in

clear stock terms that would only, only provide an inescapable

conclusion that Saddam Hussein had possession of weapons of mass

destruction.

You read from a report this week about the analysis by Hans Blix.

Well, as my colleague is well aware, the President himself asked an

individual by the name of David Kay, who many Americans have seen on a

variety of news programs, to lead the post-war effort to find the so-

called weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. He was the individual who

had the courage to come before the Senate and say unequivocally and

clearly we were all wrong.

We have not heard that yet from the President of the United States.

Well, it just happens that David Kay has now been interviewed by a

highly respected journal, newspaper, called The Guardian from the

United Kingdom. He has called on the Bush administration, and I am

reading from a story that appeared in the March 3 edition of The

Guardian, he called on the Bush administration to come clean. And these

are his words here, not mine, not my colleague's, not anybody from the

Republican side of the office, but David Kay's. And they have not

received the attention, I dare say, they deserve here in the American

media. But it was David Kay in this interview that said, ``It is time

to come clean with the American people, Mr. President, and admit it was

wrong about the existence of the weapons.'' That is David Kay.

Well, let me continue with the same report that I had

alluded to earlier in The Guardian. And, again, this is Mr. Kay. I

would hope that some of the news organizations in this country would

contact Mr. Kay and corroborate this report from this highly regarded

newspaper in the United Kingdom, because I think it is extremely

telling. This administration will not admit they were wrong. We are

going to find out what happened whether they intentionally misled or

whether the intelligence itself was faulty. That is a question that

will be answered during the course of the next 5 or 6 months. But it is

about time for the President of the United States to stand up and say

we were wrong to the American people.

Mr. Kay said, ``The administration's reluctance to make that

admission was further undermining its credibility at home and abroad.''

President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Secretary Rumsfeld and Secretary

Powell owe an obligation to the American people in our role in the

world and our claim to moral authority to get this matter disposed of.

The Secretary of Defense will not let it go. Donald Rumsfeld has

dismissed Mr. Kay's assertion that there were no weapons of mass

destruction at the start of the Iraq war as a theory that was possible

but not likely. What is wrong, Mr. Rumsfeld? Do you not get it? It is

better for the country. Put aside the fear of embarrassment.

This is more about--this is less about personal embarrassment than it

is restoring American credibility as we proceed during the course of

this year and years here after dealing in a very, very dangerous world.

Mr. Speaker, with that I yield to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr.

Abercrombie).

We have been joined by our colleagues, the gentleman

from Ohio (Mr. Strickland) and the gentleman from the State of

Washington (Mr. Inslee), regulars on the Tuesday night Iraq Watch.

I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Strickland); but before I

give the time to him, I just want to repeat what David Kay said, the

individual that was put in charge of searching for the weapons of mass

destruction by this President, and this is from a report from a British

newspaper last week. Mr. Kay said that ``continuing evasion,'' these

are his words, ``would create public cynicism about the

administration's motives.'' He also said, ``If the administration did

not confront the Iraqi intelligence fiasco head on, it would undermine

its credibility with allies in future crises for a generation.'' For a

generation.

This President with his failure to come clean with the American

people, to be forthright, is putting our credibility at risk for a

generation. It is time for President Bush to stand up and say the truth

and to concur with the statement by David Kay that we were all wrong.

You were wrong. Your Secretary of Defense was wrong. Your Vice

President has been wrong. Your Under Secretary of Defense, Mr.

Wolfowitz, has been wrong. You have been wrong. Then we can proceed

again to restore the confidence of the world in the integrity of the

United States.

Mr. Speaker, speaking, of course, about the recovery.

In Ohio.

And elsewhere in America.

What you are speaking to is competence. It is just

sheer incompetence. What the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. Abercrombie)

and I were discussing earlier in our conversation, it is credibility,

credibility, and again, when we think of how we are treating our

soldiers. I do not for a moment believe that any Member of Congress or

the administration is not prepared and willing to do what is needed to

be done or what is necessary to be done to protect our soldiers, but it

comes down to incompetence.

I agree but I would suggest that that is a by-product

of just sheer incompetence by the civilian leadership, by the civilian

leadership in the Department of Defense, not the military personnel

because they are being sent into combat, but what is intentional, and

again, I dare say goes to the credibility of this President, is the way

that these men and women are treated when they come back to the United

States and hear that this President has underfunded veterans' medical

health care to the point where the commander of the Veterans of Foreign

Wars in this country described President Bush's budget as a sham, as a

sham.

Mr. Speaker, everybody knows, we all know, on both

sides of the aisle, that we will receive a so-called supplemental

budget. And those that are watching us this evening should understand

that that is in addition to the budget that we pass. And it is going to

come in absolutely with hundreds of billions of dollars, not just for

Iraq and Afghanistan, but for other needs, right after November 2.