Mr. President, yesterday's Washington Post included

details from a memo by our Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, in which

he makes a strong case that we need to do more to make it possible for

Iraqis employed by our government to come to the United States.

Ambasador Crocker emphasizes the growing danger facing these Iraqis,

who as he states ``work under extremely difficult conditions, and are

targets for violence including murder and kidnapping.'' According to

the article, Ambassador Crocker has called for establishment of an

immigrant visa program for these Iraqi employees.

In fact, Senators Smith, Biden, Hagel, Lieberman, Leahy, Levin, and I

have introduced legislation which establishes a program to do precisely

what Ambassador Crocker calls for.

Our legislation establishes an immigrant visa program for Iraqis who

have worked for or directly with the United States government for at

least 1 year. Our Government now provides such special immigrant visas

but only for Iraqi and Afghan translators and interpreters. Our bill

expands it to include Iraqis in other professions who have been

employed by us or who have worked directly with us.

In addition, our legislation creates additional options for Iraqis

who are under threat because of their close association with the United

States to apply to our refugee resettlement program.

The Senate is obviously divided on the best overall policy to pursue

on the war. I thought it was a mistake from the beginning. That is no

secret. Some of our colleagues are convinced that continuing the use of

military force in Iraq is necessary to protect our national security.

But our divisions on that issue should not obscure the fact that all

of

us on both sides of the aisle agree that America owes an immense debt

of gratitude to these Iraqis, and we have a special responsibility to

help them. They have supported our effort, saved American lives, and

are clearly at great risk because of it.

David Keene, chairman of the American Conservative Union, recognized

this obligation and called for action in a June 12 article in ``The

Hill.'' He recalled a Vietnamese friend who did not make it out of

Vietnam when the U.S. left, and said, ``There are in Iraq today untold

numbers of people like my Vietnamese friend who rushed to our aid when

we arrived and have worked with us since. If we abandon them, they may

not be so lucky.''

Similarly, in a June 24 op-ed in the Washington Post, Julia Taft

called for swift action to assist Iraqis whose lives are in danger

because of their work with our government. Ms. Taft served as director

of the Interagency Task Force for Indochinese Refugee Resettlement in

the Ford Administration and was later Assistant Secretary of State for

Population, Refugees and Migration. She wrote about an Iraqi couple

working for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad who had been kidnapped and

executed.

She said:

In her call for action, Taft said, ``The administration and Congress

cannot waste any more time. Their lack of political will has cost too

many people their lives. . . .''

In a July 19 op-ed in USA Today, Michael Medved, a conservative

Republican who supports the ongoing war effort, and Lanny J. Davis, a

liberal Democrat who supports the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq,

called for swift and bold action to help Iraqi refugees.

They wrote:

They specifically called for action on our legislation, saying:

Many Iraqis have been working with our Armed Forces, our diplomatic

mission, and our reconstruction teams in Iraq and have performed

valiantly, and their lives are at risk. Many have lost their lives and

many more have lost their homes, their property, and their livelihood.

For some, it will be too dangerous to ever return home.

America has a special obligation to keep faith with the Iraqis who

now have a bulls-eye on their back because of their association with

our Government.

Our bipartisan legislation will establish the kind of process that

Ambassador Crocker, David Keene, Julia Taft, Roy Medved, Lanny Davis,

and many others have called for to help these Iraqis who have

sacrificed so much for the United States. I ask unanimous consent that

the Washington Post article and other articles I have mentioned be

printed in the Record.

I urge my colleagues to support our legislation, S. 1651, to keep the

faith with the many brave Iraqis whose lives are in great danger

because they have the courage to work with the United States.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in

the Record, as follows: