

checked again every word and every sentence in the speech.

I know the President practiced the speech before coming here. All Presidents do. So who knew what and when did they know it?

A retired intelligence officer from the Marine Corps wrote me this letter just a few months ago, but his words have been coming back to me, and I reread this after these revelations this weekend, and I want to share some of it with my colleagues. He says he is a retired United States Marine Corps officer with over 30 years of active and reserve service. Upon his retirement from the Marine Corps, he has worked in domestic intelligence and law enforcement in our country at a senior level.

He basically informs me, in starting his letter, that his intelligence background is operationally based. But he says in the letter, first of all, there is no such thing as an intelligence failure, Congresswoman. Intelligence is a command function, just as operations is a command function, just as logistics is a command function. If a commander decides to do something that is not supported by intelligence, then that is a command failure, not an intelligence failure.

He wrote to me that in his opinion the evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction had not been vetted through the intelligence community, and he adamantly believes that that process is absolutely critical to an adequate analysis of the question. I thought about those words a great deal.

He says in his letter, look at the decision to go to war in Iraq. Our Commander in Chief decided to go to war, he planned for an operation, and nobody was about to give him any information to the contrary.

I ask myself, even if they had that information? Who had the information? Who knew what and when did they know it? We have a responsibility to the Constitution, to this country and to the people of the world. We ought to get to the bottom of who knew what and when did they know it.

REGARDING REMARK IN PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a little under 20 years ago, the maiden holder of this congressional seat, the Honorable Barbara Jordan, served in this House. She served at a time that this Congress took up the impeachment process of then President Richard Milhous Nixon. Impeachment had not been done in the 20th century; and, of course, it was a very troubling, very serious and very sobering time for America and for this Congress.

As I recollect, Chairman Rodino attempted to work across party lines,

and it was at a point of consensus on the House Judiciary Committee to the extent that Republicans conceded that maybe Mr. Nixon should resign that this process operated under. In fact, the Honorable Barbara Jordan was well noted for the words that she would not allow the Constitution to be diminished. It was at that time that I think Congress was at its best, bipartisan, in finding out the truth and telling the truth to the American people.

I was not there in Congress, obviously, and so I do not know whether the media chose to demonize those who felt in their hearts that the truth needed to be told.

We now come to almost 30 years, I believe, later, 2004, and we have a question of integrity and credibility, that on some sense there is a desire to know the truth. I have seen some light as this has unfolded to the American public, but I have also seen the effort to demonize those who would raise this question about what happened with respect to the intelligence that was given to the White House and the National Security Council.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to present that this is another serious question of the integrity of government. Just a few years ago, as a member of the House Judiciary Committee, in almost an uncanny way, I participated in an impeachment that my friends on the other side of the aisle thought was imperative so that the American people could know the truth. By them dominating the United States Congress, the articles of impeachment moved forward and a trial was held in the United States Senate against the President of the United States at that time, President William Jefferson Clinton. I may have vigorously disagreed, and I did. I participated in the process through the democratic processes and argued that those charges did not reach a constitutional charge of impeachment. But the process proceeded, and the American people were able to tell or denote for themselves truth or consequences, truth or falsity.

Today I ask the question of my Republican colleagues, is it no less important to find out whether or not the American people were misled as relates to intelligence given that was then recounted in one of the most sacred commentaries to the American people, the State of the Union?

In that address, the President offered that there was evidence that had been received from the British that the Iraqi government had tried to buy uranium from Africa. Whether that statement was vetted, the key word was recent purchase. Because, based upon the overall presentation that was made, it suggested to the Congress and to the American people that there was an urgent need to go to war and an urgent basis upon which to perpetrate a preemptive strike.

We now have the owners of this House, the majority of this House, demonizing those who are simply asking

for truth, suggesting it is frivolous, suggesting it has already been answered, asked and answered, and I absolutely disagree.

The American people deserve the truth, Mr. Speaker, because, as we speak, the sons and daughters of Americans are dying in Iraq. None of us would fail to defend this Nation, but it is a travesty that as we find the smudging fingerprints of misrepresentation across this administration that our colleagues would not rise to join us in a unanimous effort to ensure that an investigation is had.

Ambassador Joe Wilson went to Africa in January, February and March of 2002 to investigate this, if you will, representation. He found that there was no truth to this. He said it over and over again.

I have asked for the stepping aside of the CIA Director or the firing so that he can come forward under subpoena and speak the truth to the United States people. I conclude, Mr. Speaker, by simply saying that I will write a resolution of inquiry in order to find out the truth for the American people.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JOE BACA, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOE BACA, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
July 11, 2003.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena for documents issued by the Superior Court of the State of California.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

JOE BACA,
Congressman, 43rd CD.

ISSUES OF THE WEST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, this evening the bulk of my comments I intend to make about issues of the West, issues involving the concept of multiple use, issues delving really around public lands. But preceding those comments I cannot help but give some type of rebuttal to the preceding speakers who in my opinion spoke solely for the purpose of self-serving interests.

Having spent this last weekend looking at the TV periodically and seeing some of the reports that I saw on TV, it is very clear to me that we have a

Presidential election coming up in the not-too-distant future. What I saw time and time again, especially by the candidates who intend to oppose George W. Bush for the Presidency of this Nation, what I saw them time and time again on reflecting upon was how they could get their purported goals of being elected President ahead of what are in the best interests of this Nation.

I could not believe my ears this weekend when time and time again we saw those candidates who are seeking the Presidential office next year bashing the President of this country on a basis of which they do not know.

I thought it was very interesting that my colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio, stood up here and quoted from a so-called intelligence source, from some officer in the military of which she had got a letter. Over and over again in her comments, she lectured, saying that, you know, these things ought to be checked at least three times. I wish I would have had time during her time or I wish she would have yielded during her time so that I could have found out whether or not she had in fact verified her source the very three times upon which she condemned the administration theoretically for not doing.

□ 2100

And to have listened to the previous speaker, the gentlewoman from the State of Texas, who stands up here and blatantly says that the administration across the administration has made misrepresentations. It takes away from this House; it takes away from this country. Even the accused deserve more than what the previous speaker has just given to the administration. The previous speaker does not cite any proof. The previous speaker puts a few nice words in order up here and makes these allegations that there is blatant misrepresentation across the administration. Tell me that statement is anything except intended for self-serving interest. It is one of the most partisan remarks that I have heard since I have been up here in the House.

What they are trying to do is capitalize, capitalize upon 16 words; and by the way, I was involved very intensely in the debate on whether or not we should take action against Iraq, and I do not remember and of course I did not hear all the record, but I heard a lot of the record. I did not remember any of these previous speakers or, in fact, any of the speakers that have condemned the revelations that came out this weekend that perhaps the intelligence was not as good as it should have been or there were 16 words in the State of the Union address, when we debated the resolutions on Iraq, I never heard one of the speakers, not one of them, use as their source the State of the Union speech.

I did not hear one of those speakers refer to the sale from Africa as some type of uranium material. Not once did they cite that as one of their reasons

or questions that we should take action against Iraq.

What am I suggesting? I am suggesting they are making an awful lot out of this for one reason, not for the sake of the country, not for the sake of openness, not for the sake of the future and vision in this country and where to take this country. They are making these allegations for one reason and one reason only, and that is to somehow forward their own, forward their own self-interest, which in this particular case is a partisan attack against the President of the United States. They see this as an opening.

I read either on the "Roll Call" or "The Hill" or some other political newspaper today that these words in the State of the Union address may give an opening to the Democrats. Boy, if there is any kind of light at all coming through that door, we can see speakers just like the speakers we heard this evening taking advantage at this time on the floor for their own self-interest to issue a very stinging, self-serving partisan attack against the President. They have not walked one inch in the shoes of our President. They have never walked that mile, and yet they are so quick to jump up and condemn the leadership of this country.

I believe what this country did was right, and let me tell the Members it was not just a partisan decision to go to war. This was a decision on a resolution that was acted on in a bipartisan fashion. It received bipartisan support. And let me tell the Members it was not just this President. Let me show a poster I brought over. This is President Bill Clinton's comments. Look over here to my left. President Bill Clinton on Saddam's threat. February 18, 1998, 5 years ago: "What if Saddam Hussein fails to comply and we fail to act or if we take some ambiguous third route which gives him yet more opportunities to develop his programs of weapons of mass destruction and continue to ignore the solemn commitments that he made? Well, he will conclude that the international community has lost its will. He will conclude that he can go right on and do more to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction." President Bill Clinton saw that danger. President George Bush, the first President Bush, saw that danger, and this President saw this danger.

Do the Members know what is being masked here or what is being diverted, the diversion? What it takes away from is what an evil, horrible, horrible man Saddam Hussein was. And anybody that would stand up to the American people today and even dare to say that the people in Iraq are in worse condition today than they were before we took Saddam Hussein out, in other words, they are saying they were better under the control of Saddam Hussein, has no realization of how horrible this individual was.

In the eyes of many people, he rose to the same level or downgraded to the

same level, however one would like to put it, to Adolph Hitler, the same kind of sick, perverted mind, the same treacherous murderers. Although Hitler did not gas like Saddam Hussein did, we know that he used these weapons of mass destruction of his own people. We know from his own admissions, and I have got a chart that shows that, from his own admissions Saddam Hussein made to the United Nations of the lists of weapons of mass destruction. We know that in recorded history that he has killed more Muslims than any other person in recorded history. Muslims. This man was a horrible man. There is not a person in this world, not a person in the world that can stand up and show that this man respected any type of human right, any type of human right. This man was a murderer.

And despite what these two previous speakers say, despite what the Democratic leadership is attempting to do to push forward their Democratic candidates for President, no matter how much they attack President George W. Bush, the reality of it is that one of the worst murderers in the history of the world is no longer in authority in Iraq. One of the worst murderers in the history of the world had the greatest country in the world step up to him, and they said do you want to pick on somebody? Pick on somebody your own size. And the United States of America took him out of power.

Thank goodness that this country has able-bodied leaders, and I mean in the mind. Thank goodness this country has the people with the courage to team up with our allies like Tony Blair, who I am privileged to say people talk about a guy who deserves a Profile in Courage, and contrary to the comments by the gentleman from the State of Washington that perhaps he does not deserve this congressional honor that we are going to give him this week, the fact is that he stood, our President stood.

There were a lot of countries in this world that would have stood against Saddam Hussein, but they did not have the wherewithal to take him out. The United States did. The British did. There were other countries in this world who knew of the atrocities, just like some of my colleagues who spoke this evening, they knew of the atrocities that were going on in Iraq; and they did have the wherewithal to join our team, and they purposely hid in the foxhole. They would not come out of the foxhole. And our President and Tony Blair and the people of Britain, the people of Poland, the people of the United States, the people of Australia and some other countries, they did come out of the foxhole; and they used the power for a good purpose, for a good means. They took out an evil man.

And my colleagues on the Democratic side who are making these comments for a very clear partisan purpose, and that is they want to win the

Presidential elections next year, that is the only reason we had these speakers here this evening. Mark my word. These speakers would not be making these comments this evening, in my opinion, if there were not a Presidential election coming up. Those comments are tailor made, tailor made for television audiences around this country to somehow impact the upcoming Presidential elections. That is why those comments are made.

The fact of it is when we put all that cloud aside, when we put all of that distortion aside, when we get the static off the radio, the fact is a very evil man was removed from power, and for that the President of this country, the people of this country, the people of Britain, and the people of that willing team ought to be commended. We had the guts to take on an evil man. We had the wherewithal to take that evil man out. And now to see within our own camp, within our own camp on this House floor, some of my colleagues for strictly partisan purposes not stand at this microphone and talk about the evilness of Saddam Hussein, but stand at this microphone and talk about what they would describe as terrible things of our own administration, of our own leadership. What are they going to do, beat themselves up here in front of the American people to show the rest of the world that somehow the United States should hang its head low?

This is a proud country. I am proud to be a Congressman in it, and I will tell the Members this: I am very proud this country stood nose to nose with an evil man and took that evil man out of power. And to all our men and women that are out there in that fighting force, they have every reason to be proud. The decision that was made to send them to battle was the right decision, and the mission that they carried out was carried out in the correct fashion.

I think it is sadly disappointing to have some of my colleagues, who I like personally, they are nice people, but to stand up here for strictly partisan purposes and take shot after shot because we have Presidential elections coming up, taking shot after shot about our President and totally ignoring the evilness of Saddam Hussein, that in itself fits the definition of shameful in the Webster Dictionary.

I want to move from this because this was not my original intent. I did not intend to discuss this tonight, but I cannot sit in these House Chambers and listen to speaker after speaker on the Democratic side go up unrebuted. Nobody else, they would not make those kinds of comments in a debate where the other side had a chance to respond to it. They made those comments because they did not think anybody would be responding to them this evening. So I did divert from my comments for a few minutes, and I intend to go back to my comments and my original subject here this evening, but

I want these people, the Democrats, to know, and not all of them but the liberals over there, some of these people, their comments will be rebuted. I cannot sit back here and listen to some of that go on.

So my purpose this evening was, as I said earlier, really to talk about kind of the East and the West, primarily the western United States. I come from the State of Colorado. This evening I want to talk a little bit about the West and the public lands of this country and talk a little bit about what public lands are, talk about the issues that revolve around public lands, the forest fires which we have going right now. We speak of young men and women that are fighting in our military forces throughout the world, our young men and women in the military that are stationed in this country to defend this country that are doing their missions as we speak.

We also have many men and women that are also fighting fires as we now speak, fighting fires. We have many law enforcement personnel, many first-aid people, many firefighters across the country engaged in a life-threatening mission. And a lot of this today as we speak are some of the big fires that are starting now in the West. We have got a very dry season out there. Right now in Grand Junction, Colorado, which is the home I am from, it is 105 degrees. It sets a record. It has been setting a record day after day for about a week. So I want to talk a little bit about the fire issues, about the forest issues, about the BLM issues.

So let us begin by talking just for a moment about public lands. What are public lands? It is as the word describes: public lands are lands owned by the public. The United States, throughout the world, basically we have two types of ownership. This is very fundamental, but basic. We have lands that are owned privately, i.e. probably most of those whom I am speaking to this evening on the House floor, they own the land on which their home sits. That is private property. That is private lands, private lands. Public lands are lands that are owned by the people, owned by the government; and in the United States we have tens of millions, actually hundreds of millions of acres of land that are owned by the public. And land owned in private hands is treated differently than land owned by the public for a number of different reasons, many of those which are necessary, many of those which we would expect, many of those which make common sense.

But there is a little history to what happened with public lands in the country. And the first thing we have to do when we have a discussion of public lands is realize that the bulk of public lands is located in the western United States, and there is a reason for that; but let me first of all refer folks over here to my left. This is a map of government lands in the United States. All the color on that map of the United

States reflects what I have just described as public lands. These are public lands. And take a look at what we have here. In the East, generally speaking, in fact, really from east of the mountains so even in part of Colorado, eastern Colorado, we go from, say, east to, say, Denver, Colorado, out here to New York City or Washington, D.C., relatively speaking, you do not have many public lands.

□ 2115

In the East, most of your landownership is in private hands. It is not in public hands. Now there are some big exceptions. You have, for example, you have the Everglades Park. Up here, you have the Shenandoah Valley and some of the national parks up there. Up in the Northeast we have a national park and preserves up there.

But take a look at some of these areas. Take a look at the State of Kansas. In a lot of these areas, the only public land is land owned by the local city hall or the fire department or the local courthouse.

Well, then compare that, compare the eastern United States with the western United States. Take a look at the percentage of public lands. I have counties in my district; now, my district is a big district. To give my colleagues an idea, my district alone is about the size of the State of Florida. And if you take a look, I have counties in my district that have 98 percent of their land is in public hands, and it has a big impact. Well, how did that happen? How did so much of the public land end up in one part of the Nation and not dispersed somewhat evenly throughout the rest of the Nation?

Well, clearly there is a story to be told. As we look at the History Channel, for example, you know there is a story to be told, and that is what I want to tell tonight.

In the early days, most of our population obviously was in this area of the country, right along the eastern coast; and what happened is, in those days, we wanted to grow our Nation. That is what the entire world wanted to do. We wanted to grow this new country of ours, these great number of these States, united, called the United States, under one symbol, under a flag. We were so proud, we wanted to grow that country. In order to grow that country, what we needed to do is somehow get people to go out and help us settle the land. The government went out and bought the land.

But unlike today, today, if, for example, I own a piece of property in Hawaii, I do not have to go to Hawaii. I do not have to go to Hawaii for several years as long as I pay my taxes and I have a deed that says I own that property, that property is protected under my rights. It is my land. It is private property.

But in the early days of this country, private property or the land that you claimed was yours was not yours unless you were really on it. A deed did not

mean a whole lot. In fact, many of my colleagues have heard the saying, possession is nine-tenths of the law. That is where this came from. In order for you to claim the land, you needed to be on the land, you needed to be tilling the land and, frankly, in a lot of cases, you needed to have a six-shooter strapped to your side.

So we knew that in order for the United States to really keep control of this land, to help grow our great country, we needed to persuade people to leave the East Coast and go to the West. Go west, young man, go west.

Now, this is pretty tough to do. Now, today, when you say to somebody, hey, let us go west of the Colorado mountains, let us go to Aspen or Durango or Steamboat or Glenwood Springs, it is a pretty easy decision to make. You go out there and have a great time. Some of the most beautiful spots in the world are in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado.

But back in the early days of this country, the only thing that you were promised by going west was, one, a free piece of property. But what they did not tell you so much or emphasize so much was that the odds were, most of the women would die in childbirth, most of the men would probably die in accidents in their 20s. You had to worry about snakebites. You had to worry about attacks from different groups, whether it was native Americans or whether it was pirates of our own. They did not have a real justice system out there in the prairies and out there in the West. So it was very dangerous. It did not offer a lot of promise for a long future. They did not have time-shares out in Colorado and out there in those mountains in the early days. It was a tough existence.

So what did the government do to get people to go there? They gave what is really a fundamental dream for every American, and that is the possibility to own your own piece of property. Mr. Speaker, one of the great things of this country, unlike a lot of countries in this world, one of the great things of this country is that you can own your own piece of land. It is yours. And we all dream about it.

I can remember when I was small dreaming of having my own house on my own piece of property up in the mountains. I was born and raised in the mountains. I mean, I dreamed of it. I think of the George Strait song where he talks about the difference between living and living well. He talks about his little home, his little beach house on the beach and watching a thousand sunsets. I mean, we dream of owning property.

That is what the government did. They capitalized on this dream and said, let us offer it to the people. If they go out, our citizens go out and they start a little farm out here in Kansas, let us say out in there somewhere, let us say near Hayes, Kansas, or somewhere, if they go out and till the land, we will give them 160 acres or

320 acres and they can support a family.

Now, that was called homesteading, and we had actually used land for this purpose before. Interesting.

What we had done during the Revolutionary War is the government had actually offered, to the extent that we had that government at that point, like a Department of Interior, so to speak, our government offered to British soldiers free land. You can own your own property, free of the queen, if you defect from the British forces and join our forces. So this was not the first time the government tried this scheme.

So the government did this. They decided, let us go ahead and offer free land and persuade people to go out and occupy the lands, for example, that we got under the Louisiana Purchase. It accomplishes two things. One, it expands our borders; two, it puts people on the land so we can conquer it; and, three, it meets the dreams of a united continental United States.

Mr. Speaker, it worked. We had people, we have seen the movies where they would have a big string or big rope attached and all of these people on horses and wagons, it was like the Gold Rush days. They got to have land.

What happened is that it was a tremendous success, a tremendous success. The people were coming this way, they were coming in here, they were settling all over, up here, up in the north, over here in Kansas in the mid country. They were down there in the south. They were going into Texas. People were looking to settle. They were expanding into this country.

But all of a sudden we found out there was a problem out there. And that was soon these settlers found out that when they hit the Rocky Mountains of Colorado or they hit the mountains of Wyoming or they hit the Rockies up there in Montana or they got into the deserts in Arizona, that 160 acres could not support a family. Out in the area where I live near Grand Junction, Colorado, there are places out there you cannot feed one sheep on 20 acres.

So word got back to the Nation's capital: Hey, our Homestead Act is working pretty well until you hit the mountains of Colorado or the mountains of Montana or Wyoming. When they get out into that rugged country, it is arid, and they discovered that there is a huge difference between the amount of water in the East and water in the West. Let me show my colleagues.

For example, while we are talking about the West here, take a look at what these settlers ran into. Seventy-three percent of the water in this Nation, 73 percent of the precipitation falls right there in the East. That is where they lived. So homesteading up here, a growing pasture where you have that kind of water is a whole lot different than growing pasture out in the Rockies or out in the West.

Take a look here. Over half of the Nation is in this red, and over half of

the Nation gets only 14 percent of the water. So as these settlers came to the West, not only did they run into the rugged mountains, but they ran into the fact that it is an arid part of this country.

You cannot raise things on 160 acres that you can, for example, out here in Virginia or over in Florida. I have never seen such magnificent farms as I have seen in Virginia or down in Florida where I have seen those big farms. We have arid conditions in the West. So water played a part, played a role in the difficulty that we faced.

So they went back to Washington and they said, there is no water out there. That is tough country out there. The mountains, these mountains are beautiful, but it is tough living. The people are not settling where we need them to settle. And somebody, and I am making up this number, I am sure historically we could probably find it, but somebody said, well, the way to do it, if a family in Colorado where it is arid out there in the West or Nevada or somewhere cannot make it on 160 acres, maybe we ought to give them, and I make this number up, maybe we ought to give them 2,000 acres. Let us give them an amount of land that would be proportionate to the amount of land that they would need to grow on 160 acres.

The problem was this: The government was under a lot of political heat because they have given away land to what was then called the railroad barons, the Intercontinental Railroad, and there is a book by Stephen Ambrose, which is a fabulous book about the difference in our country that this railroad made, the construction of that railroad. That workforce, we had a workforce ready to go, ready to take orders right after the Civil War, a workforce that understood tough conditions because of the Civil War, and that they could build this railroad with only one power device, by the way, a little tractor out there, it was all built by hand, that they could build that railroad. But, unfortunately, there was some fraud involved in the construction of that railroad, and they were called the railroad barons.

Now, a lot of these people, this railroad would not have been built but for those folks. But amongst their crowd, there were some bad apples. So the political circles in Washington, D.C., were under a lot of political heat: Do not give away any more land. Look what you did. You gave this land for this great railroad and look what these railroad barons did with it. So the government at that time and, in my opinion, the only reason that the government decided to keep this vast amount of land was not because they had visions that the Arizona desert or the Utah desert out here would someday be a national park. That was not the vision, like some groups would like us to believe today. In fact, they did have that vision on specific areas: Theodore Roosevelt, the President, for example,

on Yellowstone National Park. But there were specific areas that they did have that vision of great national parks and preservation for all future generations.

But that is not the explanation of why all of this land ended up in public hands or stayed in public hands. The reason is that Washington could not take the political heat at that point in time to give away the land that was necessary to support the families in proportion to the same amount of land they had given in the East. So they came up with a solution, and this is a very important part of my comments. They came up with a solution.

Well, instead of giving the people the land to homestead on, why do we not go ahead and keep the title in the government's name, but we will allow the people the use of it. And thereupon was born the concept of multiple use on public lands. Let the people use the lands, even though the title of the land is in the name of the government and Washington, D.C. That thereupon explains why so much of this land in the West was put into public hands.

Now today one of the challenges that we face living on these public lands, and let me give you an idea of what living on public lands means. In my district, almost every area in my district is completely, and I mean completely, surrounded by land owned by the government. Every community in my district is totally dependent upon those public lands. We get our power across those public lands. We get our water, all of our water, or most of our water originates, comes across, or is stored upon Federal lands. Our recreation is on Federal lands. Our cellular telephone towers are on public lands. Our radio towers, our TV towers, our access, our highways, you name it, we are dependent on public lands.

Many of my colleagues in the East are not. They do not have that problem. In fact, in the East when you want to build a ditch or a major construction project, you go to the planning and zoning authority. In the West, our planning and zoning authority is often in Washington, D.C., because the owner of the land is the United States Government.

And there are a lot of people in the East, unfortunately, not large in population, because we are one country and we have a lot of people who understand the situation that we are in, but we have certain radical environmental organizations that their number one goal is to eliminate the multiple use concept, eliminate that saying that I grew up under: You are now entering White River National Park, for example, White River National Forest in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, a land of many uses. They want to eliminate the human existence off of these lands. They want to get rid of that concept. There are people who do not want us to have ski areas out here. They do not want us hunting on public lands. They do not want us getting our water off public lands.

□ 2130

They are fighting. They do not want power lines on public lands. They do not want us to have parks and recreational areas in certain parts of those public lands. What they want to do is take control of that so we have a constant battle, a battle that is not undiscovered in the East, but certainly is not a primary concern in the East because you do not have to deal with it on a day-to-day basis and we do.

Now, let me talk about one of the big problems we have out there. As I showed you earlier, I showed you a diagram where over half of this Nation gets 14 percent of the water, where that is where the precipitation and that is in the West.

In the West we have got to have water storage. Water storage is absolutely critical. Now, I know that groups like the National Sierra Club, for example, have never in the history of their organization to the best of my knowledge ever supported a water storage project. In fact, the National Sierra Club's number one goal is to take down the major recreational power supplier, flood control and water storage unit in the West called Lake Powell down here in Utah. That is their number one goal. Water storage is critical for us.

The first dam we know to be built in the West was the Anasazi Indians down to the Four Corners. The Four Corners is called that, it is right over here, it is the only place in the Nation where four States come together at once. You can stand in my district right on that corner and be in four States at once. And it is down in there where the Anasazi Indians lived. And what drove the Anasazi Indian out of their settlements that they had had for hundreds and hundreds of years? It was the lack of water. And we found evidence down there, I did not, but the archeologists found evidence down there of dams, the first known storage of water.

If you live in the West you are dependent upon water storage. In the last 3 or 4 years, last year we had a severe drought. This year we have severe heat. In the last couple of years preceding those years, we had much less than usual precipitation. The only way we were able to survive is because we had water storage.

In Colorado, for example, in western Colorado we have all the water we could possibly want in a usual year for about a 60- to 90-day period of time, and that period of time is called the "spring runoff." But after that 60 or the 70 days after the spring runoff, which is the high snow coming and melting off the high mountains, once that runoff runs out of the State, if we do not store it, we do not have it. And the rest of the year, the rest of those days of the year if we do not have stored water, we are in real trouble.

I never knew what a real rain storm was until I came here in the East. Even the drops of rain, even your drops here are significantly larger than the drops

of rain that we get in the West. We do not have rain storms like you do back here. It is very tough in the West. We have got to store water. And that is why you will find it is very interesting to see, for example, on some of these environmental score cards, it is very hard to find a so-called environmental organization, primarily the ones on the left, it is hard to find any of them that says anything positive about water storage. But it is very interesting when you look at their so-called environmental score cards, you will see the legislators, the Congressmen in the East at the top with the A's and you will see those in the West that have to support the water storage, that understand and have to deal with public lands, they are at the bottom of the list. They usually get the F's on it. And I can tell you I am down there too because of my support for water storage.

So my comments this evening, which I will wrap up here because I want to do this in a series, I want to leave you with a couple of fact or things that I think are important to carry into any next comments which I would like to make a few nights from now.

Number one, in the United States the largest conglomerate of public lands, keep in mind it is not spread evenly throughout the country, the largest block of public lands is in the West; and it is reflected by the map to my left. All of those colors on that map indicate public lands.

Number two, something very important to remember and I will show this poster again, in the East, what I would call the East, the blue spot, the blue part of this map, that is where 73 percent of the precipitation and the water is found in this country. In the West, specifically the red part, that is over half the Nation in total acreage or size, receives 14 percent of the precipitation. So water storage here is obviously much more important for you to have water on somewhat of a continual basis through the year than water storage might be in the East.

Now, water storage is important in the East because you obviously have production of power; you have flood control, which is very important for you out here. In fact, in the East your problem a lot of times is getting rid of the water. Our problem in the West is being able to keep the water, to be able to store the water.

So I wanted you to go away from my comments this evening keeping in mind that in this area, generally, where most of the public lands are is also where the least amount of water is. So water is very precious. They say in Colorado, they say in the West, I keep saying Colorado because that is my home, but they say in the West that water runs thicker than blood. That is how vital it is out there.

So we have a number of discussions here on this House floor about public lands. We have a number of discussions about issues dealing with public lands. I cannot tell you how many times I

have heard some of my colleagues who, giving them the benefit of the doubt, I think are ignorant somewhat of the facts, who attack the fact that we have ski areas out in the West or that we have, God forbid, we cut some timber off some of this land out there or we have recreation or we have mountain bikes that we allow on government lands or we go horseback riding or we allow animals grazing. Before any of you sign on some of these "dear colleague" letters that condemn use on public lands, come to some of us who live in it, come to some of us who experience it every day of our lives, whose families have for generations and generations lived on these public lands or lived on little private holdings that are completely surrounded by these public lands and ask us about those issues.

So, again, this evening, one, I would like you to go away with remembering where the bulk of public lands are in this country. They are in the West. Proportionately speaking, there are only a fraction of the public lands held in the East. And by the way, an interesting history story to help you remember that, in the State of Texas, Texas as you know was its own country at one time and before Texas agreed to join this great Nation, the United States, one of their conditions was that the government could never own land within the boundaries of the State of Texas without permission of the people of the State of Texas. The only State to my understanding of the Union that is like that. Alaska should have done that; 98 percent of Alaska is owned by the government.

So keep that in mind. That is where the bulk of it is. And the second thing, to be repetitive, but it is so important, is the largest percentage of moisture, 73 percent, almost three-quarters of the precipitation and water in this country, is in the East on the private lands. It is on these lands out here where I live, this is where we get in this area, except for the northwest right up here, this big bulk of public lands here gets 14 percent of the water.

So I urge my colleagues this evening, do not sign on to these "dear colleague" letters that say take down Lake Powell. Lake Powell is a vital resource to the survival of the people of the West. Do not sign on to these letters that say we should get rid of the concept of the multiple use. Do not sign on to these letters that say get rid of all the roads on public lands. Do not sign on to these letters that say, for example, take all of this, put people off and put a wilderness designation. And wilderness is a positive term, but what it means in legal terms when you title it wilderness has huge, huge ramifications on the people that are around it.

So in summary I say this: public lands are an important part of this country. They are property of the country. The people of this country do own that, but you have to give consideration to the people who live on those lands and the vitality of those people to be able to survive.

With that, I will wrap up my comments. I look forward to continuing this. We will go into much more detail in a couple nights on water and the consumption of water and the recycling of water.

IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FEENEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, for 5 or 6 weeks, a number of us have been coming to the floor to discuss our Nation's involvement and our role in Iraq. We have at least four times come here, four of us, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL), and the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), and have had a discussion and a lively give and take about Iraq, about what is going right over there, what is going wrong, trying to seek the truth, trying to suggest policy changes, trying to have a full discussion and report to the people of this country. And we have decided to do this every week, every week that the House is in session as long as our country is involved in Iraq.

We are going to call ourselves the Iraq Watch because we think that there are important public policy matters that the American people need to be aware of, that Congress needs to focus on, we need to ask questions about, seek information about, to clarify, to seek policy changes, to make some changes and fundamentally to report to the people of this country on what we know and what we think we all ought to know about what has happened in Iraq.

Now, of the four I named, two of us voted in favor of the military authority sought by the President and two of us voted "no" to exercise that authority. But we all were sold, as was the entire Congress and the American people, with great certainty by the administration and by the President that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction last fall when the vote was approaching and that he was trying to develop more. The certainty was expressed in public. The certainty was expressed in private.

I have, along with a number of Members of Congress, attended a briefing at the White House, one of a series of briefings. In my case, we were briefed by Condoleezza Rice, the National Security Advisor, and George Tenet, the director of the CIA. We were told with certainty that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and was trying to develop more.

Now, there is no question that in the past Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. That has been proven. He used them. He used weapons of mass destruction against his own people. He used them against the Kurds. And he

used them against innocent civilians in Iraq. He used them in murderous ways. That is beyond question. But what we were told is that he had them in the fall of 2002, that he was developing more, and that he was an impediment to the peace in the Middle East and to our Nation's security and because of that imminent threat, we needed to exercise preemptive military power to disarm Saddam Hussein.

I voted for it. I would do so again being told the same information as we were told then. I imagine that some of my colleagues who voted "no" would vote "no" again. But the question is we are discovering that things may not have been just what we thought they were. We certainly have won a great military victory. Our armed services, our young men and women in uniform performed admirably and with great courage in Iraq. But we have got two questions, this group has two questions: Fundamentally, is our military mission complete and are we winning the peace in Iraq? And I would submit before I yield to my colleagues that the military mission is not complete and cannot be complete as long as there has not been an accounting of the weapons of mass destruction, where are they and who controls them, and what went wrong regarding our intelligence, how was our intelligence collected, and how was it used by the White House and by the political leadership, and are we doing the right things from a policy standpoint to win the peace.

And I suggest that this group of four and many of our colleagues have a lot of questions about this. I know those questions are shared by the American people; I hope we can give voice to these questions in this Iraq Watch. I hope we can come up with some answers or seek those answers from the administration, and I hope we can report back on a regular basis once a week to the American people.

I yield now to my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL).

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) for organizing this. It is interesting that you noted we were militarily successful, and I think everybody takes pride in what our men and women in uniform did in pursuing the mission that they were on.

What I think is unfortunate is that they went into that mission without a plan for the occupation and without a sense of how to seek and secure that peace once the war was over. And that is something that the civilian leaders, that is the type of leadership that the civilian leaders needed to provide and did not.

Let me give you an example of that point. After the war and hostilities ceased in both Bosnia and Kosovo, not a single American soldier was killed in action after the hostility ceased. Why? Because in both cases we had a plan for the occupation, and we had allies, two things missing in this endeavor.