

the Union Address about whether Iraq obtained yellowcake from Niger to develop nuclear weapons turned out to be totally false and bogus.

The obvious question that has to be asked is whether this administration and its spokespersons knew ahead of time the information they were giving to the American people was not accurate. That is the essential inquiry that must take place.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has 3 minutes remaining.

#### STATUS OF AHMAD CHALABI INVESTIGATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I note that something curious is happening in Washington today. There is a man by the name of Ahmad Chalabi, an Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, who is visiting Washington. Yesterday in the Wall Street Journal, FBI spokesman John Miller noted that Mr. Chalabi is "under active investigation." For what? He is under investigation for the charge that he leaked intelligence, including the fact that the United States had broken a crucial Iranian code and that Mr. Chalabi turned that information over to the Baghdad station chief of Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security.

Of course, if that happened, Mr. Chalabi endangered American troops and American security. As a result of this charge against Mr. Chalabi on May 20 of last year, his residence was searched by the Iraqis, with the cooperation of American forces in Iraq, to see if evidence could be found.

That is a serious charge that we would somehow jeopardize the security of America's troops and our national security and whether this man leaked sensitive information. The fact that he is under active investigation by the FBI is proof positive that we are taking this seriously.

So where can we find Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Chalabi this week? Well, we will find him in Washington. He has an appointment to sit down and break bread with Treasury Secretary Snow and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Then a little later this week he is going to give a speech to the American Enterprise Institute.

Does this sound like a man under active investigation or a man who is being actively lauded by this administration? I do not understand this.

While the Department of Justice is actively investigating this man for wrongdoing that could have endangered American troops and American lives, the Department of State and the Department of the Treasury are hosting him as though he were some dignitary. So do not be surprised if the Chalabi motorcade speeds up when they pass the Department of Justice. I guess they are concerned whether an FBI agent will come out and pursue this so-called active investigation.

It is very difficult to track how this man, who gave us such misleading information before the invasion of Iraq,

now under active investigation for endangering American troops, is now the toast of the town at the Department of Treasury and the Department of State. I do not follow their logic, and I certainly do not follow the pursuit of justice if they do not have an active investigation concluded so that we know whether Mr. Chalabi has endangered American lives.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SUNUNU). The Senator's time has expired. Who yields time?

The Senator from Colorado.

#### A NEW DAY AND TIME IN IRAQ

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, we are now less than a month removed from the successful Iraqi referendum that was approved by more than 75 percent of Iraqis. This vote marked a new dawn in the Arab world, a democratically created constitution written by Iraqis and approved by the general electorate made up of Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds. This is quite a change from the decades in which a militant dictator ruled over Iraq, with the threat of death hanging over the people for any harsh word directed toward their central government. It is truly a new day in Iraq and a new time.

Of course, some would rather ignore the strides that the Iraqi people have taken. They would rather focus on grim milestones that neither reflect the true sacrifice that has been made nor give a clear indication of how far the Iraqis have come to independence. The men and women of our Armed Forces have created an environment in Iraq that has given Iraqis a chance for democracy.

This chance is born from the blood, sweat, and tears of our servicemen and women. They deserve our gratitude and honor.

Friday marks Veterans Day and it is fitting that every year we take time to pause and reflect on those who have served in the military to protect our way of life and advance freedom around the globe. While we celebrate this year, we do so with heavy hearts knowing that there are many future war veterans who are currently serving in the theater abroad. As they have done in the past, our armed forces have taken up the challenge yet again to defend our freedoms from violent extremists to ensure that future generations of Americans can continue to prosper. Many of these war veterans have already served previous tours in Iraq, and my thoughts and prayers go out for another safe return home.

Many thousands of troops who are engaged in Iraq are Coloradoans. For example, the 10th Combat Support Hospital that left Fort Carson for Iraq in October. This medical unit is being deployed not only to treat our injured servicemen and women, but also any civilian that is brought in to their trauma unit regardless of affiliation. I want to take a minute to pause and re-

flect on that. Our trained medical doctors and technicians will be using their skills to save the lives of not only Coalition Forces, but anyone who is brought in—including insurgents. They might be saving the very lives of those that would do great harm to our soldiers. These are the types of actions that show what kind of men and women serve in the armed forces. These are the types of actions that show what freedom and democracy can bring to a region long devoid of it.

The individuals in our armed forces continue to shine throughout the country with remarkable levels of service. Individuals like Col. James West of Palisade, CO. Colonel West recently received a Bronze Star after distinguishing himself during two consecutive tours of duty in Iraq. He served as a Senior Program Manager in the Project and Contracting Office in Baghdad, Iraq from December 2004 to September of this year. Because of the critical nature of his position and the need to maintain the lines of communication and trust he developed with the Iraqi Oil Ministry and the primary Iraqi owned operating companies, Colonel West volunteered himself for two consecutive tours of duty.

During this time, his leadership in the field provided the foundation necessary to achieve the goal of rebuilding the Iraqi Oil production capacity to pre-war levels. The Department of Defense and the Air Force believe that his professionalism and devotion to duty merit special recognition. I honor him for his service to our country and congratulate him on his well-deserved Bronze Star.

More than just being engaged in fighting the radical insurgents who have polluted the country, our men and women like Colonel West are risking their lives to reach out to the Iraqi people to show them the heart that is behind the uniform. From the Army engineers throughout the country helping to rebuild the infrastructure, to ordinance disposal units helping to cleanse farmland from explosives left from decades of neglect, our troops continue to make a positive difference in the lives of Iraqis.

It is important to put our military's efforts into the proper perspective. The enormous progress that has been made in Iraq is the real story.

It was only 2½ years ago that the Hussein regime was in power terrorizing large portions of the Iraqi population. And now just 9 months after they elected their own leaders for the first time, the Iraqi people have approved a historical referendum by an overwhelming majority. These are the milestones we should be celebrating—the ones that could only be achieved through the sacrifices of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

This Friday marks Veterans Day. Let us not forget our future war veterans who are gallantly serving the cause of freedom abroad. And let us remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to help bring democracy to Iraq.