In Iraq, the President advanced the notion of promoting democracy to explain his decision to go to war only after his preferred political explanations—the tie between Iraq and September 11th and the presence of weapons of mass destruction—were rebutted. Democracy here was a rationalization constructed to justify a policy that clearly had other goals, and then only after alternative explanations were refuted.

It is true that the results of the American intervention in Afghanistan will certainly be a far more democratic Afghanistan, and I welcome that. But here too it should be noted that the President's approach was to first ask the repressive and brutal Taliban to surrender Osama bin Laden to us, and only after that government refused to do that did we invade. Democracy in Afghanistan will be a happy byproduct of our war, but it was not the motivating factor.

Beyond that, as Mr. Hiatt makes clear, there is not an area in the world in which promotion of democracy has been an important part of the Bush foreign policy. To quote Mr. Hiatt, ''in Bush's first term, democracy promotion seemed to be the policy mostly when it was convenient . . .''

I agree with Mr. Hiatt that it is not axiomatic that the promotion of democracy should be the single or even the most important goal of American foreign policy in every instance. But what is—or at least ought to be—clear is that a President should not claim a moral basis for his foreign policy which in no way corresponds to reality.

Mr. Speaker, with Colin Powell no longer serving as a diversion without real policy influence, and with the experience we have had with the Administration's inaccurate claims about weapons of mass destruction, I hope that the Administration's actual foreign policy will receive a good deal more scrutiny than it has in the past. Mr. Hiatt's column is a good beginning in that effort. I ask that it be printed here.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 15, 2004]

A FOREIGN POLICY TO MATCH BUSH'S RHETORIC?

(By Fred Hiatt)

In an interview last spring, Sen. John F. Kerry made clear that promoting democracy abroad would not be a priority of his presidency. Of course he believed in freedom and human rights, but in every country there seemed to be a goal that would rank higher for him in importance: securing nuclear materials in Russia, fighting terrorism alongside Saudi Arabia, pursuing Middle East peace with Egypt, controlling Pakistan's nuclear program, integrating China into the world economy.

Kerry's ostensibly pragmatic approach alarmed some idealists in his own party and allowed George W. Bush to claim the high moral ground of foreign policy. ''I believe in the transformational power of liberty,'' Bush declared as he accepted his party's nomination for the second time. ''The wisest use of American strength is to advance freedom.''

But here's the irony: Kerry's recital of priorities around the world was a pretty fair description of Bush's first-term record. An interesting second-term question will be whether the president reshapes his policy to match his rhetoric: whether he really believes that democracy abroad is in the U.S. national interest. There are, after all, plenty of smart foreign policy experts who doubt that proposition.

In 2000 Bush did not campaign on a liberty platform, and even after his oratory began to soar, his policies didn't change much. In Afghanistan and Iraq, democracy evolved gradually into a central goal of post-invasion U.S. policy. But in the rest of the world there seemed—just as for Kerry—to be higher priorities.

The administration counted its management of relations with China and Russia as a major first-term success, for example, marked by stability and cooperation in fighting terrorism. The fact that China was chewing away on Hong Kong's freedoms, and continuing to lock up its own dissidents, journalists and priests, didn't get in the way. The stunning rollback of freedoms in Russia didn't seem to bother Bush either.

Smaller countries offered a similar picture. Bush welcomed Thailand's autocratic leader as a comrade in the war on terrorism even as democracy there eroded. Under congressional pressure, the administration rapped the knuckles of Uzbekistan's torturers, but not so hard as to interfere with a budding military relationship. Azerbaijan's longtime communist strongman bequeathed power to his ill-prepared son, but that was okay; Azebaijan is rich in oil and gas. Pakistan's strongman broke repeated promises to return his country to civilian rule, but he was too valuable an ally against al Qaeda for the administration to object. And so on, around the world.

The choices Bush made weren't evil, and they didn't mean that, all things being equal, he wouldn't prefer to encourage democracy. The United States was attacked, and it needed basing rights in Uzbekistan to retaliate. Its economy needs Azeri oil, and Venezuelan oil, and all kinds of other undemocratic oil. The alternative to the general running Pakistan might be a lot worse—a fundamentalist Islamic regime with nuclear weapons, for instance.

So there were strong arguments for maintaining good relations with all of these autocrats. But that's the point; there will always be countervailing arguments. If you think democracy is just a secondary, wouldn't-it-be-nice objective—if you don't think raw national interest is served by spreading freedom abroad—liberty will always rank below some mother, legitimate priority.

You might understand if Bush felt that way. After all, it was democratically elected leaders in France and Germany who caused him the most first-term heartburn. Many experienced diplomats, including senior officials of the Bush administration, believe it's more important to appeal to the national interest of a Russia or an Egypt than to worry about how those nations are governed.

But Bush says he is convinced of the opposite view: that America will actually be safer if more countries become democratic. ''As freedom advances, heart by heart, and nation by nation, America will be more secure and the world more peaceful,'' he argued in that same convention address.

Such a belief translated into policy would not mean that liberty would automatically and always take precedence over basing rights, counterterrorism cooperation or smooth trade relations. But in Bush's first term, democracy promotion seemed to be the policy mostly when it was convenient: in Palestine, where it allowed him to avoid confrontation with Israel's leader; in Cuba, where it allowed him to win votes in Florida. If you see him in the next four years risking other U.S. interests to champion liberty where it is not so convenient, then you will know he meant what he said on the campaign trail.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the members of Zion Lutheran Church in Naperville, Illinois on the 150th anniversary of the founding of their outstanding institution.

Established in the difficult years leading up to the Civil War, Zion Lutheran Church has well withstood the test of time. Through the Great Depression, a closed school, a devastating fire, and other trials, the dedication and determination of its members have triumphed. Generation after generation, they have shown their unswerving commitment to faith, family and community.

The countless and varied contributions of the members of Zion Lutheran have played a vital role in making the Village of Naperville, Illinois a great place to live and raise families. Over the past century and a half, their selfless community service has touched the lives of so many, especially children.

Zion Lutheran Church is more than just a place of worship. It is a community with a strong tradition of service, faith, and values.

Today, we all share in their joy as they celebrate 150 wonderful years. The world is a better place because of the people of Zion Lutheran Church, and the residents of Naperville and the 13th Congressional District are fortunate to count them as our friends and neighbors.

I am happy to wish Zion Lutheran Church all the best for continued success in their good work. May the next 150 years be as great a blessing as the first.

HONORING LANCE CPL JOSEPH WELKE

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to honor the life of Lance Cpl. Joseph Welke who died November 20, 2004 from wounds suffered while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom during the battle for Fallujah.

Joseph, who was a Greater Dakota All-Conference football player, graduated from Stevens High School in Rapid City, South Dakota in 2003. He enlisted in the Marines soon after graduation, and was assigned to the Marine Corps base camp in Pendleton, California. He was a member of the 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and was deployed to Iraq this past June.

Joseph dreamed of playing college football, but put those plans on hold to join the Marines and serve his country. He is described as an individual who was self-motivated and liked by everyone who knew him. Joseph's family believes his smile said it all. His mother explained that her son seldom got punished, even when he did something wrong, just because of his smile. He was committed to and gave one hundred percent to everything he

did—including football, the Marines, and his family.

Every member of the House of Representatives has taken a solemn oath to defend the constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. While we certainly understand the gravity of the issues facing this legislative body, Lance Cpl. Joseph Welke lived that commitment to our country. Today, we remember and honor his noble service to the United States and the ultimate sacrifice he has paid with his life to defend our freedoms and foster liberty for others.

The lives of countless people were enormously enhanced by Joseph's compassion and service. Joseph, who represented the best of the United States, South Dakota, and the Marines continues to inspire all those who knew him and many who did not. Our Nation and the State of South Dakota are far better places because of his service, and the best way to honor him is to emulate his devotion to our country.

I join with all South Dakotans in expressing my sympathies to the family of Lance Cpl. Joseph Welke. His commitment to and sacrifice for our Nation will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO RICK RIDDER

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I have used this forum from time to time to acknowledge the bipartisan public service of many distinguished Coloradans. Today I rise in what I hope will be a moment my Republican friends and colleagues will not begrudge—to honor a distinguished Coloradan who is anything but bipartisan. I rise to acknowledge Rick Ridder.

Rick has been a trusted advisor and friend throughout my career in politics. Although Rick is respected and widely sought after in Colorado politics, he has never lost his down-to-earth nature. This is because he is the rarest of political partisans—a determined strategist who keeps his humanity intact. He understands the game of politics well and he most certainly plays to win. At the same time he is unwavering in his integrity and his sincere desire to work for the betterment of people.

Rick has never been particularly impressed with the ''glitter'' of politics that attracts so many to our profession. Rather, he believes at his core in the importance of our democracy and his duty to fight for its vitality. This should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with his upbringing. By way of example, his mother took him to an Adlai Stevenson rally at the age of three. To occupy her little boy, she suggested that he pass out flyers promoting the Illinois Governor's bid for the presidency in 1956. In addition, having grown up in and around Washington, DC his playmates included the children of Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy. Whereas many of our generation looked at those men as heroes and even icons of a generation, Rick saw them simply as his friends' dads.

Had he a different character this upbringing might have led Rick to a sense of entitlement, but instead, it gave him a razor sharp sense of purpose. He uses his unique experience in politics to serve a goal greater than his own self-interest. He has worked tirelessly to that effect for decades.

In 1982, he helped Colorado Governor Richard Lamm with his third gubernatorial campaign. He went on to become the National Field Director for Gary Hart's 1984 presidential campaign. In 1985 with his wife Joan, he formed Ridder-Braden Inc., a political consulting and polling firm that has been instrumental in crafting campaigns in Colorado and across the country. His clients have included Colorado Governor Roy Romer, Congressman David Skaggs, Senator BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL and various Members of Congress. In 2004 he helped launch the meteoric rise of Governor Howard Dean, and a provocative ballot initiative on reform of the Electoral College that made a significant contribution to the public debate on a largely over-looked, but critical, component of our democratic process.

While many political consultants are rightly maligned as ''hired guns'' who corrode public confidence in the political process, professionals like Rick Ridder and Joanie Braden are rare examples of people who work to elevate public discourse and improve our democracy.

For the information of my colleagues I'm attaching the original article.

[From the Rocky Mountain News, Oct. 29, 2004]

CONSULTANT RIDDER SAYS MEASURE IS ABOUT STRONGER DEMOCRACY

(By James B. Meadow)

Joanie Braden was deep into labor, nearing the delivery of her child, when she noticed something that years later would strike her as both odd and normal.

Right next to her bed, there was her husband, the father of the child, diligently checking his wristwatch so he could time the intervals between contractions. And, simultaneously, right next to her bed, the same man was diligently talking long-distance on the phone, processing voter pattern information from key precincts in the 1984 Oregon presidential primary.

''As Rick was doing that,'' says Braden, laughing, ''I remember him acting as if it was the most natural thing in the world. He was there for me; he was there for the campaign.''

Happily, both labors—natal and political—paid off for Rick Ridder. Nathaniel Ridder arrived pink and healthy; Gary Hart took Oregon.

Given this, it's no surprise to learn that ''Rick absolutely loves politics . . . he lives and breathes politics.'' At least that's the opinion of Tom Strickland, who hired Ridder for his two cracks at one of Colorado's U.S. Senate seats.

Although Strickland came away 0-for-2, his respect for Ridder remains resolute.

''Rick has a gifted political mind,'' says Strickland. ''He may be very understated and unassuming—he's like a political version of Columbo, lulling you into thinking he's not following you—but he's really a couple of steps ahead all the time.''

He better be.

As Election Day draws closer, Ridder's campaign for Amendment 36 is taking on water. The controversial measure, which would revamp Colorado's electoral votes system, replacing the current winner-take-all setup with one that awards the electoral votes proportionally, based on popular vote, has drawn national attention.

Republicans have decried it as a not-so-sneaky way to siphon votes from George W. Bush. Not all Democrats are for it, either.

And 36's proponents?

Well, one of them claims it's more representative, makes everybody's vote count equally. Furthermore, ''It's the right thing to do in order to create a stronger democracy. The system we installed for democratic rule in Afghanistan did not include an Electoral College, did it?''

Those words come courtesy of Ridder, who's heading up the pro–36 fight. But words—to say nothing of a reported $700,000—might not be enough to win. Although Ridder's side was ahead early on, a Rocky Mountain News/News 4 poll released today shows the measure sinking 60–32.

Those numbers prompted one political observer to refer to Amendment 36 as ''toast.''

Ridder's reaction to the new poll numbers was cautious. ''I think that one of the real issues that we're bringing forth in this campaign is the importance of making votes count—one person, one vote. And it is clear that we have started a debate on the issue, particularly on the Electoral College.''

Earlier, in a previous interview, he acknowledged his base optimism. ''You have to believe that change is possible and that what you fight for can come about.''

Although there is passion in his voice, it is tamed by a reflexive calm and control.

He is 51, has thinning hair, and his 6–foot–1, 150–pound frame gives him a slightly Ichabod Crane air.

A scion of the Knight-Ridder newspaper family, Victor Frank Ridder II was immersed in politics before, well, almost before he was tall enough to be immersed in anything. When he was 3, his mother was attending a rally for Adlai Stevenson. To occupy her son, she had him handing out leaflets for the Illinois governor who was bidding for the presidency in 1956.

The political theme stayed strong in his life, perhaps in part because growing up in and around Washington, D.C., brought him into contact with playmates who were the children of Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy.

After taking a year off between high school and college to toil on behalf of George McGovern's 1972 stab at the presidency, he returned to academe and graduated from Middlebury College in Vermont and earned a masters in broadcasting from Boston University.

As he was getting ready to start his Ph.D. in communications, he decided instead to defer his studies and work on Hart's 1980 reelection as U.S. senator in Colorado.

In 1982, he returned to Colorado to help with Richard Lamm's third gubernatorial campaign. He then became national field director for Hart's 1984 presidential campaign.

By then, Braden and Ridder, married in 1981, had decided Colorado was the place to raise a family and were ensconced in Denver. In 1985, Ridder-Braden Inc., a political consulting and polling firm, was born.

Over the years, Ridder compiled an impressive—and wholly Democratic—political resume. He worked on all three of Roy Romer's gubernatorial campaigns, as well as for numerous congressional candidates.

Many campaigns later, in November 2002, Ridder surprised the political world when he took on the job of campaign manager for Howard Dean's fledgling presidential run. By April 2003, however, Ridder was gone from the campaign, a victim of infighting and his disinclination to work for a ''movement'' rather than a candidate.

Although Ridder points to his leap of faith with the Dean campaign as proof that he takes chances, others aren't so sure. One competitor says that Ridder's strength has to do more with ''analysis behind the scenes'' than being a ''big picture guy or a risk taker.''