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