Mr. Speaker, for months and months we have been hearing

from the Bush administration that the training of Iraqi security forces

is going as planned. America will stand down just as soon as Iraq

stands up, they said. A milestone which we were assured was just around

the corner.

Well, now we know the truth. Not only can they not stand up; they can

barely crawl. And when they do crawl, all too often they are fighting

each other or U.S. troops.

The Los Angeles Times published a shocking report over the weekend

about the violence and corruption that is permeating the Iraqi police.

According to the Times, we are talking about

In one Baghdad neighborhood known as a militia stronghold, police

tortured detainees with electricity and beatings.

I hasten to add, Mr. Speaker, that the United States and its military

have no moral authority to combat such gruesome tactics. Why? Because

the right to torture prisoners of war, indeed, the exhortation to

torture them, was the official policy of our government for several

years.

Of course, the minimum requirement of a functioning society in Iraq

will be some kind of trustworthy law enforcement system. But with

insurgents and militia groups having infiltrated the police, Iraqi

citizens have absolutely no recourse, no legitimate authority committed

to their safety and their security.

Another recent article, this one from the Washington Post, tells of a

Baghdad resident who dialed the Iraqi equivalent of 911 after a Shiite

militia, called the Mahdi Army, firebombed a local mosque. The call

went through to the ministry of interior, which is allied with the

Shiia and its militias. The dispatcher told the man that he, the

caller, was a terrorist, said the Mahdi Army was just doing its job,

and hung up. How is that for freedom on the march?

Mr. Speaker, rather than bringing stability and rule of law to Iraq,

it has turned out that we have a chaotic killing field, a hot bed of

terror over there. The only law that seems to apply is the law of the

jungle. The streets are controlled by thugs and murderers. The Iraqi

Government is impotent at best, complicit at worst. They are in a civil

war.

The least we can do is remove our soldiers from this inferno.

Bringing the troops home will not be a panacea for Iraq, but it will

get Americans out of harm's way while we help facilitate the long,

arduous process of Iraqi reconstruction and reconciliation.

Iraq cannot be put back together again as long as we persist with a

military occupation. Every day that our soldiers are there makes it

harder, not easier. Every day that the occupation continues, we move

further away from, not closer to, the kind of democratic society

President Bush says he wants in Iraq.

Bring the troops home. It is the right thing to do for America, and

it may be Iraq's only hope for peace and stability.