Mr. Speaker, every day now, it's becoming more and more

apparent that the President's troop escalation plan is not stemming the

civil war in Iraq.

In fact, since the plan took effect earlier this year, violence in

Iraq is up, and our soldiers are paying a heavy price on the

battlefield. For months now, Democrats have stood united in our

commitment to forge a new direction in Iraq, but our efforts have

received very little support from congressional Republicans.

It appears that is beginning to change. Earlier this week, one of the

most respected Members of the Republican party on international

affairs, Senator Richard Lugar, said that we must recalibrate our

strategy in Iraq to fit our domestic political conditions and broader

needs of national security. Then yesterday, Senator Voinovich said that

he doesn't believe the Iraqis are going to get it until they know we

are leaving.

Both Senator Lugar and Senator Voinovich's comments are a blow to the

White House and serve as yet another example of long-time supporters of

the President's Iraq policy believing we are long overdue for a new

direction. It's time for the congressional Republicans to face the

reality and join us in dramatically changing course in Iraq.