Mr. Speaker, Ralph Waldo Emerson once

said that an ounce of action is worth a pound of theory. As I listen to

theories of doom and gloom about our military operations in Iraq, I am

proud that American soldiers remain focused to successfully accomplish

their mission to protect American families. Last week, the U.S.

director of the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office reminded us of

the tremendous progress that has been made in Iraq over the last 3

years.

Ambassador Daniel Speckhard reported that Iraq's per capita annual

income increased from $500 per person in March 2003 to $1,200 today.

More than 30,000 Iraqi businesses have been registered in the past

year. Iraq now has a free press, more than 2,000 Internet cafes, and

more than 5 million cell phone users.

While naysayers focus on a civil war in Iraq, our troops are

committed to creating a civil society in Iraq which protects American

families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget

September 11.