Mr. Speaker, Congress is beginning to focus on the

necessity to take a new direction with respect to Iraq. There are some

in the administration who are saying well, there is no plan. What can

we do? We have to stay the course. We have to send more troops. We have

to make a renewed effort.

Once again I am offering for the attention of this Congress a plan

that I put together that meets the requirements of being able to bring

our troops home and create stability in Iraq and reunite the United

States with the world community in the cause of peace and security.

Here are the elements of the Kucinich plan:

First, the U.S. announces it will end the occupation, close military

bases and withdraw.

The insurgency has been fueled by the occupation and the prospect of

a long-term presence, as indicated by the building of permanent bases.

A U.S. declaration of intention to withdraw troops and close bases will

help dampen the insurgency which has been inspired to resist

colonization and fight invaders and those who have supported U.S.

policy. Furthermore, this will provide an opening for parties in Iraq

and in the region to set the stage toward negotiations and peaceful

settlement.

Second, the U.S. announces it will use existing funds to bring the

troops and the necessary equipment home.

Congress appropriated $70 billion in bridge funds on October 1 for

the war. Money from this and other DOD accounts can be used to fund the

troops in the field over the next few months and to pay for the cost of

the return of the troops, which has been estimated at between 5 and $7

billion while a political settlement is being negotiated and

preparations are made for a transition to an international security and

peacekeeping force.

Number three, order a simultaneous return of all U.S. contractors to

the United States and turn over all contracting work to the Iraqi

government.

The contracting process has been rife with corruption with

contractors stealing from the U.S. Government and cheating the Iraqi

people, taking large contracts and giving a few percentages to Iraqi

subcontractors. Reconstruction activities must be reorganized and

closely monitored in Iraq by the Iraqi government with the assistance

of the international community. The massive corruption as it relates to

the U.S. contractors should be investigated by congressional committees

and Federal grand juries. The lack of tangible benefits, the lack of

accountability for billions of dollars while millions of Iraqis do not

have a means of financial support, nor substantive employment, cries

out for justice. It is noteworthy that after the first Gulf War, Iraqis

reestablish electricity within 3 months despite sanctions. Four years

into the U.S. occupation, there is no water or reliable electricity in

Baghdad despite massive funding from the U.S. and the Madrid

Conference. The greatest mystery involves the activities of private

security companies who function as mercenaries. Reports of false flag

operations must be investigated by an international tribunal.

Fourth, convene a regional conference for the purposes of developing

a security and stabilization force in Iraq.

The focus should be on a process which solves the problem of Iraq.

The U.S. has told the international community, ``This is our policy and

we want you to come and help us implement it.'' The international

community may have an interest in helping Iraq, but it has no interest

in participating in the implementation of failed U.S. policy.

A shift in U.S. policy away from unilateralism and toward cooperation

will provide new opportunities for exploring common concerns about the

plight of Iraq. The U.N. is the appropriate place to convene, through

the Office of the Secretary General, all countries that have interests,

concerns and influence, including the five permanent members of the

Security Council and the European Community, and all Arab nations.

The end of the U.S. occupation and the closing of military bases are

necessary preconditions for such a conference. When the U.S. creates a

shift of policy and announces it will focus on the concerns of the

people of Iraq, it will provide a powerful incentive for nations to

participate.

It is well known that while some nations may see the instability in

Iraq as an opportunity, there is also an ever-present danger the civil

war in Iraq threatens the stability of nations throughout the region.

The impending end of the occupation will provide a breakthrough for

cooperation between the U.S. and the U.N. and the U.N. and the

countries of the region. The regional conference must include Iran,

Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan.

The fifth point in the Kucinich plan is to prepare an international

security and peacekeeping force to move in, replacing U.S. troops who

then return home.

Mr. Speaker, this is a 12-point plan, and I will be presenting more

features of it in future sessions.