Mr. Speaker, last week the people of Iraq risked life and

limb to vote. They showed the world that freedom and self determination

were things worth fighting and dying for.

The people of Iraq have spoken and in doing so, have undermined the

terrorists who claim to be the true representatives of the Iraqi

people.

No one expects the transition to representative government to be

easy. After winning independence from Britain, it took our Founding

Fathers years to draft and adopt a constitution that brought together

the widely different factions that comprised the original 13 colonies.

There is one thing that is beyond dispute. The overwhelming majority

of Iraqis want to live in a free and tolerant society. They have no use

for the discarded Saddam and his henchmen.

As this editorial cartoon shows, a seed of democracy has been planted

in the very heart of the Middle East. As Iraq continues to defeat the

terrorists and build a flourishing society, the other oppressed peoples

of this troubled region will demand and seize the same freedom for

themselves. The mullahs of Iran should take note and realize that their

people will throw them out sooner or later.

Again, I wish to congratulate the people of Iraq on their successful

election.