Mr. Speaker, while we are all appalled

and outraged by the actions of a few soldiers, let us not forget there

are 135,000 honorable American troops, along with 23,000 courageous

coalition partners, working day and night in Iraq to improve the

Iraqis' quality of life. These fine men and women in uniform have built

and repaired schools, reopened thousands of run-down hospitals and

clinics, restored and improved electricity and water supplies, and put

a new currency in place.

The positive progress which I saw firsthand last month in Iraq has

been astounding, despite daily terrorist attacks that seek to prevent

democracy from taking root. The terrorists know that if freedom

prevails in Iraq that it will spell the beginning of the end of their

quest for tyrannical hold on the Middle East. Yet their desperate

attempts will fail, and the American military will continue their noble

work to make sure that Iraqis live in a free Iraq to protect American

families from future acts of terrorism.

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

September 11.