Mr. President, all Americans are inspired by the way the

Iraqi people once again demonstrated their courage, dedication, and

resilience by going to the polls to place their future--and the future

of their country--squarely on the side of democracy.

Every American salutes our men and women in uniform who are serving

so ably under enormously difficult circumstances, and whose dedication

and sacrifice have made today's elections possible. More han 2,100 of

America's finest soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq and

we owe them and their loved ones an immense debt of gratitude. We all

hope that successful elections will give the Iraqi people new

confidence that a brighter future lies ahead.

Successful elections can and should be the turning point we've been

waiting so long for, when our troops can begin to come home. As our

Ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalizad, said today, because the training

of the Iraqi security forces is proceeding,

An open-ended commitment of America's military forces does not serve

America's interest and it does not serve Iraq's interest either. If

America want a new Iraqi government to succeed, we need to let Iraqis

take responsibility for their own future.