Mr. Speaker, there haven't been any front-page articles

in the newspapers about it. Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News and World

Report haven't covered it either. And the big news channels are pretty

much silent.

But the fact that a group of courageous Iraqi women came to the

United

States last week to tell their stories is nothing short of remarkable.

To get here, they had to brave the treacherous 500-mile stretch from

Baghdad to Amman, Jordan. Then they had to clear U.S. Customs, no easy

undertaking, and fly from Amman to New York.

The stories they shared when they visited the Halls of Congress were

both strikingly sad and extremely valuable. But you wouldn't know it

unless you had met with them personally, because the American media has

hardly reported a single word they said.

Too often in this Chamber we have heard that the media isn't doing a

good enough job of covering the war in Iraq. Well, you know what? They

are right. The media isn't doing a good enough job. The media isn't

reporting about the destroyed hospitals, roads and schools, not to

mention the shattered lives, shattered lives throughout Iraq.

The media isn't talking about the tens of thousands, maybe hundreds

of thousands, of Iraqi civilians who have been killed over the last 3

years of war and occupation. And they are not telling us that some 50

percent of those killed have been women and children, or that thousands

of Iraqis have been unnecessarily detained or have gone missing.

But the women who flew from Amman to New York talked about what is

really happening in Iraq, about some of the burdens they bear every day

as a result of our politics there.

One of these women was Faiza Al-Araji, a mother of three from

Baghdad. Faiza's son, Khalid, was a student at Baghdad University. Last

year he was arrested by officials from Iraq's Ministry of the Interior

for no apparent reason. He was never charged with a crime and his

family was not told about his whereabouts for 3 days. To secure her

son's release after Khalid was finally allowed to call home, Faiza had

to pay a ransom to the Ministry of the Interior.

As if she hadn't already suffered enough, last year, gunmen put a

rifle to Faiza's head and stole her car. When she told a group of

American soldiers what had just happened, they told her, There is

nothing we can do. When she told her story to the Iraqi police, they

told her, I am sorry, my sister, but there is nothing we can do.

Mr. Speaker, we have nearly 150,000 soldiers stationed throughout

Iraq, many of them in Baghdad. If they can't keep the Iraqi people

safe, and if the local police can't keep them safe, why are we there?

After going through these ordeals, Faiza and her family moved to

Amman, Jordan where it is safer. She has dedicated herself to telling

the truths about Iraq, the truths that our media isn't telling us.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage anyone watching tonight to visit

Faiza's blog, [www.afamilyinbaghdad.blogspot.com](http://www.afamilyinbaghdad.blogspot.com).

Sadly, what Faiza and the rest of the Iraqi women's delegation have

revealed is what many of us have suspected for months, that an Iraqi

civil war isn't imminent; it is going on right now, right before our

very eyes. Shiite and Sunni militias have been fighting each other and

targeting innocent civilians for months. Well more than 2,000 people

have been killed since the bombing of the famed gold-domed Shiite

shrine in Samarra last month. And the situation will not get better

until we bring our troops home.

Mr. Speaker, how many more innocent Iraqis, mothers, fathers and

their children need to be killed before we realize that our policies in

Iraq are not working?

How many more of our troops have to be killed before we bring them

home?

Faiza and the rest of the Iraqi delegation know that it is time for

our troops to leave. Nearly two-thirds of the American people share

this belief. It is time for Congress to catch up.