Mr. Speaker, the so-called war on terrorism has been

going on for more than 4\1/2\ years, and it looks like terrorism is

winning.

The U.S. Government released its annual survey of global terrorism

two Fridays ago. Of course, they always save the bad news for Friday,

when they hope everyone will have checked out for the weekend. The

results? The number of terrorists attacks worldwide quadrupled from

2004 to 2005, climbing over 11,000. That is 30 strikes by terrorists

every day, an average of more than one an hour.

Of the 11,000, nearly one-third took place in Iraq, and those Iraqi

attacks led to 8,300 deaths. Keep in mind, these are just civilian

casualties. These numbers don't even include the number of American

troops who have been killed at the hands of the insurgency.

Thank goodness there have been no more attacks on American soil and

nothing on the order of 9/11. Then again, if violent extremists want to

kill Americans, they don't have to infiltrate our borders. They can

make a much easier trip to Iraq, where 130,000 of our bravest men and

women are deployed.

The dirty little secret that you won't find in the report is that the

Iraq war is responsible for the proliferation of terrorism in recent

years. Our preemptive invasion strike on Iraq inspired vicious

animosity towards the United States, the likes of which we have never

seen and the likes of which we will be dealing with for years and years

to come.

The continued occupation is a rallying point for bin Laden and

everyone who already dislikes America. The war has given jihadists the

best possible propaganda tool, turning Iraq into a hotbed of terrorism.

And the way we have conducted the war has only exacerbated the problem.

The abuses at Abu Ghraib, the detention camps at Guantanamo, the secret

gulags around the world, all of these have eroded U.S. moral authority

and further radicalized the Muslim world.

The President has sold the Iraq campaign as some kind of antidote to

terrorism. The truth is just the opposite. Our presence in Iraq is

pouring gasoline on the fire instead of putting it out.

Peter Bergen, a terrorism expert at the New America Foundation, put

it this way: he said,

There was one part of the terrorism report that I just could not

believe. The Washington Post cites the survey as indicating that bin

Laden and al-Zawahiri are frustrated by their lack of direct control

over terrorist operations. Here is a man who is American public enemy

number one, a sadistic killer who President Bush promised to hunt down

and capture, dead or alive, and the best we can say 4\1/2\ years later

is that we have got him frustrated?

There is only one answer, Mr. Speaker: we must bring our troops home,

and we must do it at once. Every day that we persist with this

occupation is another day that the insurgency gathers strength and

further justifies itself. Every day that we stay in Iraq is a day that

we lose ground in the war on terror.

It is time for a new counterterrorism strategy like the one I have

outlined in my SMART Security proposal; one that is based on strong

intelligence and cooperation with our allies and multilateral

organizations; one that invests in homeland security and enhances

efforts to cut off financing for terrorist organizations.

Defeating terrorism will require more brains and less brawn. It

demands, first and foremost, that we bring our troops home.