Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this

time, and I rise today to support House Resolution 557.

Under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi people lived in

poverty and fear. During his 30-year reign of tyranny, he massacred

tens of thousands of his own people, some murdered for their religion

and some for their ethnicity.

On March 19, 2003, the United States and its coalition partners

launched the first air strikes of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In 3 weeks,

Iraqis in Baghdad danced and waved their country's flag as U.S. forces

toppled a statue of Saddam Hussein, signaling the end of Saddam's

brutal tyranny.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was a military success, courageously executed

by American men and women in uniform. It was an operation of

unparalleled precision and speed, and was carried out in a way that

prevented widespread destruction of Iraqi's infrastructure, lengthy

street-by-street fighting or a humanitarian crisis. Food and medical

aid flowed into Iraq immediately after the troops and there was no

``adventurism'' by Iraq's neighbors or other destabilizing action in

the region.

One year later, Iraqis are engaged in the enormous challenge of

rebuilding their country after decades of neglect, and are working with

the coalition toward the creation of a secure, stable, sovereign and

peaceful Iraq. To date, in nearly all major cities and most towns and

villages, Iraqi municipal councils have been formed, and for the first

time in more than a generation the Iraqi judiciary is fully

independent. More than 600 Iraqi judges preside over more than 500

courts that operate independently from the Iraqi Governing Council and

the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Mr. Speaker, U.S. forces are handing the torch to the Iraqi people as

they take control, form an army, build an effective police force, and

develop a fair justice system.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution. I have a lot of other good

stuff to say, but my time has expired.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 577.

Under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi people lived in

poverty and fear. During his 30-year reign of tyranny, he massacred

tens of thousands of his own people, some murdered for their religion,

some for their ethnicity.

On March 19, 2003, the United States and its Coalition partners

launched the first air strikes of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On the

evening of April 9, 2003, Iraqis danced and waved their country's flag

in central Baghdad as U.S. forces toppled a huge statue of Saddam

Hussein. In a matter of weeks, Hussein's decades-old regime was

dismantled and 25 million Iraqis were liberated from one of the world's

most brutal tyrannies.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was a military success, courageously executed

by American men and women in uniform. It was an operation of

unparalleled precision and speed, and was carried out in a way that

prevented widespread destruction of Iraq's infrastructure, lengthy

street-by-street fighting or a humanitarian crises. Food and medical

aid flowed into Iraq immediately after the troops, and there was no

``adventurism'' by Iraq's neighbors or other destabilizing action in

the region.

Coalition successes include delivering some 3.3 million metric tons

of food to Iraq; all 240 hospitals in Iraq and more than 1,200 clinics

are open with more than 90 percent of Iraq's 4.3 million children under

the age of 5 have been vaccinated against diseases including polio,

tetanus, diphtheria, measles and tuberculosis; two-thirds of potable

water production in Iraq has been restored, treating nearly 800 million

liters a day, benefiting 3.5 million people; electric power generation

has surpassed 4,400 megawatts of electricity in contrast to only 300

megawatts prior to the war; average crude oil production has reached

2.5 million barrels per day and since June 2003 oil sales have

generated more than $5 billion in revenue for Iraqi reconstruction.

One year later, Iraqis are engaged in the enormous challenge of

rebuilding their country after decades of neglect, and are working with

the Coalition toward the creation of a secure, stable, sovereign and

peaceful Iraq. To date, in nearly all major cities and most towns and

villages, Iraqi municipal councils have been forced, and for the first

time in more than a generation the Iraqi judiciary is fully

independent. More than 600 Iraqi judges preside over more than 500

courts that operate independently from the Iraqi Governing Council and

from the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Mr. Speaker, U.S. forces are handing the torch to the Iraqi people as

they take control of their own resources, form an army, build an

effective police force and develop a fair justice system. Thousands of

Iraqis now provide security for their fellow citizens, and Iraqi

security forces now account for more than half of all forces in Iraq.

Every day more and more Iraqis who know that a free Iraq will change

the world are stepping forward to ensure a more prosperous and free

Iraq. And Iraqis who once fearfully followed a fluid and unwritten law

now have the assurance of a fair and reliable bill of rights that

ensures equality for all.

Some skeptics continue to suggest that military action in Iraq was

wrong, that preemption is never the answer and that Iraqis would have

been better off left to the will of Saddam Hussein. Today, however,

Iraq has been freed from the grips of fear, a liberated people are

cultivating their resources and exploring their free lands, and the

world is also a safer place because of Saddam's removal.