Mr. Speaker, I have listened to this debate very

carefully for the last day. There are clearly those who want to debate

whether we should have gone into Iraq. That point is moot.

There are some who want to debate immediate withdrawal regardless of

the consequences. That is dangerous.

Some just want to criticize the administration yet offer no plan of

their own. That is political posturing.

Finally, there are some who want to debate that victory is not only

possible in Iraq, it is essential to our security. Count me among their

numbers.

Like many Members of this body, I have been to Iraq to visit with our

troops. Those whom I have spoken to, they believe we are winning. And

they also believe it is essential, like one soldier told me,

Congressman, I hate being here, but I know how important it is to my

family and how important it is to my country that we succeed.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the American people are anxious, and I know

that many days progress comes three steps forward and two steps

backwards. And unfortunately, the national media tends to only portray

the two steps backwards.

Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein has been captured. He has been defeated.

Last week al Zarqawi, the number one terrorist in the region, has been

eliminated. A quarter million of the Iraqi troops have been trained,

equipped, and on patrol. After years of halting progress, we now have a

fully functioning, democratically elected government in Iraq. This is

important because we are not threatened by democracies. We are

threatened by despotic regimes and terrorist ideologies.

But the news stories that are most important about why we are there

are never written. I come from Dallas, Texas. I have never read the

story that today no suicide bomber exploded in North Park Mall. I have

never read the story that today no car bomb went off in Poteet High

School, and I know I have never read the story that today Jeb and

Melissa Hensarling put their 4-year old and 2-year old to bed in a

safer, more secure Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.

Victory is costly. Defeat is even more costly.