Mr. President, last week the Iraqi people celebrated a very

rare triumph, they won a soccer game. But their celebration had nothing

to do with decreased violence, improved distribution of water,

electricity or other basic necessities or, of course, political

reconciliation. It was a soccer game. Iraqis were celebrating their

victory in the Asian Cup soccer championship, as well they should. But

even during this rare moment of joy, political realities could not be

ignored. After his game-winning shot, team captain Younis Mahmoud told

reporters he would not be returning to his home country, and he hoped

that the American forces would leave Iraq quickly.

The setting, a great victory for the Iraqi soccer team. Their hero,

their captain, says: I am not going home. I am not returning to Iraq,

and I want the Americans out.

His words reflect the overwhelming sentiment of the Iraqi people

whose hopes he carried on his shoulders. A recent poll showed that 70

percent of Iraqis think American forces make them less safe.

President Bush said 2 weeks ago, the war in Iraq has invited guests,

and we would leave if asked. They are asking, we are not going.

Yesterday was a day without water in Baghdad. It was 115 degrees.

There was no water because there was insufficient electric generation

for water filtration and distribution of water. This was the sixth day

in a row with virtually no water in the capital city, this huge

metropolitan area, no water. People are drinking water when they can,

but it is contaminated, and they are getting sick. Four dead American

soldiers yesterday.

Meanwhile new evidence emerges by the day. Prime Minister al-Maliki

is utterly failing to achieve the political reconciliation the country

so desperately needs. Even worse, there is no evidence he is even

trying.

Next month the administration will deliver a progress report on Iraq

to us, the Congress of the United States. We, of course, will take that

report seriously, but it has been clear for some time that this war and

President Bush's troop escalation is a tragic failure. General

Petraeus, whom we hear so much about, has said time and time again, the

war cannot be won militarily. Many of our colleagues on the other side

of the aisle have said for months that September would be the turning

point, that in September, if meaningful progress has not been made,

they will finally work with us to reach a responsible end to the war.

When we come back in September, the eyes of the world will be on

those Republicans who made September their month to draw a line in the

sand. I hope they would back their words up with action. Democrats have

done everything we can do. All Democrats, we have done everything we

can do. We need some help from the Republicans to change the course of

that intractable civil war, costing the American people about $350 to

$360 million every day. We need to finally take a stand together,

Democrats and Republicans, to deliver a responsible end to the war that

the American people demand and deserve and turn our military focus to

the grave and growing threats we face throughout the world that have

been ignored by this administration for far too long.