Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from

California, and we appreciate greatly our colleague's past military

service, we appreciate his service now as chairman of the Committee on

Armed Services, and we are very grateful for the service of his son,

who is currently in Iraq. We are just so pleased that the gentleman is

leading the effort to explain to the American people the significance

of the war on terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, I will be providing for the Record a prepared statement,

but I would like to give a brief synopsis, and it really relates to

earlier this month my having had the opportunity to serve on a

bipartisan delegation led by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Rogers)

and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. Etheridge).

The intent of our trip was to visit Iraq. On the way, though, we had

several stops. First, it was to Qatar, then Iraq, then Jordan, and then

Hungary. What I found out at every place that we stopped is that the

war on terror is coming into place, and we have thousands of allies,

professionals, working together to provide in the war on terror

protection for the American people.

When we first arrived in Qatar itself, we visited with the Iraqi

Survey Group, and we found that there are hundreds of linguists putting

together 32 million pieces of evidence, paper, video tape, computer

disks, and computers themselves to put together the whole story and

history of the Saddam Hussein dictatorship. This can be used for the

later situation of a war crimes trial. Additionally, it can be used for

putting together identification of criminals who are in the country of

Iraq, in order to protect American soldiers.

Then we visited Iraq itself, and I was very pleased at the airport to

visit with the FBI command post and found the very dedicated FBI agents

who are working to uncover the different bombings that have occurred in

Iraq in order to protect the American citizens who are in Iraq.

We also helicoptered to Kirkush to visit with the North Carolina Army

National Guard. While we were there, we of course met with troops from

our home State, from my situation in South Carolina. It was a 2-day

visit. At each stop we would visit with enlisted personnel, junior

officers, and in meeting with them, it was so encouraging. When I was

there in September, the young service members told me that 70 to 90

percent of the people that they met on the streets, and that is how

they patrol. It is not by speeding Humvees. They walk the streets.

Seventy to 90 percent are supportive of the liberation of their country

and the ability to develop a democratic Iraq. Now when I was there just

this month, the number is 90 percent. I kept stretching and asking

them, are you sure? They told me that indeed the people are supportive

of the efforts made by all of our allies. We have got 32 countries with

25,000 troops in Iraq working to build a democratic country.

We also had the opportunity to visit with personnel who had helped

reestablish the Ministry of Health in Iraq. Currently there are 240

hospitals in Iraq which are open and 1,200 primary health care clinics.

This is extraordinary because traditionally that has not been available

for the average citizens. Health care was for the elite of the Baath

Socialist Party.

Additionally, we visited Jordan. In visiting Jordan, I found visiting

the International Police Training Center that there are professional

police from 20 countries who are training in classes of 500 Iraqi

police. Ultimately by the end of next year, 32,000 police officers will

be trained to serve in Iraq. That night I visited with the chairman of

the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the AmCham, in Jordan, who told me that

there have been two business conferences where there are in place

contracts to establish hopefully over a million new jobs in the country

of Iraq. This is extraordinary, the progress being made.

Finally, we came back through Hungary. We visited the International

Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest, where since 1995 law enforcement

officers have been trained to fight organized crime and they are

preparing for police officers from Iraq to fight organized crime which

works with terrorism. I am so encouraged by the visit to Hungary. It

was symbolic. Fifteen years ago, Hungary was a totalitarian police

state. Today it is a democratic member of NATO. Nobody would have ever

dreamed this could occur in 15 years. That is the vision that our

President has for the Middle East, that it be democratic, that it be

peaceful and that it protect the people of the United States from

terrorist activities.

I thank the gentleman again for his efforts.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, we appreciate your past military service and

now chairmanship of Armed Services Committee, we are grateful for your

son serving in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, during the first week of April, I served on a bipartisan

delegation led by Congressmen Mike Rogers and Bob Etheridge to visit

Iraq, but I found every stop in Qatar, Iraq, Jordan, and Hungary to be

a crucial part of the Global War on Terror.

I saw firsthand courageous coalition forces of dozens of nations

working with determination to stop terrorism from destroying modern

civilization. Without fanfare or attention, American families are being

protected by professionals who are making every reasonable effort to

keep the terrorists on the defensive overseas and deter further attacks

on civilians in North America.

As the media correctly reported the violence of the week in Iraq, the

global interrelation with terrorism was evidenced by another bombing in

Madrid while terrorist cells with truck loads of explosives were

arrested in England and Jordan. The worldwide conflict is not solely

war in Iraq. The Jordanian explosives yesterday were revealed to

include chemicals which could kill up to 80,000 civilians.

In Qatar, we were immediately taken to Camp As Sayliyah for a

briefing by the Iraqi Survey Group. Hundreds of linguists and analysts

are cataloging 32 million documents retrieved from Iraqi Government

ministries, terrorist sites, Saddam Hussein's many palaces, and dual-

use laboratories to recreate a paper, computer disk, and videotape

history of the Hussein dictatorship.

The evidence of war crimes will be presented at upcoming trials and

the recovered individual criminal records can now be used to protect

American troops from violent criminals released by Hussein prior to

Iraq's liberation.

Visiting troops from South Carolina was a highlight of my trip, and I

enjoyed seeing personnel of all ranks enthusiastic with high morale. It

was especially meaningful to meet with Columbian Major David G. Ellison

who still has a will I prepared for him when I was a mobilization JAG

officer with the S.C. Army National Guard.

With 2 days in Iraq at the height of renewed violence we found morale

high, and the South Carolina troops who patrol by walking the streets

said 90 percent of the Iraqis were

grateful for liberation, which is higher than the estimates I learned

in a September visit. My appreciation for the troops and their families

is profound. My oldest son is now deployed in Iraq, and I was able to

speak by phone with him as he begins his year of active duty.

In Baghdad, we visited the FBI Command Post where experienced agents

from across America lead investigations of identifying terrorists,

uncovering terrorist financing, and analyzing bombings and murders of

Americans. This came to life with Congressman Rogers, a former FBI

agent, and by the accompaniment of Indianapolis Special Agent in Charge

Tom Fuentes who has an extensive career of professional investigation.

We helicoptered to Kirkush to visit with the newly arrived troops of

the North Carolina Army National Guard. Their morale was high as it was

explained that the local Iraqi security forces were making a real

impact establishing order. Proof of the local forces' effectiveness is

that Hussein loyalists are brutally attacking them with the Iraqis

fighting back with a new resolve to build democracy.

In concluding our briefings we met with Jim Haveman, formerly

Community Health Director of Michigan, who explained the upgrading of

Iraqi healthcare. The previous system, which was totally focused for

the Baath Socialist Party members, has been expanded for all citizens

and the Ministry of Health was among the first to be transferred to

Iraqi control. All 240 Iraqi hospitals and more than 1,200 primary care

clinics are open.

Visiting Jordan was an unexpectedly pleasant surprise. Jordanians are

enthusiastic in helping the coalition rebuild Iraq because a stable

Iraq protects Jordan's growing economy.

At the Jordan International Police Training Center, professional

police from 20 nations are training classes of 500 Iraqi police

trainees with a goal of producing 32,000 graduates by December 2005.

Without notice or preselection our delegation interviewed four Iraqi

students who told of their heartfelt desire to play a role in building

a democratic Iraq.

That evening I met with the Chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

(AmCham) in Jordan. The AmCham had recently hosted in Jordan a second

business conference on Iraq, together with Amman World Trade Centers.

The conference was attended by many Iraqi business people during which

it was suggested that contracts that are either in place or soon to be

awarded to hopefully create more than 1 million new jobs in Iraq. The

AmCham is promoting Jordan for the value it offers as a launching pad

for doing business in Iraq.

Hungary is home of the International Law Enforcement Academy at

Budapest where since 1995 police officers from formerly communist

nations have been trained to detect and fight financial and organized

crime. Iraqis will soon join the classes to learn of the relationships

between organized crime and terrorism, which work to acquire financing

and provide munitions.

In the former totalitarian police state of Hungary, which is now a

dynamic member of NATO, it is a dream come true to see freedom flourish

in just 15 short years of democracy. President Bush has this same

vision of democracy for the Middle East, which he knows will benefit

the people of the region and is the best way to protect American

families from future terrorist attacks. Just as in Hungary, the road is

bumpy, but the benefits are crucial for peace and freedom. After World

War II we rebuilt Germany to deter it from being a breeding ground for

communists and now in Iraq we can stop it from being a breeding ground

for terrorists.

September 11 confirmed we are in a global war we did not seek, but we

clearly now have a choice of fighting terrorists overseas at their

homes or we will fight them in America at our homes. From Qatar to Iraq

to Jordan to Hungary competent and dedicated patriots are making a

difference.

In conclusion God Bless our Troops, we will not forget the attacks of

September 11.