Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana

for yielding, and I always find it interesting. Monday morning

quarterbacks are always right in their minds because they have a chance

to look back on tough decisions that have to be made; but as we know,

the war on terrorism is progressing to one of those situations where

the lessons of the past are important, because when Americans have been

impatient, we have lost; and when we recognize that the war on terror

is going to take time, al Qaeda and other terrorist elements are in 65

different countries that we know of, thousands of terrorists were

trained in the camps in Afghanistan and Sudan and elsewhere, but we are

making progress; and we are holding firm on the war on terror.

Clearly, the war on terror is progressing. It is a tough, hard fight;

and our effort in Iraq is a key front in the war on terror.

Just less than 2 short weeks history will be made. Today, Saddam

Hussein is in jail and an international coalition led by the United

States and our 31-country allied coalition will hand over authority

over Iraq to a sovereign Iraqi government. Let us review what is going

on; and frankly, here is the bottom line.

The goal of the 31-country international coalition, which the United

States is part of, has the bottom line goal that Iraq will govern its

own internal affairs. The Iraqi interim government will run the day-to-

day operations of Iraq's government and ministries. The Iraqi interim

government will increase security and prepare the country for national

democratic elections.

The President has a five-point plan that is now being implemented and

has been implemented over the last several months as we worked not only

to win the war on terrorism but to put in place a stable,

democratically elected government in Iraq.

The President's five-point plan calls for handing over authority to a

sovereign Iraqi government that should be achieved in just 2 short

weeks. We want to establish the stability and security in Iraq that

democracy requires. We want to continue rebuilding Iraq's

infrastructure. We want to continue to build international support

beyond the 31 nations already involved, and we want to move towards

free national elections that will bring forward new leaders empowered

by the Iraqi people themselves.

The past few weeks have proved that the President's Iraqi plan is

moving forward; it is working. The international community is coming

together to help Iraqis secure their own future.

On June 8, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution

which supports free elections and reauthorizes a multinational force to

help provide security in Iraq. The international community is now on

the record. The coalition will continue to help in every way possible

on the economic front, the security front and the political front; and

the international coalition will continue in the process of assisting

the Iraqi people and taking responsibility for the future of their

country.

I am pleased that as a result of the recent summit, the G-8, that we

continue to build that international support. In fact, many of us had

the opportunity just less than 2 weeks ago to meet with the new, free

Iraqi President when he visited Washington, and it was an impressive

meeting with an impressive leader.

Iraq is improving and has already taken big steps to keep Iraq on the

path to national elections by January 2005, leading the way to

representative government by and of the people of Iraq. That interim

government is making progress.

Ninety thousand militia members are being transitioned into new

occupations. All six of Haditha Dam generating units recently ran at

maximum capacity for the first time since 1990. To date, over 10,000

democracy development activities, program activities, have been held in

communities across Iraq involving more than 312,000 Iraqi participants.

Today, there are now 55,000 Internet subscribers in Baghdad compared to

only 3,000 just 2 years ago. Reconstruction of the Baghdad

International Airport is expected to be completed by this August; and

primary, intermediate, and secondary students are completing their

final exam for the school year with minimal disruption; and I would

note when we visit Iraqi schools today, we see young girls attending

those schools again. That is progress.

Our international coalition has a clear goal, to see the Iraqi people

in

charge of Iraq for the first time. America worked not only to defeat an

enemy but to give strength, freedom and opportunity to our friends, the

people of Iraq.

Freedom can and will advance and enhance the lives of those living in

the greater Middle East, just as it has been successful in Latin

America, Eastern Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa. Today, we are

fighting a war on terror. We are making progress. It is a tough, hard

fight, but al Qaeda and other terrorist groups want to defeat our

effort to bring freedom to the Middle East. With our commitment, we

will win.

In the next few weeks we are going to be tested by al Qaeda and other

international terrorist organizations. We are going to be tested and

have violence that is going to be likely. The terrorists and Hussein

loyalists would rather see innocent Iraqis die than let them taste

freedom. They honestly think that Americans will cut and run, because

they have seen that happen in the past. We are going to be tested in

this war on terror, and how we conduct ourselves today and in the weeks

ahead will determine whether or not we win the war on terror, whether

or not we give the people of the Mideast a taste of real freedom.

They will not succeed and the forces of good, the forces of freedom

and the international coalition, which is growing, will win if we

remain firm and hang together, because, again, we are being tested. My

hope is we will hang tough and continue to fight the war on terror

because we would all rather fight the terrorists on the streets of

Baghdad than here in Washington and in communities in the south suburbs

of Chicago.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I am confident through the will of the Iraqi

people and the international community President Bush's plan will be

implemented successfully. Iraq will have a free and representative

government. The terrorist regimes of the past will be defeated and

silenced, and we will prevail. That is because I believe, like I know

so many other Americans do, the Iraqi people deserve and know better.