Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from California

for giving me some time.

You know, in Iraq it is tough, it is difficult, it is dusty and it is

dangerous; but we are following the same pattern that we followed for

the last 60 years in bringing freedom to other parts of the world. It

is not a smooth road.

First, you stand up a free government. We have done that. It is an

inept

government. It bumbles along, as most new governments do. But it is a

free government, and it represents the people.

The second thing that you do is stand up a military capable of

protecting that free government.

Thirdly, the Americans leave, because we don't covet anything that

another country has.

We are right now in the second phase of standing up a military

capable of protecting this government. My good friend who just spoke

talked about the difficulty of standing up the Iraqi military. I know a

couple of years ago in the first battle of Fallujah when we rushed

green Iraqi troops to that battle and we thought they were going to

help the United States Marines, the next day they were gone. They

didn't show up for roll call. But this time when you go out there and

you are in Fallujah and Ramadi, the Iraqi military is standing and

fighting.

We sat there about a month ago with the Sunni leaders of the national

police in Ramadi and Fallujah, and they sat there side-by-side with the

Shiite leaders of the Iraqi Army and talked about how they are working

together, this time to push back against al Qaeda, whose rough edge has

made enemies in the Anbar province.

Now, we got 129 battalions in the Iraqi Army, and, personally, I

think that the standup of the Iraqi Army and the reliability of the

Iraqi Army is the key to America's success in Iraq and our successful

turnover of the security burden.

We have got to make sure that every one of those 129 Iraqi battalions

moves into an operation where they do two or three months in a military

operation where they have to work out, exercise their logistic chain,

their chain of command, the commander has got to coordinate with the

guy on the right and the guy on the left. At that time they can rotate

into the battlefield and displace American heavy combat forces. That is

the right way to leave Iraq. Not this way.