Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to

address this Chamber and appreciate the opportunity for some dialogue

with my colleagues from the other side of the aisle and particularly

Uncle Bill from Massachusetts whom I did yield to the last time when he

asked me, and so we have a little engagement going.

I think it is constructive dialogue that we have. I know we disagree

often. We are looking for the best thing for this country all together,

Mr. Speaker, and disagree with the method of how we get there, and

sometimes we disagree with our definition and analysis of how we

approach these things.

So to begin my hour, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some of the

concerns that were raised in this previous hour, many of which I did

not hear in great detail, some of which the philosophy I heard ad

infinitum here one or 2 hours a night after our session every week for

the last months.

One of the issues that came up, Mr. Speaker, was the issue of weapons

of mass destruction, and yes, I have been to Iraq. I have been there

three times. The last time there was I came back the latter part of

August, and I make it a point to go to the places where some of the

other Members of Congress have not gone. I make it a point to find

soldiers there, generally I ask for Iowans, anybody here from Iowa. We

sit down and talk, and I meet with people all the way up the line to

the top brass and also to the U.S. ambassador, representatives of the

Iraqi government. I have tracked this through the history of the

liberation of Iraq and on through to this point that we are today.

It saddens me a great deal, Mr. Speaker, to hear some of the leaders

of the party on the other side and a very small number of people on my

side of the aisle who have lost their faith, lost their faith in their

own judgment, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we had this debate here in this

Congress in the fall of 2002, and this Congress voted by a solid

majority to endorse the President's authority to use force to enforce

the resolution of the United Nations in Iraq. Those resolutions had to

be enforced, Mr. Speaker, and without that, there would have been no

teeth whatsoever to the United Nations.

Our President did that. We knew that was going to be the case. We

knew when the debate took place in this Chamber that there was going to

be a majority decision. I would like to think when we meet here to have

these debates, Mr. Speaker, that we stick with the decision of the

majority. That is the will of this body. When the will of this body is

reflected and the will of the Senate is reflected and that resolution

makes its way to the White House, where statutory legislation the

President signs it, if it is a resolution the President takes account

of the judgment of the House of Representatives and the judgment of the

Senate. The judgment of the House and the judgment of the Senate was to

endorse the President, the commander-in-chief, and grant him the

endorsement of Congress to use authority to enforce the United Nations

resolutions, particularly 1441. The President did that.

There is a long argument as to why he did not have an alternative,

and our troops went into Afghanistan. Our troops went into Iraq and

liberated 50 million people, and they are grateful today,

extraordinarily grateful today, to have that opportunity to be free.

If anyone doubts that, look back in your mind's eye to last January

when the Iraqis went to the polls to elect their interim parliament.

Eight to 8.5 million of the Iraqis went to the polls to vote, and they

voted and they dipped their finger in the purple ink. They proudly and

they, in fact, defiantly marched out of there with their purple fingers

in the air. When they were threatened with their very lives for going

to the polls to vote in that January, there were 108 attacks on the

polling booths in Iraq by some suicide bombers, all terrorists, trying

to intimidate the entire country from voicing their voice of freedom,

their voice of directing their national destiny through their elected

leaders. Yet, they went to the polls and defied all of those threats

and, in fact, upset the predictions from the other side of the aisle,

Mr. Speaker.

So the people that did not have faith that there could be legitimate

elections in Iraq saw them happen, and those people that were so

invested in failure, that they could not abide admitting that there was

a success, began to explain it away.

Well, we had kind of an election, kind of a legitimacy came out of

the mouth of John Kerry. So how much more legitimate can you get when

people defy a threat of death to go for their first time and vote for

the first time in their lives, and legitimately, their argument can be

made the first time in all history on that piece of real estate. They

had that courage to take advantage of that opportunity, and they voted

in greater numbers in percentage-wise than Americans did in the

presidential election.

Yet, we had people over here that said, well, it is a kind of

legitimacy; it really is not a real election; we really do not know how

many people that did not participate that would have if somehow or

another they believed in the process, had more courage or been less

threats on their lives. Yet, they voted in greater numbers than

Americans did, and they call it kind of a legitimacy. That was January.

October 15, by then this new parliament has written a new

Constitution, another milestone, a milestone that set on the calendar a

sequence of events that need to take place in order

to take Iraqis who lived under tyranny, of murderous torture and

tyranny, once that is taken, the resources of the country, and focused

it on building palaces for themselves and glorifying their own

leadership of Saddam Hussein, at the very expense of the people, a

country that spent less than 50 cents per person per year on health

care, did not let the girls go to school, that did not allow freedom of

speech or press or religion, a country where you could not own a

satellite dish or there were not free newspapers or there was not a

television station that did not project the very opinion of Saddam

Hussein himself, that, today, on a very short period of time of

liberation, which really took place in the latter part of March of

2003, now nearly every home, everybody in Iraq has access to satellite

TV, which is access to the world.

I flew over up in Kurdistan up at Kirkuk, and I looked at the

difference. I was over Mosul in October of 2003 and looked down. Two

out of three homes had a satellite dish. I flew over the suburbs of

Kirkuk up in Kurdistan, and I saw homes there. At each one of the

neighboring homes were typical, about two stories, flat roof, many of

them had three satellite dishes on one roof. All of those dishes would

have been illegal just 3 years ago, Mr. Speaker, along with the mobile

phones that are there, the cell phones that now are replete all across

Iraq.

There is something like, and I get conflicting numbers, somewhere

between 100 and 170 new newspapers, some of them printing the real

truth where none of them printed the real truth when it was under

Saddam's regime. New radio stations that have grown to significant

numbers out there, and television stations, the media has gotten out to

the people, and some of it is the truth. It is not all the truth. We

all know it is not all the truth in this country.

One thing we have is the check and balance on our mainstream media,

who has a certain desire to destroy our effort over there is the

bloggers and the Internet. They do tend to get the truth out, and they

are a check and balance. In a free country, you will get that check and

balance, but people on that side of the aisle do not have that faith in

this new freedom that 25 million people began to realize and appreciate

in Iraq, that began the latter part of March of 2003, that freedom the

Afghanis have known for a little while before that.

Afghanis that had not gone to the polls ever in that place on the

globe now have, and they have freedom, and certainly there are

uncertainties. Yes, they have enemies. A Nation that has really not

known anything but war is not going to be at peace just overnight, and

Iraq's had it share of strife. There will be more ahead of us.

We have lost 200 Americans in Afghanistan, and we have lost more than

2,000 Americans in Iraq, and their sacrifice is great value. It has

great meaning and it is profound, and their conviction and their

demonstration of courage and their leadership and their sacrifice will

echo throughout the ages, Mr. Speaker.

It is going to echo a long ways into the future in a way that never

would have happened if we had receded from this challenge; if we had

listened to the people on the other side of the aisle that wrung their

hands and thought we should not have gone to Afghanistan but could not

figure out how to say we should not, and so only one Member voted

against going into Afghanistan, and that is all.

But we sit there, having lost more than 200 Americans in Afghanistan,

and do not hear a peep out of this side. What is the distinction

between Afghanistan and Iraq? The difference is between 1,800 American

lives. All sacred in my mind. All precious American patriots in my

mind. All deserving their legacy for which they paid the ultimate

price. All of them deserve our very best, Mr. Speaker. All of them

deserve for us to keep the faith, to keep the honor, to keep the

pledge, and to keep the commitments that were made in this Chamber in

the fall of 2002 when a significant majority voted to endorse giving

the President the authority to use force if necessary, and when this

Chamber established a policy of regime change in Iraq.

Now we are hearing it from the other side, over and over and over

again relentlessly. And what is it about? I will submit this: it is

about politics. It is about such a hunger and such a lust for power it

would tear down the very destiny of the United States and put our

American troops at risk because they want to be in the majority. They

want the Presidency and they want the majority in the Senate and they

want to change the face of America and send us down another direction

that is against the will of the American people.

But why? Why would someone put our troops at risk for political lust?

I do not understand that, Mr. Speaker. I look back in history and I

wonder when, when has there ever been a precedent where the well-being

of America, when disagreements that we have had in this country did not

stop at our shores; when we did not have political campaigns that

focused on our economy, on our domestic life and the future of America,

but joined together to support our military operations overseas when at

time of war.

How many of the people over here are saying wrong war, wrong place,

wrong time? Howard Dean says a war that cannot be won. John Kerry said

wrong war, wrong place, wrong time. Teddy Kennedy said it is a scheme

cooked up in Texas. Do they not think that our enemies listen to them?

Do they think that our enemies know what we know about them, that they

really are not the spokesmen for the foreign policy of the United

States of America?

They are the naysayers, the critics, and the gadflies. The majority

of the American people understand this. We voted in this Chamber when,

and I will say the Murtha amendment or the Murtha resolution came up on

the floor of this Congress, and that resolution said we should pull out

of Iraq immediately. That was the recommendation that was made across

the aisle, or at least by the news media. It was not verbatim to the

resolution drafted by the individual. We debated that in this Chamber

for 3 hours; and when the 3 hours were over and we debated the rule and

we debated the resolution, at the end of that 3 hours, Mr. Speaker, the

vote went up and three Members of the United States House of

Representatives voted to immediately pull out of Iraq. Everyone else,

Mr. Speaker, voted to stay the course, voted to support our troops,

voted to defend their mission and ratified the authority and the

direction that has been given to our military by their Commander in

Chief, our President of the United States, George W. Bush.

Those are the facts. Yet night after night after blessed night the

team comes down here and relentlessly assaults the integrity of the

administration, rearranges the facts of history, and seeks to dupe the

American people, believing that somehow or another if they can erode

the confidence of the American people, they will not have any

alternative but to accept these people as their leaders. It is a

frustrating thing to watch. But it would be even more extraordinarily

frustrating if I did not have so much confidence in the American people

and in their judgment.

History has shown that in times of difficulty and in times of strife

the American people have risen up together and that their judgment is

sound. They believe in the principles, the Constitution and individual

rights, and in freedom; and they know that freedom is not free. They

know intuitively that if we are going to support our troops we must

support their mission. We cannot separate the two.

We cannot say to a soldier or a marine who puts on that helmet and

puts on that uniform and salutes that flag and then goes out and puts

their life on the line, that we are for you, but we are against your

mission. We can never ask someone to put their life on the line if we

do not support their mission.

And we have asked them to do that. And duty and honor and country

says that they do that, and they do that proudly. But when we look them

in the eye, we know it is a dedication. They take their share of the

risk. And when the grim reaper visits some of those homes, it is a sad

time. And I draw my strength from those families and their belief in

this country and in our freedoms and in our patriotism. It is stronger

than the belief that we find in the average American household because

they understand.

One of the reasons they understand, I think, is because they have

also imparted those values to their sons and daughters who have gone

forth to protect our freedom. When that call has come for them, they

have stepped up, and we owe them. We owe them 100 percent full support.

We owe them all we can that is due them if we are to respect their

memory. We have to give our level best as they fight to preserve these

freedoms.

Yes, we fight that out on the floor of the House of Representatives,

Mr. Speaker; and we fight it out in the debates that take place in the

coffee shops, in the workplace, in our churches and schools, and in our

homes across this country. But I want the young people to understand

that there are certain fundamental truths that we have to stick with;

and one of them is that if we are going to support the troops, we must

support their mission. We cannot have it both ways.

We cannot have our cake and eat it too. We cannot undermine their

mission and say that we support them. And when we argue that somehow or

another there could have been a better plan, and we Monday morning

quarterback and look back over 3 years and say, gee, knowing what I

know now, this is what the President should have done then. It does not

help the cause.

When my colleague from Massachusetts seeks to discuss these issues in

open hearings, I will not deny his right to ask for that. In fact, I

will not deny a congressional right to have those kinds of open

hearings. But I will say that it is not constructive for us to have

these discussions out in the open. It is constructive for us to have

these discussions behind closed doors, to reach a consensus and

determine if we need to look further into any of these issues.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen $200 billion get poured into a country for

military support and reconstruction efforts, and by the way, the

reconstruction efforts were the smallest part of all of that. As I

mentioned to Mr. Delahunt, I have been there to review the construction

that took place in Iraq, $12.5 billion done by the Army and the balance

of that, $18.5 billion, that was done by other entities there,

including the Seabees and others, subcontractors that were put

together.

I looked at the roads and the sewers. I looked at some of the bridges

and the streets and the water lines. I have looked at the generating

plants. I went up to Kirkuk to see the mother of all generating plants,

725 tons of generator and turbine, two pieces bolted together which

came across 1,057 kilometers of open desert and came on a caravan with

other components of that mother of all generators which was over a mile

long.

That generator, Mr. Speaker, had to arrive at that location out in

the countryside near Kirkuk, Iraq, without a bullet wound in it.

Because a bullet wound into the windings on that generator would have

incapacitated it. But it arrived there safe and sound. They took a big

crane and set it into place, the generator. They took the same big

crane and set the turbine in place and then bolted them together.

Several hundred Iraqi workers began to scurry around and put the pieces

together of this mother of all generating plants.

Now, we are told that this is far too dangerous a place for people to

invest capital, for them to develop anything or put any commitment into

energy. But in that area, for all those months that they constructed

that huge generating plant, and after coming across 1,057 kilometers of

desert, and after they had to rebuild and reconstruct eight bridges to

get the strength there to cross those bridges with that caravan,

throughout all of that, there was one little attack by insurgents, and

that was fairly feeble, which resulted in one wounded person from a

little bit of shrapnel.

There was not a wall built around this generating plant. There is not

a trench. There are not terraces pushed up with soldiers behind them

all. There are not tanks dug in. They do not have Blackhawks hovering

over this generating plant 24 hours a day. It is not sitting there

rimmed with armed guards. Sure, it has a little security, but it is not

ringed with armed guards. It is out in the countryside near Kirkuk, up

in an area where the Kurds live.

And throughout all of that, there sits that generating plant, the

mother of all generators, pumping electricity into Kirkuk, pumping it

into the surrounding communities. That can be a model of the energy

that is unleashed into that part of the country. And I might add that

if this were a highly dangerous area, an area that you could not

control the security in it, then would there be a 12-inch natural gas

pipeline that runs on the surface of the ground down to that generating

plant that runs the turbine that turns the generator? Would that not be

a highly sabotagable natural gas line? And would they not take that up

every night, if they could?

The reason for all that is that those folks up there are not

interested in that. And 14 of the 18 provinces in Iraq are not

interested in that kind of violence. They have a sense of security.

They are building for the future. The children play in the streets. The

families plan for their future. They go off on vacation. They go up to

the lake and go swimming, like you and I do. Many places in Iraq have a

normal, normal life. People on this side of the aisle would not want

you to know that.

Many do not want Americans to know that during Saddam's regime he was

killing his own people at an average rate, Mr. Speaker, of 182 a day.

Now, this was a tough day in Iraq, Mr. Speaker, but I cannot remember

the last day in Iraq that there were 182 people that died at the hands

of violence. Every day that goes by there are another 182 Iraqis that

are alive that would not be otherwise if Saddam were in power.

He is on trial today, and in a few hours they will gavel in in a

courtroom in Baghdad, and he will be back under trial again. They are

putting together a record, Mr. Speaker, a record of the atrocities that

were committed under the regime of Saddam Hussein.

I have met some of the people that were victims of those crimes. The

other night I sat down in a coffee shop for 3 hours and talked with a

young lady from Kurdistan. She had grown up there in that region,

within an hour of Kirkuk. She has a friend, a friend that survived

Saddam's gassing of Halabja where 5,000 Kurds were killed: men, women,

and children, the most innocents of civilians.

We have all seen the pictures of civilians lying there dead, gassed

to death, a mother holding her child and families lying there dead. One

of this young lady's friends is an individual that escaped from that

gas, that gassing death at Halabja and lived to tell the story.

As she told me the story of that friend, I asked her if she believed

that Saddam Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction. Ladies and

gentlemen from the other side of the aisle, I challenge you to try to

convince that young lady of that. No weapons of mass destruction, when

5,000 of your neighbors are dead, when one of your friends has escaped

the gas? How would you convince someone who had lived through that that

it did not exist, because we did not find huge warehouses of gas, huge

warehouses of chemical weapons, huge warehouses of biological weapons?

Because we did not find a nuclear bomb affixed to the tip of a missile

that had the capability of going to Tel Aviv? Would that have been

enough? Or Washington, D.C.? Would that have been enough not to have

detonated?

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the people on this side of the aisle have

so much political capital invested in failure that they cannot abide

victory. In fact, I challenge the people that will come out here on

this floor in another 40-or-so minutes to define victory for me. Define

victory for the American people.

Let us hear what is the upside of this. I hear a relentless drumbeat

of pessimism night after night after night. The pessimism is so deep

and so dark, I could not wake up in the morning and face myself if I

thought the world were really like that. What is victory, Under 30

Group? How would you define victory? And I will submit that they will

never, Mr. Speaker, define victory because the investment in defeat is

so great and the fear of victory is so great that they know as soon as

they define victory, they will not be able to raise the bar again and

again. They will not be able to redefine victory again and again and

again. They will not be able

to challenge the wisdom of this administration and continually give us

a pessimistic viewpoint that causes so many people in this country to

lose faith on where this Nation is going.

I will define victory. Victory was defined by this administration, in

fact, more than 2 years ago. It was defined shortly after the Iraqis

were liberated in March and early April of 2003. Our President laid

these principles out clearly. It was already defined in advance, and

now I can back up and I can tell you the sequence of events.

You liberate the Iraqi people, do so militarily. Our troops did that

in a miraculous way. Even though detractors said you do not have enough

troops to do that, Colin Powell had over half a million, you are going

to do it with less than half, how can you hope to do so when you are

going up against one of the largest armored militaries in the world?

How can you go across the desert with your own armor in a fashion that

has never been done before? How can you attack a city and liberate that

city that is larger than any city that has ever been invaded and

occupied by a foreign power in all of the history of the world. It will

be another Stalingrad, they said. But before we got to the Baghdad,

about 3 days in we got hit with a 4-day sandstorm and then there we

were all bogged down in this quagmire.

It was said the Iraqis are the only people that can see in the sand,

and here our troops were hiding. The argument is will be slaughtered by

the Iraqis because they are desert fighters, and our troops do not know

about that environment.

Mr. Speaker, it turned out to be entirely different. The world found

out that our airplanes could see through that sand and they could

identify the Iraqi armored columns. The Iraqis had their heads in the

sand and they were waiting that storm out. And a lot of them did not

live to see the end of that storm because we had the ability to see

through the sand and we hit their armored columns, and we knocked much

of that out during those days. And when the sand stopped blowing, our

armored columns started up again and they headed up to Baghdad.

Mr. Speaker, it was the longest and fastest advance across the desert

in history. They arrived in Baghdad almost in a sequential column

between our Army and our Marine Corps from two different directions. On

a Thursday they went in and drove around through Baghdad with a tank

and a couple of armored personnel carriers and looked up at the hotels

and buildings. Essentially they met no resistance to speak of. They

came out of Baghdad and said we really have liberated the city, and

they had. It is the largest city in the history of the world to be

invaded and occupied and liberated by a foreign power. It is an

astonishing accomplishment.

Was there an effort then to go forward from that martial law period

of time and establish a civilian government in Iraq, you bet. In Mosul,

the liberation took place in March, and in May, they elected a governor

and a vice governor from Mosul. They sat down and again to craft how to

govern that region.

I met with those people in October 2003. They were doing business as

usual. It was already usual in Mosul. So we went from liberation to

martial law to the civilian government. We went to the Coalition

Provisional Authority under Paul Bremer. Under that we had regional

elections in some regions. We put the people that lived there in power.

That was another great milestone.

Under the CPA, we had local governments that were functioning well.

We needed to get the head of this government put back on again, and

that was Paul Bremer's job to do that. He knew that we needed to hand

over that authority to a Civilian Provisional Authority in Iraq. That

happened in June. The date was set, but unlike most of the milestones

for any other effort in history, the Iraqis and the American military

did not just meet that deadline. Generally they get delayed, delayed,

delayed, but they beat the deadline by 48 hours and took over control

of Iraq with an interim civilian government from Paul Bremer and the

CPA. Another milestone reached, Mr. Speaker.

And that milestone went on. As the interim Iraqi government began to

put the pieces in place so they could begin to get some connections

between Baghdad and the rest of the country, and it was their job to

prepare for an election. That election took place in January. That

elected the interim government, and their number one job was to craft a

constitution. Between January of this year and October 15 of this year,

they crafted a constitution. It was a tough task. A lot faster than we

crafted our Constitution here in the United States of America. This

Constitution that I carry by my heart every day I have a jacket on for

a pocket for it, it was a struggle to get our Constitution established.

We had a Constitutional Convention.

We had an effort for ratification. Essentially it happened in 1789.

We had a Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, so 13 years and

several months later, we had a constitution ratified by the people. We

have not been in Iraq anywhere near 13 years, and I do not expect the

effort is going to take anywhere near that long.

It was a struggle to establish this constitutional republic that we

have in the United States of America, and it is a struggle to establish

a free government in a region of the world that has not had one before.

But the Iraqi people stepped up and reached each milestone and crafted

a constitution. Now 108 polling places were attacked by terrorists in

January in the election that elected the interim government, the

interim parliament that crafted the constitution.

By October 15, 2005, the election that ratified the constitution that

was drafted by that interim parliament, there were 19 attacks on

polling places as opposed to the 108 that took place in January. That

is a measure of progress, Mr. Speaker.

We look throughout Iraq and we measure progress after progress. But

now we are sitting here with a ratified constitution and our interim

parliament and an election coming up December 15. Of all of the

milestones that have been laid out in this sequence that I have talked

about, liberation, local elections, establishment of the Coalition

Provisional Authority, an election to elect the interim parliament

whose job it was to run the country, a constitution, you add all those

things all up, and this election on December 15 is more important than

the others by far because this election puts in place a parliament in

Iraq that truly represents the people. It will be the voice of the

people and it is a certified voice of the people. It will be, among the

Arab world, the most legitimate voice of any Arab people in the world.

I would submit there is only one place where an Arab can go for a

fair trial outside of Iraq, and that might be Israel. We are watching a

fair trial take place in Iraq today, and that will be the second place

in the Arab world where a person can go to get a fair trial. When this

election takes place on December 15, 2005, several days from now, it

will put in place a parliament that is elected by the people of the

sovereign nation of Iraq. They will select a prime minister, and they

will then be more legitimate than any other Arab nation that sits at

the United Nations.

And the sovereignty that comes from that and the consent of the

people that empowers their representatives in almost the same fashion

as we consent as people to empower representatives here, will give this

government the authority to move quickly and decisively down the paths

of progress.

I am hearing naysayers. I am hearing detractors. Why? Why when we are

roughly a week from time we are going to have a certifiable, sovereign

nation of Iraq that has the ability to sit down and negotiate oil

development contracts with some of the most effective oil companies in

the world, to come into this country that is rich with resources, so

rich with resources that oil seeps to the top of the ground, and I have

seen it, Mr. Speaker.

So rich with resources that more oil wells need to be punched in and

more pipelines need to be laid and refineries built, and the export of

the wealth of Iraq will pour the capital back into that country, and we

will see that economy start to grow and multiply and flourish. Why do

we hear these negative comments and detractors? Do they not know that

our soldiers over there want and need their support? That the people

that watch al-Jazeera TV see these voices as quasi American

leaders. They see these as people that are directing the policy of the

United States of America. They do not understand that the Commander-in-

Chief is not listening to this every night. Thankfully he is not

listening to this every night, and I hope he is not.

The Commander-in-Chief has to lead us down a path without regard to

public opinion. He will take into account our judgment, but the destiny

of this country is more important. If the mainstream media and the

relentless drumbeat on the floor of the House takes the confidence of

the American people down so low that they have lost their will, it is

the job of the President of the United States to step up and take the

debate to the American people and do the fireside chats in this modern

technological world, lift our spirits up and give us the facts. I am

here to help him do that.

He has given us some of these fireside chats and speeches. He

understands, as I understand, that our freedom, our freedom depends

upon our soldiers, yes, but it also depends upon our will. There is

something that is a universal truth throughout all of history and that

is a war is never over until the loser realizes they have lost. That is

a fact, Mr. Speaker. War is never over until the loser realizes they

have lost.

If you are down in the dumps and you are losing your soldiers and

troops and you are losing your ability to combat a battle, losing your

munitions, losing the funding network, you are really down and out,

there would be some people in this country that think that I am talking

about the American or coalition forces, and I am talking about

Zarqawi's people. They are down and out. They can barely put together

enough munitions to conduct any kind of opposition. They do not have a

lot of logistical support. They are hiding in caves and cowering in mud

huts in places throughout Iraq, and they are going out one or two every

day dying for their cause, dying for a lost cause.

Mr. Speaker, I will submit that the people on the other side, the al

Qaeda people, the Zarqawi people, they have it pretty tough where they

are right now. A lot of them are dead. Perhaps 75 percent of their

leadership is dead. We decapitated the number 3 man in Afghanistan

within the last week.

They have been writing letters back and forth from Zarqawi to Bin

Laden. We know they are short of resources. One of them asked, could

you kindly send me $100,000. Zarqawi wrote a letter a while back that

said in this country we do not have any place to hide. This is not

Vietnam. They do not have any mountains. They do not have any forests

to hide in. The only place they can hide is in the homes of the Iraqis,

and Iraqi homes that are willing to hide al Qaeda terrorists, he said,

are as rare as red sulfur.

Red sulfur does not mean a lot to us here. I submit it is quite rare.

Red sulfur fits in the category of maybe as rare as hen's teeth or

chicken lips or frog hair. It is a rare commodity. He draws the

distinctions between Vietnam and Iraq: No mountains to hide in, no

forests to hide in, and the homes they have to cower in where Iraqis

are willing to house them are as rare as red sulfur, rare as chicken's

teeth, rare as chicken lips, rare as frog's hair.

So they feel that taste of defeat. When they are about ready to give

up, we can take the tone of that letter some months ago, and have to

think they are very close to the end.

Then we hear the voice from the other side that says we cannot win.

Howard Dean, This war cannot be won. The esteemed gentleman, the

ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, This war cannot be won.

In the same debate he said, Our military has accomplished their

mission, bring them home.

Was not their mission to win? And how do you define your exit

strategy? Victory, Mr. Speaker. That is how we define the exit

strategy, victory. There is no other exit strategy. In fact, I would

submit why would you want to leave.

I certainly want the Iraqis to take over the defense of their own

country, and that is our administration's policy, and it is one that I

support. There are over 210,000 Iraqis in uniform that are trained, and

you will hear again from this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that

there is only one battalion that is combat ready. One battalion. Maybe

there was a time there was only one battalion, that there was not one

American in that was truly combat ready that had the logistical support

that they could go out and engage in combat without cooperation,

coordination with American troops and American know-how and American

logistics and American ingenuity and ability. Maybe one.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit to you that 30 to 40 percent of the

Iraqis that are in uniform, trained, equipped, ready for combat, having

the courage to defend their country, 30 to 40 percent are engaged and

ready to engage; and some of them have some American advisers there,

and these people on this side of the aisle argue that disqualifies them

from defending their country. I wonder what the mothers and the fathers

and the wives think when they have an Iraqi soldier that is killed in

the line of duty and they are told by the floor of the United States

Congress that they were not really qualified for combat, they really

were not ready to defend their country.

Mr. Speaker, these people are ready. They have the courage. And many

of them are ready for combat. Many have been in combat. Most of them go

in combat with American soldiers, and it is a good thing for us to

have. I would not want to say there are 210,000 Iraqi troops with

uniforms and equipment and training and they are all ready to go into

combat right now and all we have to do is just turn them all loose, Mr.

Speaker, and they can all go into combat and at the same time, same

day, same night American troops come back to their home bases, to their

wives, their husbands, their sons and daughters and their parents. I

wish they could, Mr. Speaker, but that would not be prudent. It would

not be wise and it would not be good policy.

It would not be good policy not to have an American involvement there

to go through a transition, a transitional period, Mr. Speaker, that

provides for a gradual transfer of power so that the Iraqis that are

willing and eager to defend their country are handed over those reins

of responsibility in a fashion that ensures success. So maybe sometime

ago there was only one battalion that did not have any American

involvement. About that same time that you heard the remarks about one

battalion, one Iraqi battalion that did not have any American

involvement, at that time we really did not have any American bases

either that were under the control of the Iraqis.

But since that time, we have 20 bases that have been handed over to

the Iraqis to manage, 20 military bases. Have you heard that from the

other side of the aisle? Have you heard that the Iraqis have taken over

the control of 20 bases? Because we have confidence that they can

provide the security and the logistics out of those places and dispatch

their troops, take care of the communications, food and housing and

training, all the munitions and equipment, the logistics that take

place there and provide the security in the region.

Twenty bases the Iraqis have today that they did not have when the

allegation was made that there was only one battalion that was combat

ready. So you get a real twisted view here, because we have people that

get out of bed every morning and they scour the television, they scour

the newspapers, and they scour the Internet trying to find the most

negative that they can so they can bring this down, hustle down here

and trot out onto the floor of the House of Representatives, Mr.

Speaker, and begin to inform the American people of the most

pessimistic view point, not always substantiated, by the way, but the

most pessimistic view point possible because they want to dispirit the

American troops.

Well, that is some of the effect, only our people are so courageous

and they do not listen to you all that much. But they are sure, in a

word, encouraging our enemies. Osama bin Laden, Zarqawi, Zawahiri,

Muqtada Al-Sadr, all of those people. They believe that the Americans

are going to lose their will; and if we lose our will, so will the rest

of the coalition forces. Last night I put a poster up here on the floor

that showed a picture of Muqtada Al-Sadr, big old blow up of his

bearded face, and the quote beneath his face that I heard come out of

al-Jazeera TV in Kuwait

City. The quote was, he said it in Arabic, I watched the English

subtitles, if we keep attacking Americans they will leave Iraq the same

way they left Vietnam, the same way they left Lebanon, the same way

they left Mogadishu.

Now, if you are an enemy, and you are dispirited like Zarqawi was

dispirited when he wrote the red sulfur letter, and you hear that quote

out of one of their leaders, by the way that same quote has come out

of, in similar language has come out of the mouths of all four of those

leaders that I have talked about, Muqtada Al-Sadr, the non-al Qaeda,

the Shiite leader who is actually I will call him a revolutionary in

some fashion. But Zarqawi, Zawahiri, bin Laden, Muqtada Al-Sadr, all of

them have made statements that you will find out there on the Internet

that says the Americans have left in the past. They have pulled out of

places like Vietnam, Lebanon, Mogadishu. They will pull out of Iraq.

Just persevere, blow yourself up one more time, get your 72 virgins,

turn yourself into smithereens, take a few people with you if you can

and you will be adding to this cause somehow and some of the rest of us

will figure out how we can come in here and create this civil war that

will split this nation into three different section.

What is the future for Iraq if we let that happen? Think about it for

a minute. What is the alternative? What is this idea that was presented

by the chairman of the Democrat National Committee that we ought to

evict ourselves from Iraq and pull ourselves out of there and go

someplace where we are wanted. Did you ever know there was a need for

an army or you were really wanted? Anybody ever invite you all in there

and say, gee, we like you folks. Why do you not come in here and stay

because we like the way you spend your money downtown. Actually, there

is a place in Germany like that. They are glad to have us. But that is

not a reason to send an army there. An army goes a place generally

where you are not wanted to free the people that are under the tyranny

of those who do not want you there.

But Mr. Dean has advocated that we pull our troops out of Iraq and go

to another Middle Eastern country where we are more wanted, and then we

can fight Zarqawi from there. Boy, you know, Zarqawi, I wonder if he is

writing those press releases for Mr. Dean. That is what I would want if

I were Zarqawi. I would be trying to convince Americans, get your

troops out of here. Why do you not go someplace where you are wanted,

and then Zarqawi would be free to turn Fallujah into an armed camp, to

turn Ramadi into an armed camp, to turn Tikrit into an armed camp, to

turn all of the Sunni Triangle into an armed camp and pull in money

from around the rest of the Arab world and bring in and arm all the

troops and recruit more al Qaeda and turn it into a training camp, and,

yes, develop more weapons of mass destruction, both gas, biological to

get the money.

We are watching what is happening over in Iran. Nuclear. Add that all

together, take the advice of the chairman of the Democrat National

Committee and pull our troops out of Iraq, go to an Arab country where

we are more wanted so we can fight Zarqawi from there, Mr. Speaker?

That does sound like something that has been put out by Zarqawi

himself. And it would be the very worst scenario that we can imagine.

We are there now. Zarqawi is at least under our thumb. We have him

surrounded. We do not know exactly where he is, but we have him

surrounded. So we have to stay there; we have to finish this job. And

every time we squeeze them down a little more, a little more, it gets

harder and harder, and Zarqawi gets ready to write a letter and to

sound a little more desperate each time when he puts out a plea for

help that goes to Osama bin Laden, who essentially has not had much of

a voice in what is going on in this effort for a good long time, Mr.

Speaker.

Pull out of Iraq. Go to a place where we are more wanted in the

Middle East to fight Zarqawi from there. Think what happens if we ever

pull out of Iraq. If we pull out of there, and it is not clear to

history that we have a victory, if we pull out on our own free will, if

we redefine victory ourselves, history will define it anyway. History

will define victory as the effort that prevailed. And we have said here

is what we want: we want the Iraqi people to be in charge of their own

country; we want them to have free elections; we want them to elect a

parliament, which they will do December 15.

We want them then from that parliament to elect a prime minister, set

up a civilian government, a government that represents the people of

the state of Iraq, a sovereign state, a sovereign nation. They will go

sit at the United Nations, and they will have more credibility there

than any other Arab nation, Mr. Speaker. That is our definition of

victory, and it is going to take a while for the violence to disappear

in Iraq. And the reason for that is, Mr. Speaker, that as I said

earlier, a war is never over until the loser understands that they have

lost. If we stand on the floor of the House of Representatives and tell

our enemies that here is how you win, if we tell them we cannot win,

but they have, some of them are going to believe us. I do not believe

it. Some of the American people believe it. I do not believe it.

I believe that Iraq is going to be a certified sovereign free nation

on the date of December 15, and maybe it will take a little while to

count the votes, and maybe it will take a little while to elect a prime

minister, and maybe it will take a little while to gavel in that first

parliament, and it will take a little while for them to get all the

kinks out of their new government. And it will take a little while to

get the enemy, the insurgents, purged out of that society.

But as they see this inevitable march, this inevitable march towards

freedom, the enemy will begin to understand that they have lost. When

they understand that they have lost, then we will have victory because

the rest of the principles are there. We have followed the sequence of

liberation, Coalition Provisional Authority, interim Iraqi civilian

government control, an elected interim parliament, draft the

Constitution, put it on the ballot October 15, get a great turn out,

ratify that Constitution, and now set an election for December 15. We

are now a free people. Free people go to the polls again, and I predict

they will go to the polls again in greater numbers than the percentage

of the American people do, because people that have never had freedom

cherish it even more.

That will be the definition for victory, Mr. Speaker, when we see a

free people that are controlling their own destiny and going to the

polls and directing their own leaders. They have got their

Constitution. It is ratified. They have a tremendous amount of natural

resources, and some day very soon after December 15 they can sign a

contract with one or a dozen companies that have the technology and the

skills and the capital to develop that massive amount of oil that they

have. It is theirs. It has been our principle that it has been their

oil from the very beginning. Our Commander in Chief said that to the

world. And, in fact, if you go read the Iraqi Constitution there are

two references in there as to the possession of their oil, and it is

their oil.

And it is there for the Iraqi people, and the Constitution defines

that it will be distributed proportionally in a fair fashion and

equally across the country so that there is equal development of Iraq

from that wealth. And soon, within 6 months I will predict we will

start to see the oil export from Iraq. Right now, the only thing that

is really exporting from Iraq with any kind of profits are dates, and

it is about half the date crop that it used to be. That can be improved

too.

But when the oil starts to flow out, it is their oil, the profit is

theirs, the capital comes in. And when you have capital that comes in,

you know what you have. You have capitalism. And capitalism really is

the solution to this. We have the military who are doing their job. And

behind the military solution is the political solution which is taking

place on December 15 in this election. And when that free parliament is

established and they elect a prime minister, the next step is hand over

some of this development to some people that will risk some of their

capital to develop those oil fields so that capitalism can sweep into

that country, sweep into that country and so the linkage of military

solution, the political solution and the free enterprise

capital solution all come to pass, all in their sequence, Mr. Speaker.

When that happens, then we do have a definition for victory in Iraq.

And we cannot expect miracles, and it is hard and it is bloody and it

is costly. But they can become, and in fact I believe they are, the

Lode Star for the Arab people. This inspiration that gets established,

when people are cynics in the world think that because of what

ethnicity you are, what tribe you belong to, what country you come

from, what religion you might be, you cannot handle freedom, well, I

agree with the President. Freedom beats and yearns in the heart of

every person and all people yearn to be free.

Now we have not gone to war and fought and handed them their freedom.

They fought alongside us and some of that freedom they have earned, and

they needed to earn it because it is precious and it has more value if

it is them earning that freedom instead of us. But I believe this has

been a very noble thing that we have done, Mr. Speaker; and I look

around the world and I think throughout history, when has this country

ever gone to war against another free people? I will say never. Never

once in the history of the world has the United States ever gone to

war, a clash of arms, against another free people, because we resolve

our differences in open debate here on the floor of the House of

Representatives and the Senate and across this country.

And one of those things also that beats in the heart of all of us is

we have a certain capacity for change in all of us.

That change is within us. It is natural, and it is human, and it is

described pretty much in the book ``The Case for Democracy'' by Natan

Sharansky. He spent a fair part of his life in the gulag up in the

Soviet Union, and he watched how there they struggled for their very

lives and very survival. And the effort that came from them just to

stay alive every day consumed almost everything that they did, and he

thought that was the world that a lot of people lived in too, but that

was a narrow thing that he was in at the time.

When he was liberated from the gulag, he went to Israel, and he

became a free person in a free society that had a democracy and open

dialogue, and he went to the Knesset, and he watched that debate that

was taking place there, and he saw that same energy go into the debate

in the Knesset, sometimes arguing and debating and struggling over

things that he saw as minutia because he had spent a lot of his years

on survival, and the same effort on survival was being burned up and

consumed on minutia in a free country.

And he concluded, and I think rightfully, that we all have within us

this energy for change, this desire for change, and we will use that

energy for a constructive change whether we do so in open debate and

dialogue like we do in this country, like they do in Israel, or whether

we use that same energy and desire, when we do not have this freedom of

speech, to take it out on our neighbor, take it out on our enemy, and

do so in a violent fashion and often in the form of terrorism. That is

the habitat that breeds terror, the habitat that is anathema to

freedom.

So some years ago, shortly after September 11, we had a guest

lecturer there at Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa. Benazir

Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan. She gave a wonderful

lecture, and it was fascinating. And afterwards we sat down and had a

little one-on-one conversation, and I asked her a couple of questions,

and one of them was what percentage of the Muslim world are inclined to

be supportive of al Qaeda. How great in numbers are our enemy?

She did not hesitate. In fact, her answer was so spontaneous that I

concluded that she had answered that question before, and she said, Not

very many, perhaps 10 percent.

Well, not very many, perhaps 10 percent of 1.2 or 1.3 billion people

is a whole lot of enemies, in my opinion. That is 120 to 130 million

scattered throughout the world. We cannot attack all of them, and we

cannot turn our military effort on all of them. We have to find another

solution.

So I asked her then how do we get to this point where we can ever

define victory? What is victory going to be? How will we ever craft a

victory given this global enemy we have that is committed to our death,

people who believe that their path to salvation is in killing us?

She said, You have to give them freedom. You have to give them

democracy. You have to give them an opportunity for their future, and

they will turn their minds, their hands, their hearts from hatred and

killing towards their families, their neighborhoods, their communities,

their mosques.

That is the difference, and that is the climate that we need to

create. That is that climate that is there in Afghanistan, and that is

that climate that we are in the process of creating in Iraq. That is

how Afghanistan and Iraq can link together and be the inspiration that

shows the world that freedom can echo across the Arab world the same

way it did across Eastern Europe when the Wall went down on November 9,

1989. And that is some insight.

Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, there were a

number of motives, and I will concede there were other motives; but in

the 60 seconds that I have left, I am not going to be able to address

all of that.

I will just say that, yes, liberation was part of that; and, in fact,

I believe it is the broader vision, this vision that has been brought

to this global effort by our President. I think he is a leading thinker

on this in the world. Not a receptive adviser, but I think he is a

leading thinker. And that is why I raise this issue. It is bigger and

broader than weapons of mass destruction. It is bigger than many of the

things that are discussed here on the floor of this House, and I bring

this message here so that we can see the benefits of the sacrifice and

the reason to carry on and the price if we fail to do so.