Mr. Speaker, despite what many Americans may see on cable

television networks over the last several months, as I learned again

today in a meeting with the President of the United States; the

Secretary of Defense; with General Casey, the four-star general in

charge of Operation Iraqi Freedom, through a satellite link, Mr.

Speaker, we are winning the war in Iraq. And 7 days from today in the

midst of an ongoing victory for the freedom of tens of millions of

Iraqi people, we will once again see the people of Iraq use the freedom

won by the American soldier in forming their own government and

adopting parliamentary elections.

The ongoing victory in Iraq was described by the President at a

speech just 1 week ago at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland; and

like the meeting that I attended at the White House today, I had the

privilege of joining the President for that address, and there he

described his strategy for victory.

And let me say that while there have been sometimes loud and

cacophonous debates on this floor about the need for a plan or the lack

of a plan, what is available today, Mr. Speaker, at whitehouse.gov for

all Americans to examine is a recently declassified version of what has

always been the plan. It is, in effect, a three-track approach that

involves political, military, and economic initiatives to achieve a

free and stable and democratic Iraq, and we are winning in this cause.

With less than 7 days to go before the Iraqi people will engage in

parliamentary elections, I am delighted to report to the Members and

any looking on that the American people, the people in Indiana that I

serve, will be proud to hear what I have heard, to see what I have seen

in my three different trips to Operation Iraqi Freedom, and they too

would conclude inexorably that we are winning the war in Iraq.

On the military front, as General Casey described today, over 200,000

Iraqis have been trained and equipped, both military and police

personnel. For the national elections that took place earlier this

year, there were 80,000 fewer Iraqis in uniform. Today there is one

full Iraqi division, four Iraqi brigades, four Iraqi battalions that

are leading the fight in places like Najaf, Karbala, the dangerous road

to the airport in Baghdad, in Tikrit. In one city

after another, these Iraqi military personnel are on the point. They

are leading the fight, along with 160,000 American military personnel.

And the Iraqi people themselves are becoming more involved in

advancing their own security and stability. Here is an interesting

fact, Mr. Speaker, that I just learned today: in March of this year,

there were essentially 400 tips by Iraqis of insurgent activities, tips

made to U.S. and coalition forces. In the month of November, we logged

more than 4,700 tips from regular and ordinary Iraqis. The people of

Iraq are partnering in their own security and in their own freedom, and

that 10-fold increase of that partnership speaks for itself.

On the economic front, we have seen 30,000 new businesses. And GNP

per capita in the last year has more than doubled in Iraq for ordinary

Iraqis. It is an extraordinary record of success.

Politically, we have around the corner parliamentary elections; and

as we speak, Mr. Speaker, there are 327 political entities, or as we

might call them, parties or organizations, and 7,000 candidates that

will be answering the call of millions of Iraqis who will put

themselves, as 8.5 million Iraqis did in January of this year, in

harm's way to exercise their own freedom.

It is my fondest hope, Mr. Speaker, that when the President of the

United States comes into this well on January 31 of 2006 that maybe in

this Chamber, in a seat in this Chamber, might be a legislative leader,

or two, of the newly elected Iraqi Parliament.

I have been to Operation Iraqi Freedom three times. I have sat even

today with our military commanders and the President of the United

States. As we go into this weekend, let the word go forth from here: we

are winning the war and winning the peace in Iraq.