Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor tonight to make

what might be a shocking announcement, and that is an announcement of

something that has not been very available in the United States news

media, something that needs to be acknowledged on the floor of this

Congress. And that is that one of America's most reliable and possibly

historically are the most reliable American ally, an American ally that

has been with us in virtually every major conflict throughout the 20th

century, and is with us today in Iraq as one of our strong coalition

partners, joining together with Great Britain and the other 25 or so

coalition partners that are there.

The nation of Australia has doubled their troop deployment to Iraq.

They have done so at a time when there are other nations that are

looking for opportunities to leave that area. And they have done so at

a time with historical moment, when we are seeing people marching in

the streets of Lebanon reaching out for freedom, acting upon the Bush

Doctrine, standing up for freedom. The Australians are standing with

us, as they stood with us in World War I, World War II, Vietnam and

Korea and, as I said, virtually every major conflict.

The 900 or so troops that are in there now are there to defend, in an

interesting irony, they are there to defend the Japanese, who have also

deployed to Iraq to provide engineering and other services there in the

country at a time when it is pivotal and significant that we help them

continue to grasp the freedom that they did when they reached to go to

the polls on January 30.

Now, the reason I make this announcement as an announcement is

because I think it is pretty difficult for a regular American citizen

who watches television every day and reads the paper every day, and

maybe even surfs the Internet every day, to even know this significant

piece of international news, a piece of international news that was

published throughout a great number of Internet services, as well as

mainstream media around the world, but not so well in the United States

of America.

So, I looked around and I asked the question, how would a person know

this?

I came across it because I picked up the Sunday newspaper in Sydney,

Australia, and this is what I found. The countries that refuse to

surrender, U.S., Australia and Britain, boost their troop numbers.

Great Britain increased their numbers there, as has the United

States, as has now Australia. And the national news media that handled

it here in this country were few and far between.

So how would a person go about finding this out?

Well, I will go to Al Jazeera's Web page and see if I can find this

little piece of information that I happened to have been coincidentally

privy to. And I find on Al Jazeera's Web page dated February 22,

Australia to send more troops to Iraq.

I did not find that in major newspaper in America, with the exception

of the Los Angeles Times and one other newspaper on the west coast. Not

the Washington Post. Not the Washington Times. Not the New York Post,

not the New York Times. Not generally available to Americans.

Mainstream media broadcast TV, most of the cable networks had a

little story, one blip. But on the mainstream media that was not

something that came out on Peter Jennings, Brian Williams and not Dan

Rather. But it did come out of Al Jazeera.

These are our tried and true allies. The people that stood with us

for over a century have doubled their troop commitments out of

Australia, and there is a long list of them standing with us as allies,

as has Great Britain, and as has a number of the other coalition

partners.

We need to recognize them, Mr. Speaker. We need to acknowledge them.

We need to thank them for their service, not just to the support of the

coalition troops, but their service to the freedom of humanity. And I

challenge the news media to pick this up and try to scoop Al Jazeera

next time.