Mr. President, I rise to discuss recent events that are

positive steps in the war on terror for the United States and our

allies abroad. The first is the announcement that the United States and

foreign counterterrorism officials have worked together to make a

series of arrests that appear to be linked to a web of Islamic

extremists in Canada, the United States, and Europe. The recent death

of Iraqi insurgent leader and al-Qaida member Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi is

another. These are significant victories against those who wish our

country harm.

Last week, Canadian officials arrested 17 people for allegedly

plotting to carry out a campaign of bombings, kidnappings and other

terrorist acts in Ottawa and Toronto. The arrests were made possible by

the monitoring of Internet chat rooms and e-mail accounts tied to

suspected Islamic extremists. The arrests came after three tons of

ammonium nitrate--common garden fertilizer that is easily transformed

into an explosive--was allegedly purchased from undercover officers.

Two of 17 suspected terrorists were caught trying to smuggle guns and

ammunition from the United States into Canada via the Peace Bridge last

summer.

These individuals were allegedly using the Internet to communicate

with terrorist facilitators abroad, such as a 22-year-old Web site

operator with direct links to al-Qaida who was arrested by British

police last October on charges of financing and supporting terrorist

activities. Authorities believe the Web site operator was in contact

with the individuals in the Canadian arrests, as well as two men in the

U.S., sharing surveillance videos and other information for potential

terrorist attacks. Included in the surveillance videos were many

Washington, DC, landmarks.

Also, just last Tuesday British police arrested an American student

in London as he prepared to board a flight to Pakistan. He was wanted

in New York for allegedly providing military equipment to people who

took it to members of Osama bin Laden's terrorist organization in

Pakistan. Authorities have not ruled out a connection to the Canadian

arrests.

Here in the U.S., the New York and Atlanta joint terrorism task

forces recently arrested two men in connection with an alleged

terrorist plot. The plot included discussions about blowing up oil

refineries and disabling navigational aids on airplanes. The

investigation began when California police arrested two men for a gas

station robbery. A subsequent search of their home turned up documents

listing the addresses of U.S. military recruiting stations, the Israeli

Consulate, and synagogues in the Los Angeles area. The investigation

eventually revealed the existence of a terrorist cell that had been

spawned by a small radical group operating in Folsom Prison who

considered themselves the ``al-Qaida of California.''

American counterterrorism officials are joining forces with their

colleagues around the world to unravel intricate webs of terrorist

organizations that would do us great harm if not for the efforts of

these countterror experts. I commend them for their efforts to discover

terrorist plots and bring them to a stop before they are carried out.

Much further from home, but still close to our hearts are the brave

men and women of our Armed Forces deployed in the Middle East and

Afghanistan.

I thank our servicemen and servicewomen in the U.S. Armed Forces for

their on-going service to their country, their commitment to American

ideals, and their determination to win the global war on terror. We

need to continually express our gratitude to the families of the U.S.

military personnel, especially those families who have lost loved ones

during our most recent deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Most important, our Armed Forces continue to seek out terrorists to

disrupt their plans both in the Middle East and abroad. They also

continue to provide support and guidance to the Iraqi and Afghani

people in their newborn democracies. With their steadfast courage, our

citizens in uniform have taken the battle to the enemy and achieved

success.

Their most recent victory was the elimination of insurgent leader and

al-Qaida member Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. His death is an enormous blow to

those who continue to terrorize the Iraqi people. Zarqawi, whom Osama

Bin Laden has heaped praise upon, has lead a horrific campaign against

our troops in Iraq and against the Iraqi people. I am thankful to say

that this mass murderer will no longer be able to carry on attempts at

undermining the Iraqi national government and the coalition.

Of note in his demise is the international cooperation that

spearheaded the operation. After receiving tips and intelligence of his

location from Jordanian sources, Coalition forces killed Zarqawi and

many of his lieutenants yesterday in an airstrike. It was this exchange

of intelligence information between the United States and Jordan that

helped to permanently end Zarqawi's operations. I should also note that

the Iraqi police were first on the scene after the air strike to help

identify our success.

Also, perhaps lost among this news yesterday was another announcement

made by Prime Minister Al-Maliki of Iraq that candidates have been

named for important cabinet posts in the Iraqi government. After much

negotiation, consensus picks were made to fill the defense and interior

ministries--both key to a more secure and stable Iraq. Much of our

success depends on the men and women forming the Iraqi government, and

these are important steps to meeting the security challenges.

The recent announcements in Iraq and our international

counterterrorism efforts, while significant, are only small victories

in the overall global war on terror. There are more extremists who will

line up to preach against democracy and freedom. There are still those

that will attack the free people of this world and want to do us much

harm.

After news of Zarqawi's death, the forces of al-Qaida in Iraq vowed

publicly to continue their so-called ``holy war'' on innocent

civilians. They have stated:

.

In fact, only two hours after the Zarqawi announcement a bomb blew up

in Baghdad killing at least nineteen people. It is clear that our

success in Iraq against this enemy depends greatly on our continual

cooperation with the Iraqi government and the new ministers in charge

of security there.

The global war on terror has been a great challenge for our Nation.

Yet while the cost has been high, the cost of doing nothing would be

even greater. And we cannot do this alone. Only with help of our

neighbors, countrymen, and allies throughout the world can we assure

that our democratic ideals defeat those of the terrorist extremists. I

thank all of them for a job well done.