Madam Speaker, what a difference 2 years

makes. In August of 2003, I was in Iraq, and every Marine I met wanted

to show me the field that Iraqis began digging in as soon as they took

control of it. A mass grave was there with 3,000 bodies, part of the

400,000 to 500,000 mass graves around the country. This hopelessness

has really driven the Iraqis to embrace the freedom that our brave

soldiers have given them the opportunity for. That is why, as we stand

here today, millions of Iraqis, Shia, Sunni, Kurds are giving the

terrorists the finger, the ink-stained finger voting for the third time

this year, and as they do that, they are piercing through the

hopelessness that breeds terrorism. They are giving themselves the

opportunities for a better life. They are transforming a region. They

are making America safer. We applaud the Iraqis. We thank the American

troops that have made this possible.