Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in support of the

rule and the resolution.

Obviously, much has happened in Iraq since the war began a year ago.

The military occupation of Iraq was amazingly swift and efficient,

taking only a few weeks. Since then much has been accomplished, and I

would like to point out just a few things that I think are noteworthy.

More than 200,000 Iraqis are now involved with security operations.

U.S. troops have been reduced by 20,000. Most importantly, an interim

constitution has been approved, including a bill of rights. The

gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. Dunn) and I have formed an Iraqi

Women's Caucus, and we are pleased to see that Iraqi women will be

given an active role in new government, after experiencing years of

brutal oppression, with at least 25 percent representation. More than

17,000 reconstruction projects have been completed. The 240 hospitals

are open, and I think something else worthy of note, health care

spending has been increased 26 times higher than under Saddam. Ninety

percent of the children are now immunized. Electricity and water are

being rapidly restored and improved. Oil production has increased

dramatically. Schools and universities are operating following a

massive infusion of school supplies. Private enterprise is increasing

dramatically. Seventy percent of Iraqis now say that things are going

well, and they see a brighter future.

I just came from a meeting downstairs where we met with seven Iraqis

who are over here as part of a delegation. One of those gentlemen saw

three of his brothers executed and his father executed; their heads

were chopped off. They talked about people who had been buried alive. I

guess it is one thing to stand here and to debate and to talk; it is

another to meet with people who have really experienced the pain and

the suffering that was imposed by Saddam Hussein and to understand the

gratitude that these people have for the military operation that has

been going on in Iraq.

Reconstruction has certainly been difficult. There have been bumps in

the road, as has been true throughout history. Reconstruction is much

further along right now than it was for Germany and Japan following

World War II, and I think we need to not lose track of these

accomplishments.

There should be no disagreement, I believe, in this body that

American troops are doing a remarkable job and deserve our total

support. Also, I feel that there should be no disagreement, that we

must see this conflict through to a successful resolution. It is

important that we present a unified front in this body. I think recent

events in Spain will indicate the danger of being fractionated, of

sending mixed messages to terrorists. So I am hopeful that we can

demonstrate a unified position.

As a young captain told me on a recent visit to Iraq in Afghanistan,

it is better to fight terrorists here than in the United States. I

agree wholeheartedly. Support the resolution and the rule.