Mr. Speaker and Members of the

House, last January when the President was suggesting the need for the

escalation of the numbers of troops in Iraq, he also told us that while

we would provide the troops under his policy, the Iraqis would provide

a series of

benchmarks which they would meet to end the insurgency and to bring

their country together politically so that the insurgency can be

dampened down or ended.

Now we are told by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that it would

be wrong to hold the Iraqi Government, the Malaki government, to those

benchmarks because it would take away their flexibility, while

President Bush said that if they did not meet these benchmarks in

January, they would lose the confidence of the American people.

President Bush had it right. They haven't met the benchmarks. They

are not holding up their end of the bargain. The Parliament is not

meeting. A third of them are living in London, not in Iraq, and they

have lost the confidence of the American people.

How is it that the Secretary of State and the President of the United

States can continue to believe that we should continue to send American

soldiers to die in Iraq when the Iraqi Government won't meet the

benchmarks which were supposed to be the bedrock of this new policy,

this new direction, that has turned out to be the same old stay-the-

course policy where American soldiers die and the Iraqi Government

dithers away day in and day out and not meeting the new policies to

bring a unified Iraq together?

It is unacceptable to the American people. It is unacceptable to our

soldiers. It is unacceptable to their families. And we ought to end

this policy now.