Mr. Speaker, the President has been touring

the country giving speeches to justify his Iraq war policy to a series

of controlled audiences. But as the American public nevertheless lends

an eager ear, it hears a muddled message.

Today it is the economy. But the fact is that in Iraq, the

unemployment rate is over 50 percent. Oil, water, electricity is worse

than pre-war levels.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Murtha) has offered

an alternative vision, immediate redeployment as soon as practicable,

but with a military force over the horizon. The fact is, Mr. Speaker,

that our bottom line needs to be, what policy is going to enable our

once inexhaustible military to regain its strength and to

make this country, in fact, more secure?

And the reality is that our unjustified invasion and occupation of

Iraq has, in fact, destabilized that country and has weakened our

military and caused our country to be far less safe from terrorism.