Mr. Speaker, I rise today to amplify on the Iraq

proposal that I made last night in the House. I believe the solution in

Iraq lies with the United Nations and that it is time for direct U.N.

involvement to replace U.S. forces and to allow our troops to return

home safely and in an orderly way.

The evidence is mounting that America's current approach in Iraq will

not work. When was the last time anybody heard the word ``coalition''

to describe the military activity in Iraq? The world largely perceives

the United States as going it alone in Iraq. Furthermore, large

portions of the Arab world believe in the insurgency rhetoric that

America is an occupier in Iraq for selfish oil reasons and not to serve

the needs of the Iraqi people.

Administration claims about the insurgency do not square with the

news coming out of Iraq every day or with the sober assessment by

America's best military leaders. U.S. and Iraq civilian casualties are

mounting. That is what Americans see every night on the news. What

Americans want is a sober assessment of Iraq that reflects reality and

for the Congress and the administration to work together to come up

with a solution. Americans are sick of the politics. They want a

solution that will protect U.S. soldiers and make what they are

fighting and dying for, and what has taken untold numbers of Iraqi

lives, worth the enormous sacrifice.

We need a new strategy in Iraq. We need a new plan. This one is not

working. The more the administration denies it, the more time we waste

and the more lives we lose because we do not do what we need to do. We

do not need permanent bases in Iraq. Every day that goes by with the

current war scenario, this country loses credibility around the world.

Every concrete block that we lay is sowing seeds of mistrust, anger,

and resentment that will affect us for generations. Consider that we

are still dealing with Vietnam 30 years later trying to establish

relationships with them. It is time to involve the rest of the world in

Iraq and stop anyone from calling this is the U.S.-Iraq war. Only the

United Nations has the international imprimatur to lead an

international coalition in Iraq. Only the United Nations can credibly

install a peace-enforcing force in Iraq that is seen as such by the

entire world.

We did a similar thing under UNTAC in Cambodia. We have done it

before. I have never supported this war, but I would gratefully support

a Republican resolution to get the U.N. into Iraq. This would be a

positive development to safeguard U.S. ground forces and send a

positive signal to a skeptical Arab world that America's intentions are

not what the insurgents claim them to be.

We need a bold stroke in Iraq if we are to succeed in stopping the

loss of lives and spread of terror. We cannot just fight insurgents in

the streets day by day if there is any hope of peace in Iraq. The world

has to believe we are only there to benefit Iraq. As long as the war is

called and perceived as the U.S.-Iraq war, the insurgents have new

ammunition to recruit, terrorize, maim, and kill.

We have an opportunity to work together as Americans, not Democrats

and Republicans, but to create a plan that creates a new role for the

U.S. in Iraq, contributing to the U.N. peace-enforcing force. We have

an opportunity to safeguard American lives we are replacing, not

withdrawing U.S. soldiers from Iraq.

Today, too many military experts in our country quietly say that the

Iraq war could go on for the indefinite future. David Hackworth, the

most decorated Vietnam veteran, said we are going to be there 30 years.

We cannot afford the price in dollars, and more importantly, in loss or

shattered lives for our soldiers.

The way to win the war in Iraq is to allow the world, not the United

States, to lead the war in Iraq. Since the Republicans are the majority

party in the House, I willingly submit my proposal to the Republicans

to call their own, get the President on board, turn it into legislation

that we can pass by unanimous consent.

The best military option for the United States in Iraq is to act

under the command and direction of the United Nations. U.N. leadership

offers the best chance for a lasting peace and the fastest orderly way

for American troops to return home.

Mr. Speaker, please put politics aside and let us act together.

Yesterday, 82 members of the Iraq parliament submitted a letter to

their speakers saying get the troops out of Baghdad. We ought to be

working with them and make it happen, but it will take both Republicans

and Democrats to do it.