Mr. Speaker, as thousands of our brave American soldiers

continue to fight and die and receive serious wounds halfway around the

world, I want to speak about two Iraqs that are presented to the

American people.

There is the Iraq that President Bush and his administration want

people to see, the one that is supposedly one small step away from

becoming a peaceful democracy. And then there is the real Iraq, the

quagmire halfway around the world that the rest of us know.

In President Bush's Iraq, the war was never a mistake, never a

failure, and never something to question, much less regret. The same

war, which as of today has caused the deaths of 1,027 American soldiers

and seriously wounded at least seven times that many, not to mention

the thousands of Iraqi civilians that have been killed, President Bush

says he would have gone to war in Iraq even if had he known 2 years ago

what he knows now.

That means he would have gone to war knowing that Iraq did not have a

nuclear weapons program. He would have gone to war knowing that Saddam

Hussein never harbored al Qaeda terrorists, and he would have gone to

war knowing that thousands of our young soldiers would be killed.

Somehow, and I do not know how, somehow President Bush fails to

recognize the death, destruction, and deprivation that his war has

caused.

The rest of us see a different Iraq than President Bush. In the real

Iraq, America preemptively waged a war that was never a war of

necessity and never a war to protect our Nation. Instead, President

Bush and the Republican-controlled Congress led this country into a war

that U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan recently called

In the real Iraq, hundreds of soldiers have died because they were

not given the battle armor that would have stopped bullets from

entering their bodies, even after Congress made funds available for

that very specific purpose. This was a drastic mistake made by the

Pentagon.

In the real Iraq, President Bush, as Commander in Chief, has failed

to properly address the insurgency that is killing scores of troops and

civilians every day. This is a failure that could have and should have

been addressed during the planning stages of the war.

In the past week, four Republican Senators have bucked their party

line and acknowledged the sweeping problems that exist in the real

Iraq. Senator Chuck Hagel of Nebraska said,

Senator Richard Lugar, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee, went further. When asked why only $1 billion of the $18

billion appropriated for Iraq's reconstruction has been spent, he said,

``Well, this is the incompetence of the administration.''

This did not have to be an unmitigated disaster. But Iraq is woefully

unstable largely due to planning failures by the Bush administration:

the failure to enlist most of our allies as partners in the war, the

failure to anticipate the anger and intensity of the insurgency, and

the failure to allocate the billions of dollars in reconstruction funds

that could have helped secure that country.

Fortunately, we have opportunities to fix this awful mess. Earlier

this week Senator John Kerry offered a better, smarter solution to

fixing the real problems in Iraq. John Kerry's plan includes soliciting

and enlisting support from our allies, properly training Iraq's

security forces, and carrying out a viable reconstruction plan that

truly involves the Iraqi people, instead of giving companies like

Halliburton the benefit of America's investment, while leaving Iraqi

companies without contracts and the Iraqi people without jobs.

We need to engage in smarter policies if we want to stop the bleeding

in Iraq. That is why I have introduced H. Con. Res. 392, to create a

smarter security resolution for the 21st century. SMART stands for

Sensible, Multilateral American Response to Terrorism. With SMART

security, we would not be in the mess that we are in today. SMART

security treats war as an absolute last resort. It fights terrorism

with stronger intelligence and multilateral partnerships, and it

controls the spread of weapons of mass destruction with aggressive

diplomacy, strong regional security arrangements, and vigorous

inspection regimes.