Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago the Iraqi people lived under the

rule of a man who massacred and tortured his own people by the hundreds

of thousands, who supported terrorists groups, and who was a human

weapon of mass destruction.

Today 25 million Iraqis have been liberated and an example has been

made of Saddam Hussein. Today America is a safer place. Today the world

is a safer place because of the actions of our military.

Since September 11, thousands of Guard and reservists have been

activated to fight the war on terror and 40 percent of the current

force in Iraq is composed of these soldiers. And despite what some

critics continue to say, Guard and Reserve service is just as honorable

as regular military service. They have left their families and their

jobs to serve their Nation. They too have seen the horrors of Saddam

Hussein's regime and the gratitude of the Iraqi people as they work

hand in hand to rebuild their country.

Today I thank all who serve. I give a special nod to our guardsmen,

for when I see them, I do not see half a soldier, but I see twice a

patriot.