Mr. Speaker, the previous days have offered a series of

reports on conditions in Iraq. These reports have been consistent: Iraq

remains dangerous, unstable, and political progress is virtually

nonexistent.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. The President's escalation was

supposed to give the Iraqi Government and the ethnic groups the room

they needed to make political progress. That progress simply has not

happened.

So now, after 4\1/2\ years, billions of dollars, thousands of lives,

and countless new slogans, the Bush administration is just giving us

the status quo. Instead of a new strategy for Iraq, the Bush

administration is cherry-picking the data to support the political

objectives and preparing a report that will offer yet another defense

of the President's strategy.

We don't need a report that wins a Nobel Prize for creative

statistics or the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Americans are demanding

the facts, an end to this open-ended commitment, a surge on the

political and diplomatic front. In short, the American people want a

new direction in Iraq.