Thank you so much, Jim.

Tonight we want to begin an honest discussion about where this Nation

stands in the war that we are prosecuting. And I think that we owe this

to the young men and women whose lives are on the line each day, their

families, their futures.

Supporting the troops has got to mean more than bumper stickers on

pickup trucks, my friends. We need to give them what they need. You

know, it wasn't too long ago when my good friend Congressman Reyes and

I and about eight other bipartisan Members took a trip to visit 25

military bases around this country. In 4 days we visited 25 bases that

were in deplorable condition. We were here in this facility on 9/11

having a press conference to let the American people know where we

stood and the conditions of the bases that we inspected, the

infrastructure.

A few minutes after that, a plane struck the Pentagon. We never were

able to give the American people the conditions of the military bases.

I have been to Afghanistan, and I have been to Iraq. But nobody has

been to Iraq more than my good friend Congressman Reyes. And I would

like for him to give us an assessment. He is a veteran. He has been to

Iraq more than any other Member. My friends, let us be honest with the

American people and tell the American people what we need to do.