Mr. President, I think it is appropriate this morning

that those of us in elected office, and every American, show some

appreciation for what is going on in Iraq this morning.

I turned on the television and saw a new face of Iraq. I saw a judge

schooled in the law, loyal to the law, presiding over a trial of Saddam

Hussein, a person who was schooled in thuggery, loyal to himself and

his agenda, one of the most brutal murderers the Middle East has known.

And I saw an attorney general laying out the case against Saddam

Hussein.

How did that all happen? It happened through sheer will. First,

violence had to replace diplomacy because diplomacy was failing. The

effort to contain Saddam Hussein's regime, to rein it in, to clearly

understand what his purposes were about weapons of mass destruction, to

get him to stay out of the upheaval of the Middle East, to be a

productive member of the Middle East society, the world community, in

my opinion, failed miserably and we had to resort to force and violence

to oust a man who had perpetuated many crimes against his own people

and his neighbors.

How did it happen, at the end of the day? It happened through the

bravery, commitment, and sacrifice of the American military, their

coalition partners, and the Iraqi people themselves.

We have lost around 2,000 troops since the war began. To those

families who have lost loved ones, there is nothing I can say other

than I am sorry and, in my opinion, for what it is worth, your loved

ones have advanced the cause of freedom by participating in a military

operation to take Saddam Hussein off the throne and into the dock as a

defendant.

To those coalition members who have stood with us and who have

sacrificed, thank you. Because of your sacrifice, the cause of freedom

has been advanced.

We do not appreciate enough, in my opinion, the sacrifice of the

Iraqi people. I believe it is the judge or one member of the court

whose brother was assassinated. To sit in judgment of Saddam Hussein is

no easy thing to do. They are literally risking their lives to be a

prosecutor, a policeman, or member of the army. They wear a target on

their back. Their families are at risk because the terrorists see it as

a risk to their way of life. Those who take up arms against the

terrorists in Iraq are literally changing the course of history.

To those men and women who have served in the American military,

those who have lost life and limb, I hope you take pride in what is

happening today. To the families of the loved ones who have been lost,

those who have been injured, and those who are still serving, because

of your sacrifice and commitment, your willingness to leave your

comfort zones, to leave your family and friends, Guard members and

Reservists leaving their businesses and loved ones behind, you have

changed the course of Middle East history.

At the end of the day, we can't kill enough terrorists to win.

Terrorism is about hijacking of a great religion. There is no place in

the terrorist world for a different faith, people of moderation in the

Islamic community, and there is no role for a woman. For that to

change, it is going to have to be deeper than force of arms. It is

going to have to be a transformation of a culture.

The culture of the rule of the gun versus the rule of law is

happening before our eyes. What is going on today in Iraq is a sea

change in the Middle East. It is about time a dictator in that region

answers for his crimes. It is about time people in that region be

allowed to live their lives in a normal fashion and raise their kids in

peace.

That day is still far away, but we are closer than we have ever been.

So to those men and women serving in our American military and those

who have suffered, congratulations and God bless. Because of your

sacrifice and those sacrifices of our coalition partners and the Iraqi

people, there has been a sea change in the Middle East and you deserve

all the credit.

I hope the American people will be patient to see this thing through

because what happens in Iraq is directly related to our own security.