Mr. Speaker, we are all celebrating Iraq's election, and I

certainly join in the celebration. But I hope we realize that the great

slogan that was almost universal, every candidate, every party says,

Vote and the Americans will go home soon; the more you vote, the faster

we will get the occupying troops out. I think we should understand

that.

We have a problem here with the trust of the Iraqi people. The

problem is, who will gain the trust of the Iraqi people. Will we be

able to gain that trust by behaving in a certain way, not just speaking

and talking about guaranteeing liberty and freedom, but also justice?

Will we be able to gain the trust before the outside forces of bin

Laden?

Time is on bin Laden's side. The longer we wait, the longer we

hesitate, the longer we occupy Iraq and stay there, the more he will

gather in new forces and recruit new people to come in. So we don't

have an infinite amount of time.

We should prepare an exit strategy and move on that exit strategy

immediately. The problem is, how do you gain the trust of the people of

Iraq in order to guarantee that the insurgents will have no support

among the people. The less support the insurgents have among the

people, the more secure Iraq will become.

Step one in any successful departure from Iraq, and I think we can

have a successful end to this occupation, step one in that successful

end to the occupation would be to put a discussion of oil on the table.

An open and truthful discussion of the oil revenues of Iraq should be

on the world table.

Oil is part of the problem. Oil can be a part of the solution. In

fact, oil is possibly the major problem, and oil can be the major

solution. Let us have an honest discussion of what is going to happen

to the revenue earned by the oil of Iraq.

Iraq is quite fortunate. Despite all of its great troubles, it does

have beneath the soil enough oil to keep the country prosperous for

many decades to come. It does have enough oil to rebuild the country

and to do things that resources can provide.

Within the next 90 days, if you want a successful exit strategy,

within the next 90 days a conference should be called. An international

conference should be called on the distribution of the oil revenue of

Iraq.

What will the distribution of that revenue be?

I think the conference should guarantee that the great majority of

the revenue, most of the revenue will go to the Iraqi people. Whether

that is paid directly to the Iraqi Government or whether it is through

some taxing arrangement on privately produced oil from private

companies does not matter. Some way, we should guarantee that the

benefits of the oil, the revenue, most of it, goes to the people of

Iraq.

There are other problems, because people have invested in the oil

wells of Iraq. There are problems, because a great deal of money has to

be poured in the provision of technical assistance. Technical

assistance, and the cost of that, is part of the problem with respect

to France and Russia's and Germany's involvement in Iraq before the

war. France, Russia, all must be invited to the table. Germany, China,

everybody should come to the table. We need the sanctioning of whatever

agreement is reached by the entire international community. If the

Iraqis will trust what happens and believe it is true, it must have all

the people at the table who can guarantee it will be carried out

appropriately.

Step two would be to say, once we have dealt with the problem of oil,

and there is so little discussion of the problem of oil, of what

exactly is the role of oil in this whole conflict, it is frightening.

It is dishonest, of course, not to discuss oil and how oil brought us

there and how oil is being handled right now.

When we moved our troops into Iraq, most people don't know it, but we

immediately secured the oil wells. Before they dealt with the museums

or the city halls, the hospitals or any other facility, the Marines and

the invading forces secured the oil wells.

There are some written agreements already, I understand, that the oil

industry in the future in Iraq must be privatized. I do not know how

such agreements can be enforced. I do not know how they could be

generated, but I hear rumors that privatization of the oil is a

condition that is written somehow into the agreement with the Iraqi

interim government, and it has to be a part of the constitution, et

cetera.

Oil is a problem. Let us guarantee that the greater benefits of that

oil go to the Iraqi people. Once you have done that, in the next 90

days, that can be done, once you have done that, then steps can be

taken to move forward toward a constitutional government.

The people elected now were elected primarily to write a

constitution. They should be given an incentive by being told that

after this constitutional process, a certain number of days after that

process, we are leaving. They should be given that incentive.

I understand the scheduling probably is a year away. I do not know

exactly what the timetable is at that point. But if they have to delay,

then they delay the occupation. If they move it faster, there will be

some incentive there so that they will see the occupying troops leave

that much sooner. It does not take rocket science to resolve this

problem if there is going to be real honesty.

The great fear of the Iraqi people is that they will get no justice.

And if they fear they will get no justice, they will turn more and more

to outsiders. Bin Laden and his insurgents will become stronger and

stronger, and more and more Americans will lose their lives, and more

and more dollars from American taxpayers will be pumped into this

situation needlessly.

I say that we should understand that. Oil was the problem and oil can

be the final solution.