Madam Speaker, President Bush finds himself increasingly

isolated on the issue of Iraq. Public support continues to evaporate.

This week in a devastating blow to the President's policy, Indiana

Senator Richard Lugar, ranking member of the Foreign Relations

Committee, a respected voice and, I might say, a very experienced voice

on foreign policy for the past 30 years, publicly broke with the Bush

administration on Iraq.

In remarks on the Senate floor which are prominently featured on the

home page of his Web site, Senator Lugar said: ``Our course in Iraq has

lost contact with our vital national security interests in the Middle

East and beyond. Our continuing absorption with military activities in

Iraq is limiting our diplomatic assertiveness there and elsewhere in

the world. The prospects that the current ``surge'' strategy will

succeed in the way originally envisioned by the President are very

limited within the short period framed by our own domestic political

debate. And the strident, polarized nature of that debate increases the

risk that our involvement in Iraq will end in a poorly planned

withdrawal that undercuts our vital interests in the Middle East.

Unless we recalibrate our strategy in Iraq to fit our domestic

political conditions and the broader needs of U.S. national security,

we risk foreign policy failures that could greatly diminish our

influence across that region and the world.''

Senator Lugar framed the debate in terms of U.S. interests in the

Middle East and the world. He is correct to note that: ``The current

surge strategy is not an effective means of protecting those interests.

Its prospects for success are too dependent on the actions of others

who do not share our agenda. It relies on military power to achieve

goals that it cannot achieve. It distances allies that we will need for

any regional diplomatic effort. Its failure, without a careful

transition to a backup policy, would intensify our loss of credibility.

It uses tremendous amounts of resources that cannot be employed in

other ways to secure our objectives. And it lacks domestic support that

is necessary to sustain a policy of this type.''

I would add several other observations: Rising casualties signal a

strategy that is not working.

The U.S. death toll has risen to over 3,555 and there are that many

Iraqis dying every month. President Bush himself has admitted his surge

will result in more American casualties, a phenomenon we in Ohio know

well as last week we lost another airman, F-16 pilot Kevin Sonnenburg,

who was laid to rest.

Madam Speaker, I would like to place in the Record other important

information about the situation in Iraq. Flexibility is not the

President's strong suit, and it is time for President Bush to get in

touch with reality before he does more damage to the position of the

United States in the Middle East and before we lose more of our sons

and daughters and the nation of Iraq loses more of its sons and

daughters.

Madam Speaker, President Bush finds himself increasingly isolated on

the issue of Iraq. Public support continues to evaporate. This week, in

a devastating blow to the President's policy, Senator Richard Lugar,

ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee and a respected voice

on foreign policy for the past 30 years, publicly broke with the Bush

Administration on Iraq.

I would add several other observations:

rising casualties signal a strategy that is not working

When a U.S. soldier was killed recently by a roadside bomb in the

southwestern section of Baghdad, the death toll for American service

personnel reached 3,500 over the four years of this war.

The U.S. death toll has risen over 3555.

President Bush himself admitted his ``surge'' will result in more

American casualties--a phenomenon that has become all too frequent as a

result of the Administration's conduct of the war. Even now, Northwest

Ohio is mourning the loss of an F-16 pilot from the 180th Fighter Wing

out of Toledo.

We stand foursquare behind our troops. We will support them in every

possible way.

Sooner or later, President Bush has to face the facts: the American

people will not sacrifice their sons and daughters in a failed

strategy.

soldiers becoming increasingly disillusioned

Our armed forces are being stretched too thin, but the White House

just won't listen. Senator Lugar said in his speech: ``The window

during which we can continue to employ American troops in Iraqi

neighborhoods without damaging our military strength or our ability to

respond to other national security priorities is closing.''

Tour after tour in Iraq are taxing the best troops in the world, our

American soldiers, leaving them increasingly disillusioned with the

mission.

Soldiers are home no longer than 24 hours before they receive a phone

call telling them to change their plans because they are going back to

Iraq.

Our troops have stepped up to the plate, they have served with honor,

and now it is time for their Iraqi counterparts to step up.

Our unit has already sent two soldiers in a box. My

soldiers don't see the same level of commitment from the

Iraqi Army units they're partnered with.--Captain Douglas

Rogers of Delta Company.

Meanwhile, the line between ally and foe is continuing to be blurred

as soldiers watch shadowy militia commanders installed as Iraqi Army

officers, which places all our forces in a vulnerable position, heavily

susceptible to internal as well as external terrorist attacks.

the war is causing neuropsychiatric illness among our troops

The war in Iraq is taking a hidden toll on the American forces:

38 percent of soldiers, 31 percent of our Marines, 49 percent of our

Army National Guard and 43 percent of our Marine reservists have

reported symptoms of neuropsychiatric illnesses--PTSD, anxiety,

depression.

Mental health care stigma remains pervasive and is a significant

barrier to care.

Mental health professionals are not sufficiently accessible to

service members and their families.

There are significant gaps in the continuum of care for psychological

health.

The military system does not have enough resources, funding or

personnel to adequately support the neuropsychological health of

service members and their families in peace and during conflict.

There is a shortage of active-duty mental health professionals. The

system has been stressed by repeated deployments and other

frustrations, and psychologists and psychiatric nurses are leaving the

military in growing numbers:

Air Force lost 20 percent of mental health workers from 2003-2007.

Navy lost 15 percent of mental health workers from 2003-2006.

Army lost 8 percent of mental health workers from 2003-2005.

This report points to significant shortfalls in achieving

goals and taking care of our service members and their

families.--Dr. S. Ward Casscells, assistant secretary of

defense for health affairs

The current complement of mental health professionals is

woefully inadequate.--MHTF Report.

Madam Speaker, flexibility is not President Bush's strong suit.

As his policy in Iraq continued to unravel, he dug his heels in and

refused to listen to the generals, to the Congress or to the American

people.

As the situation in Iraq continued to deteriorate, the President kept

insisting that things were getting better and the violence was

beginning to subside.

As civil society devolved into chaos, President Bush held onto the

false hope that the Iraqi people were somehow prepared to take the

necessary steps toward creating a democracy.

Madam Speaker, President Bush cannot sustain this charade any longer.

The ``wise men'' of the Republican Party, including Senator Lugar,

are calling into question the fundamental precepts of the Bush policy

and calling for a major overhaul.

The president's Iraq policy stands discredited in the eyes of the

world. At this point, only President Bush, Vice President Cheney and

Prime Minister Tony Blair seem to believe that the original mission has

any chance of success.

It is time, Madam Speaker, for President Bush to get in touch with

reality before he does anymore damage to the position of the United

States in the Middle East and before we lose in the Middle East even

more of our sons and daughters in this disastrous war.