Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the

remarks and the message of Interim Prime Minister Allawi, and in fact,

as someone who opposed this war as being misdirected and procedurally

and constitutionally unsound, inasmuch as the Congress did not follow

the Constitution and declare war, this resolution simply authorized the

President to look at the option of militaries as one option.

But even in spite of my opposition to the initial beginnings of this

war, I welcomed the remarks of Prime Minister Allawi and certainly

welcomed his optimism and his desire to tell the American people that

there is an end, there is a future in Iraq.

The whole idea of beginning to work with this process of rebuilding

Iraq is clearly a circumstance that requires telling the American

people the truth, and even though I think that the Prime Minister was

eager to engage us in the optimism of Iraq, the one thing that he could

not answer for us is simply where is the plan. Where is the plan of

this administration, and what do we say to the men and women who are

now on the frontlines of Iraq who wear the American uniform?

I just mention and show this gentleman who happens to be a face that

has been utilized by one of my colleagues, and I am sharing that with

my colleagues tonight, but it reminds us of the Americans who are on

the frontline, reminds us of the families who are longing for them to

return, reminds us of those troops that I visited in Afghanistan and

Iraq who are committed to their duty. But they want to know when they

can return home, what is the ultimate plan and agenda for the survival

of Iraq.

Prime Minister Allawi told us that things were getting better, that

schools were opening, clinics were opening; but, frankly, I believe

that in the backdrop of all of that, the violence is raging.

Let me cite for my colleagues words from Jessica Mathews who just

returned from Iraq. She made this statement in an op-ed in the Thursday

Washington Post: ``To visit Iraq today is to be forcibly reminded of

the obvious: there is no military solution to politically inspired

violence by locals against foreigners. What was true for the French in

Algeria, the British in Northern Ireland, the Russians in Chechnya and

the Israelis in the West Bank is proving true for the Coalition

Provisional Authority in Iraq. Notwithstanding a huge and impressive

military effort, the security situation, at least for now, is

worsening.''

She said this over a year ago, and it is now true today. Since that

time, some 700 Americans and probably at least 10 times as many Iraqis

have died, and every single day they are dying. So although I rise to

thank the Prime Minister for his carefully stated words, might I say to

my colleagues that we still are languishing without direction.

So I ask the President to stand before the American people, present

to us a plan of survival and existence and progress. Present to us a

step-by-step methodical progress of being able to return our troops and

honor the increasing utilization of Iraqi law enforcement and military

and begin to answer the questions of some of those who we will hear in

just a moment.

Maybe it should be Senator Lugar, who, when asked the question over

the weekend, why has a great part of Iraq not been rebuilt, he simply

said without any qualms, and I guess he said it before he heard it,

because the administration is incompetent. So we can see that

statements are being made by a number of those on the other side of the

aisle that are now coming together as Americans, pleading for some

direction by the administration.

My words simply tonight as I close, Mr. Speaker, are this. We can

hear from the leadership, the interim leadership, that elections may be

coming, that we may be making this work; but the violence says

something different. We are failing the Iraqi people, and we are

failing the United States military because we do not have a plan.

We in Congress are grateful to His Excellency the Interim Prime

Minister Allawi for his inspiring remarks on the floor. He very

articulately laid out the important issues that are now attendant and

that lie ahead for Iraq--they include ``Military Strategy,'' ``Iraqi

Elections,'' ``International Help,'' and ``Freedom.''

He spoke of the positive aspects of these issues; however, we in the

United States must realize that there are very pressing issues to be

addressed by this administration within our own borders as well as on

the battlefield for our troops. To that end, I ask the question:

``Where is the plan Mr. President?''

I was privileged to visit some of our troops when I traveled to

CENTCOM in April. I learned of their experiences in Iraq and I heard

the challenges that they faced. I continue to be impressed by how well

those young men and women in uniform represent the United States. They

perform their duties and meet the demands of their positions every day

despite the tough conditions and sometimes inadequate supplies.

The troops are fulfilling their duties, now it is time that the

administration fulfills its duty by creating a real plan to create and

keep the peace in Iraq. The administration must also jumpstart the

process of rebuilding in Iraq. Clearly, the situation cannot continue.

We are losing soldiers daily and families are being left heartbroken

because peace has not prevailed in Iraq, not even in Baghdad where the

administration said the United States military had a stronghold.

Worse yet, our allies are backing away from their commitments to join

the effort to secure

Iraq. Turkey has decided not to send troops to Iraq. Japan will not be

sending personnel and it is providing less money for rebuilding than it

once offered. Even South Korea has said that the lack of security in

Iraq makes the idea of sending South Korean troops untenable. Where now

is the joint effort that the President promised? How will the

administration secure the assistance that is clearly needed in Iraq?

The number of casualties is increasing at an alarming rate; when will

it stop?

I believe that the administration must embrace a multilateral peace

process to bring lasting peace to Iraq and to create an environment in

which rebuilding can safely occur. A multilateral process is needed not

only to develop and maintain peace within Iraq but also throughout the

Middle East region.

Therefore, in addition to creating a plan in Iraq the President needs

to create a plan to truly engage our allies. That is how the United

States will be successful not just in the short term but for years to

come. That is how we can responsibly follow up the inspiring words of

His Excellency Prime Minister Allawi.