The picture, for the record, showed about 30 Iraqi

civilians standing amidst the rubble of bombed buildings in the Iraqi

town of Fallujah. In the forefront of the picture were five Iraqi

children, and the caption beneath the picture read:

President Bush makes a show of strength, and an Iraqi boy weeps. I

say ``President Bush'' because this is not the U.S. military. They are

carrying out the orders of their Commander in Chief. This is not the

American people because the American people do not kill innocent women

and children in another country. This is the result of and the

responsibility of a failed policy in Iraq by the President and his

administration.

There were at least two other aerial bombings that day in two other

Iraqi cities, according to that one story--more destruction, more

civilian casualties, more children weeping; children who lost brothers,

sisters, mothers, fathers, grandparents, and friends; children who will

have the United States of America, for the rest of their lives, seared

into their memories; children who will, horribly, possibly cheer if

terrorists can cause that kind of terrible destruction to Americans in

American cities; children who might even be willing to do something

like that themselves in revenge.

President Bush, Vice President Cheney, and other apologists for this

continuing war in Iraq claim that they are fighting terrorists there so

we won't have to fight them here. By these actions, I maintain they are

creating terrorists in Iraq whom we will have to fight here, whom we

will have to defend against, fend off, and protect ourselves from for

years, even decades to come. How would we feel if our children or our

friends or our parents or wives or husbands were buried beneath the

rubble that used to be our homes, our stores, and our neighborhoods?

I do not fault the courageous Americans in our Armed Forces who have

borne the brunt of this administration's failed policy. To the

contrary, I salute them for their heroism and their patriotism. It has

been over a year and a half since they won the initial military victory

in Iraq. They went from the Iraqi border to Baghdad in 3 weeks. They

routed Saddam Hussein's army. They toppled his evil regime. And since

then, they have stood guard until someone began to run that country.

They are still standing guard, 138,000 brave Americans. They are

fighting, they are bleeding, and they are dying because this

administration and their Iraqi allies have not figured out how to run

that country.

We need a policy, a plan, and a timetable to get out of Iraq--not to

lose Iraq but to leave Iraq, not tomorrow or next week, unfortunately--

because the Bush administration has failed. They have failed to prepare

for that. But not in 10 or 20 years, as my colleague, the senior

Senator from Arizona, Mr. McCain, has predicted. He is not recommending

that course of action; he is just telling us and the American people

the truth. Thank goodness someone is telling us the truth, the truth

about what the Bush administration has gotten us into and where their

present policies will leave us.

What he can't tell us, because no one can, is how many more Americans

will die in Iraq during those 10 or 20 years; how many more Americans

will die elsewhere around the world or, God forbid, right in this very

country because of the failures of those policies today.

Today I am asking the esteemed chairman of the Senate Armed Services

Committee to hold oversight hearings this week on the current policy in

Iraq, on the military situation there, on the plans of this

administration, on the timetable for our continuing involvement there,

and on the costs in dollars and lives and international esteem to the

United States of America, because the American people deserve the

truth. This Congress deserves the facts. Our soldiers, our 138,000

courageous Americans serving in Iraq today, deserve to come home with

their military victory secured.

And I say to those who want to support our troops, if you want to

support our troops, bring them home alive, bring them home alive now or

as soon as possible hereafter, but not in 4 years or 10 years or 20

years. Make the administration in Iraq and the people of Iraq

responsible for their own country. That is what democracy is about. It

is about self-determination and self-responsibility. It is time the

people of Iraq become responsible for Iraq. It is time the 206,000

militia and military that we claim to have trained in Iraq become

responsible for Fallujah and Baghdad and everywhere else in Iraq.

The article I referred to earlier states: U.S. and Iraqi authorities

lost control of Fallujah last April after they turned the city over to

a U.S.-sanctioned force, the Fallujah brigade, which has now all but

disappeared.

Where did they disappear to? I supported that action back then. I

thought that was the right course of action, that we make Iraqis

responsible for the defense of their own country, for the security of

their own cities. Now I learn, not through this administration's

disclosures but through an article appearing in an investigative

story--thank goodness for the free and vigilant press because we

wouldn't learn those things here in Congress if we were waiting to be

told--that the Fallujah brigade has ``all but disappeared.''

That is a fundamental failure of this administration and the Iraqi

administration to train, equip, and motivate the Iraqi forces in Iraq

to stand up for and defend their own country from whomever it is over

there--insurgents, terrorists, and citizens who want an end to the

violence, understandably so, in their own homes and neighborhoods.

It is time to put Iraq in charge of Iraq, make them stand up and

fight for their own country, for their own cities, for their own

security, and stop forcing Americans on the ground or in the air to

cause this kind of destruction that that picture capsulizes which is

going to wreak future destruction on our own cities and our own people.

This is a failed policy. It is a disastrous policy. It is one for

which this administration should take responsibility.

Again, I call upon the Armed Services Committee of the Senate to hold

oversight hearings and tell the American people the truth about what is

going on there and what the future holds--in the near future, not the

future future.