

are extremely thankful that we are making the sacrifice we are for their nation. It is very humbling to be told that by a common villager. These people have known war as a way of life for 2,000 years. That being said, it is important to know that in every town there is an elder that stated, "The U.S. was just different. You are respectful and you want to help us."

"If you have ever held the ideal of compassion for your neighbor, then it is easy to understand that Afghanistan and her people are well worth the sacrifice. I am thankful to have been a part of a stronger future for Afghanistan."

And here he says some complimentary things about me which I will leave from my presentation but leave in the printed RECORD and conclude with:

"As I said before, our efforts in this region are worth it. I encourage all to take a longer view. The compassion and the patience of the American servicemember make up a large part of their sense of duty. This is a fight between good and evil." Sean P. O'Brien, First Lieutenant, Field Artillery, United States Army, Purple Heart Recipient.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully enter this into the RECORD.

For: O'Brien County Republican Newsletter, Iowa

There are few things that a professional military officer can attribute to editorial statements; however, I would like to share some of the ideas that more than represent what my tour of duty in Afghanistan meant to me. This "ethos" is to help put these personal feelings—which all soldiers have—into a tangible rallying point.

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

This is called the Warrior Ethos. Every soldier can recite it. It means everything.

I cringe when I say this aloud. Those words have such weight. As far as service, I understand now. When I shake hands with a veteran, there is a silent conversation that takes place that transcends all words. You can never understand this without experiencing it.

I cannot deny the power of facing the enemies of truth with truth. The population was the center of gravity, and we systematically engaged in separating these bullies from the population; usually by simply not leaving.

The stability created by our presence allowed civil leadership to stop focusing on being brutalized and start focusing on fostering a better way of life for the people; education, medical aid, commerce. When the population realized that these ideas were worth having, they would generally take on

the responsibility of denying safe-havens for the bad guys.

Those people (the Afghans) are just like you and me. They want their children to have a safe place to grow. They are extremely thankful that we are making the sacrifice we are for their nation. It is very humbling to be told that by a common villager.

These people have known war as a way of life for 2,000 years. That being said, it is important to know that in every town, there was an elder that stated:

"The U.S. was just different, you are respectful and you want to help us". If you have ever held the ideal of compassion for your neighbor, then it is easy to understand that Afghanistan and her people are well worth the sacrifice. I am thankful to have been a part of a stronger future for Afghanistan.

I was honored by the personal efforts of 5th District Congressman Steve King. He actively followed our efforts and through personal correspondence offered his support. I enjoy the fact that there is adequate moral "top cover" that actively engages in seeking the truth. Thank you Steve, you are as much a patriot as I ever hope to be.

As I said before, our efforts in this region are worth it. I encourage all to take a longer view. The compassion and the patience of the American Service Member make up a large part of their sense of Duty. This is a fight between good and evil.

Sean P. O'Brien, 1st Lieutenant, Field Artillery, U.S. Army, Purple Heart Recipient.

THE COUNTDOWN CREW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, for the past 2 months, myself and others have been coming to the floor to talk about the impending tax increase that we face in this country if the majority doesn't act in something just under 1,400 days, and we will see this huge tax increase and all the majority has to do is run out the clock. They have to do nothing to see this tax increase be put back in place when the tax cuts that we passed in early 2001, 2002, 2003 will expire.

But tonight we are coming to the floor, and we think it is fitting to talk about the fourth anniversary of Iraq and what is happening in Iraq and, most importantly, what is going to happen on this House floor we think this week but maybe not until next week.

It was fitting tonight that we had a moment of silence for our men and women in harm's way. It was very fitting. But it is also fitting that the United States Congress is very clear to the men and women in harm's way that we support them. And we don't just support them in standing up on the House floor talking about it, but we support them in a concrete way, and that is making sure that they are getting the funds that they need, making sure that the United States Congress is sending a message to our enemies around the world that we are behind

them; that we are not going to short-change them; that we are not going to pull the rug out from under them; that we are not going to put a time line in place that is going to allow our enemies to know when and what we are going to do, we let our enemies know that they just have to run out the clock.

And if they run out the clock, that we are going to be gone and they are going to be able to be back in Iraq, they are going to be back in other places around this world doing harm to many people, including Americans. So it is absolutely important that our men and women know, and this supplemental is going to be the key. It is going to be the key for our men and women to know that we are behind them. And what the majority party is putting forth, at least we think what the majority party is putting forward, has created a confusing and inflexible timetable for the Americans' withdrawal from Iraq.

From what they have said, and we only know in press accounts and I will read many of those press accounts, and I would encourage you to go to www.gop.gov and see last week's press conference with the leadership of the majority party, the Democratic leadership talk about their plan, and just watch it for about a minute and you will see just how confusing it was to not only the American people but to the leadership of the majority party.

As I said, they have put in place timetables for withdrawal, with forces leaving as early as July 1 and concluding their removal no later than August 2008. Now, we can talk and talk and talk, but our enemies see that, and they will just go back into the shadows and they will just wait until we are gone to be able to wreak havoc on Iraq and the Iraqi people.

An example of what is in the supplemental, at least that is what we have heard, we are not sure but this is what we have heard: that none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available in this or any other act may be used to deploy any unit of the Armed Forces to Iraq unless the chief of the military department concerned has certified in writing to the Committees on Appropriations and on Armed Services at least 15 days in advance of deployment that this unit is fully mission capable.

Now, if that is not micromanagement, I don't know what is. I think the lessons of Vietnam have been lost on the majority party. That is micromanaging the war. That is what caused us great detriment in Vietnam.

The next thing is: the President certifies in writing to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Armed Services that the deployment to Iraq of a unit that is not assessed fully mission capable, he is required to fill a report detailing the particular reason or reasons why that unit's deployment is necessary. If that is not micromanagement, I don't know what is.

We have one Commander in Chief, clearly stated in the Constitution, not 535 commanders looking to micromanage a war. This requirement ties the hands of the President in committing more troops to fighting required by red tape and lengthy explanations, cost of time, and the risk of lives. That is micromanaging the war. I think it is very, very clear. And, again, I would urge anybody that is interested to go to the Web site and see the Democratic House leadership's press conference last week, and you will see just how clearly they are confused.

So how can the American people not be confused? How can our men and women in harm's way not be confused about what this Congress, what this House is about to do?

Just a couple of press accounts talking about the supplemental. The Washington Post, The Washington Post described the Democrat plan as: an attempt to impose detailed management on a war without regard to the war itself. Micromanagement. The Los Angeles Times. The Los Angeles Times called for the bill to be vetoed. Imagine that. And I quote the Los Angeles Times saying this, not me: It is absurd for the House Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, Democrat, San Francisco, to try to micromanage the conflict and the evolution of Iraqi society with arbitrary timetables and benchmarks. The Los Angeles Times is saying that; it is not the Washington Times. If it were the Washington Times, my friends on the other side of the aisle would say that is a conservative paper. But it is the Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post saying this.

Now, my friends on the other side like to talk about the Iraqi Study Group, and the bipartisan Iraqi Study Group did not advocate, I repeat, did not advocate a firm timetable for withdrawal in its December 2006 report, because those folks knew that it was a bad idea to give our enemies a time certain as to when we would be out of Iraq.

The National Intelligence Estimate released in January warned of the perils of an early troop withdrawal. And it said: If Coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly during the term of this estimate, we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq. More death, more destruction.

Now, you can't have it both ways. You can't stand up and quote the Iraqi Study Group and the National Intelligence Estimate and pick out bits and pieces of it. There are certainly things in there that they said that we all need to pay attention to, but these are extremely important statements that were made.

I am sure I can go on and on quoting newspapers around this country that say similar things that The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times are saying. And, again, I want to remind people what the Los Angeles

Times said: It is absurd for the House Speaker to try to micromanage the conflict and the evolution of Iraqi society with arbitrary timetables and benchmarks. It is absurd for us to give our enemies a timetable for them to know when to lay back so they can regroup and wait until we leave, so that they can go back into the country of Iraq, set up bases, and wreak havoc on the people of Iraq.

The other thing about this supplemental that is distasteful to me and I believe others on the other side is that they have loaded this supplemental with spending. They have used our troops as a bargaining chip to increase domestic spending. Now, our troops deserve better than that, not to be used as a bargaining chip. This is a supplemental. This is for emergency spending, this is for the war, this is for something that our troops need. And I hope that those on the other side that have talked on the this floor night after night about irresponsible domestic spending, that they won't stand for it to be put in a supplemental that is to be used for emergency spending on this war.

Republicans rejected last year \$14 billion of domestic spending not related to the war. We had a clean supplemental. And I hope my friends on the other side will reassess what they are about to do and use this supplemental, use our men and women in harm's way as a bargain chip.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Would the gentleman yield for one second?

Mr. SHUSTER. I most certainly will.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I just want to share, those who are joining us tonight have joined the Countdown Crew. We meet the first night of votes each legislative week. We can be reached by e-mail at CountdownCrew@mail.house.gov.

And the one thing that I would like to share from my perspective, we hear a lot of statements about a desire to support the troops. And I have said for the last 2½ years that, if we say we support the troops, it is important that we listen to what they have to say. As a former member of the 82nd Airborne Division and other military units with comrades serving in all the major line Army units, commanding brigades, serving on the senior staffs, receiving e-mail reports on a weekly basis, even from a platoon leader who is in Sadr City right now, we get a somewhat different perspective on the politics and debates that are going on back here in the House Chamber. And I would say this from a perspective of looking at the fiscal implications of decisions.

When we talk about the supplemental spending, the vast majority of money, and the original clean bill before politics got involved was designed for one thing, it was designed for troop support, it was designed for equipment reset, it was designed to provide support for provincial reconstruction teams for the transition of Iraqi security forces to be effective in their mission on the ground.

Unfortunately, due to the Hatch Act, the troops themselves don't have a voice where they can come into this Chamber and debate, and so as we have seen on numerous occasions, opinion is often substituted for fact. And it is an honest opinion; it is an honest viewpoint. I think we have honest disagreements. I think one thing that both sides can agree on is that there were strategic mistakes that were made early in the campaign due to institutional infrastructure and process issues that are endemic in the United States Government and need to be reformed.

But the truth of the matter, at the moment, is we have people in harm's way that are deployed forward who actually watch C-SPAN, who watch these debates. Many of them are friends of mine that I have known for well over 30 years and we have served together, a number of us served together in the Middle East. And the perspective that I would bring is this when we talk about emergency supplemental spending, and it comes back to an aspect of fiscal responsibility, to the gentleman from Pennsylvania's point earlier: a supplemental spending bill is designed specifically to augment needs that were not covered in regularly budgeted, authorized, or appropriated lines.

□ 2030

And to put this into context, there are many divisions in the Congress, particularly in the Democratic Caucus, regarding the war. We are all well aware of them. I have many friends on both sides of the aisle. There are honest disagreements and disputes. But the one thing, to quote my friend, HAL ROGERS from Kentucky, where he said, "Attention K-Mart shoppers," at the end of the appropriations hearing last week. "A variety of spending provisions have been placed in a military supplemental bill that have nothing to do with national security in order to encourage those to vote for it."

And I want to put this into context, that over \$20 billion in nonmilitary, nonnational security spending has been included. They include \$283 million in milk subsidies that are already funded in other programs. It includes \$74 million for peanut storage.

Now, when I went to flight school at Fort Rucker, Alabama, at the U.S. Army Aviation Center, there were two great economic engines in the area. One was the United States Army Aviation Center that trained the pilots for the U.S. Army, the rotary wing force that provides our air assault and attack helicopter capability worldwide today, and also the peanut industry. The last time I checked, the peanut industry was not directly related to American national security.

Twenty-five million dollars are in payments to spinach producers on a national security supplemental bill. And this also rescinds \$89 million in homeland security funding that allegedly would have lapsed in fiscal year 2006.

The reason that I bring these up, and the billions of dollars in spending, is

not to highlight honest disagreements about policy issues which have a rightful place in this Chamber.

And my friends on the other side are certainly entitled to their views, the basis of their perception. I certainly have my views on the subject which are different from many in the administration and on my side of the aisle as well. But the one thing that I will share is let's translate these dollars into reality from a fiscal perspective.

When Secretary Gates came over to testify before the Armed Services Committee in his first hearing in January of 2007, the first major request, and I was very heartened by this, was a request to increase the end strength of the United States Army by 96,000 soldiers. Now, why that number is important, I have advocated for nearly 5 years for a 100,000 soldier increase to the end strength to deal with and augment the operations tempo that our troops have experienced since the draw-downs in the mid-1990s. The rate and the pace of that transition is very significant upon our soldiers. And as a matter of fiscal responsibility for the investment that we have made in them and the commitment that we have made to them, I think it is important that we see that increase. And I was very heartened to see an acceptance of that need in the civilian appointed leadership of the Defense Department.

But here is the fiscal issue. When we talk about \$20 billion in nonmilitary spending that were put on that supplemental bill, here is what \$1 billion means. Regardless of your views on national security, \$1 billion roughly translates into 10,000 fully equipped light infantry soldiers and fully trained and accessed into the military.

The reason that that number is important to keep in mind, at the end of the day, as we talk about force structure and staffing, I would ask my friends, would it have not been a more prudent use of our national security dollars and emergency supplemental, rather than going for programs or peanuts and spinach and the milk program, which I think would be more appropriately addressed jurisdictionally in the farm bill, to use that money, if there was a need, to assess it for troop training, to augment the needs for the conflicts that we are going to be facing in the 21st century, which are going to be significant. And I think that those conflicts would have come regardless of our policies there.

But nonetheless, this approach, I believe, is a poor use of fiscal stewardship and begs the real question at the end of the day of what we actually have voted for from a policy change, a world view change when we changed Speakers in January. As I have shared with many when we get asked about how is this going to be paid for, every working family in America making between \$30- and \$50,000 will have a \$2,098 tax increase if those tax cuts are not extended and made permanent by 2010.

And with that I will yield back to the gentleman, but I just wanted to clarify

that point from a national security perspective. Understand that it would be helpful for, I think, the American people to understand there are many nongermane issues and spending lines that have been added on this bill that have nothing to do with our current national security situation.

Mr. SHUSTER. I appreciate the gentleman pointing that out. And with your background, you are most qualified to do that, point out some of the things you pointed out.

I would now like to yield my friend from Texas, Mr. CONAWAY.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for hosting this hour tonight. It is particularly important, given it is the first of these hours for the week in which rumor has it that the war supplemental will be on the House floor this week up for debate. We don't even have really good rumors as to whether or not the other side will recognize the normal order of business with appropriations bills and bring it to the floor as an open rule, as has been the tradition certainly under the 12 years of Republican leadership. And so we are anxious to see the arrival of this first spending bill, if the other side brings it with a modified closed rule or a closed rule.

Mr. SHUSTER. May I interrupt the gentleman for a second? Did you say we are not going to have an open rule? Because I was under the impression that the Speaker and the leadership of the Democratic Party campaigned that they were going to have open rule after open rule, and they weren't going to put bills on the floor that didn't give the minority their rights. Are you telling me that it is not going to be an open rule on this supplemental?

Mr. CONAWAY. If the gentleman will yield back. We don't know for sure. I know that, during the debate last week, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee could not confirm his instructions from his leadership as to what he should be doing. In other words, were we going to have an open rule, as has been the tradition. Well beyond the 12 years' takeover that the Republican's experienced, it has just been a tradition on each floor that we bring an appropriations bill to the floor with open rules. And as late as last week, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, a guy that you would think would be in the know, would be in the inner circle, in the inside skinny with respect to the Democrat leadership, even he didn't know what the Speaker had decided in this arena.

So the caveats placed in there, the restrictions on our ability to fight this fight, the instructions to the President, I want to speak at from a little different angle. You yourself talked about the advantages that gives our enemies if we have a date certain that we have to be out of Iraq. That is pretty obvious. It doesn't take a lot of common sense, it doesn't take a lot of warfighting experience to understand that if you give your enemy that kind

of an advance notice, that that is a clear advantage to the enemy.

I want to look at it from the other side. I want to look at it from the side of our troops. How do we ask good men and women who defend this country with their lives to fight under those considerations?

One of the great lines that the other side has used to argue about the war is, well, if we would have just known in 2002 what we know today, we would have voted differently. Well, yeah. Right. Well, let me maybe take a bit of a twist on that. How do we face that mom and dad in March of 2008 whose son or daughter has been maimed or killed? How do we look them in the eye and say, yeah, you know, if we had known in March of 2007, when we were setting the arbitrary and artificial dates, that your son was going to get killed in March of 2008, gee, we would have set the date at March 28 or January 31.

And so what we are doing to our troops is that we are undermining their morale, their strength of purpose by asking them to do things that are just unbelievably untenable. Night after night after night we listen to these floor speeches and we hear people build a case that in their mind we need to get out. We have had a couple earlier tonight, in fact, Mr. Speaker, that went through a litany of information they have used, they have gleaned to make their decision that we have lost this fight and that we need to get out.

Well, this body, from time to time, like daily, has its integrity challenged. Each one of us has a challenge to our integrity all the time; whether it is from a campaign contribution that we got and they are trying to link it to some sort of official act, all those integrity issues play out in the media constantly, and we rarely get our day in court. We rarely have an opportunity to stand tall and vote our conscience. I am going to argue, Mr. Speaker, that the Out of Iraq Caucus and all those other Members who have come in here night after night after night saying we have got to get out of Iraq have got an opportunity to vote their conscience this week.

I will argue, Mr. Speaker, that there are only two legitimate positions with respect to what we are doing in Iraq. The first, that I agree with, is to fight this fight and win it. The other legitimate circumstance is to get out today. There is no half ground. There is no half-stepping it. There is no run up the white flag and retreat the way that this supplemental would argue. There are no other choices but to fight the fight or get out.

And so all of these colleagues of ours that have night after night after night preached about getting out of Iraq have got an opportunity to demonstrate their integrity to their convictions. We will see how they vote. Will they vote the party line, come down here, 233 of them strong, vote in favor of this supplemental with these restrictions on

them that are unworkable in the extreme, but that put our men and women in harm, that make it very difficult for our combat leaders?

Our good colleague tonight is an experienced pilot in the Airborne. How do you ask a sergeant, how do you ask a first lieutenant to go do a dangerous mission in the last half of March of 2008, knowing that by the end of the month we are getting out of there? And how do you ask people to do that? You simply can't. You can't ask people to do that. You can't ask people to put their lives on the line under that kind of a restriction.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I think, to the gentleman's point, I received some correspondence from a colonel who came back from Iraq recently, and he shared this perspective. He shared that he had worked for General Abizaid, and he just made the comment, General Abizaid, the Central Command Commander, made the comment that dealing with Islamic radicalism is something that you want to do as an away game. And unlike different times in our history that, again, regardless of perceptions of the decisions that were made before you and I came here to be engaged in this conflict, there are second- and third-order effects that will be inherited by a precipitous withdrawal.

And when I go back, I listen to so many different voices with so many different perspectives, but the one unity of purpose that they say is that there would be profound consequences. In fact, one of the ones most recently was a friend who was in Task Force Ranger in Mogadishu, which I believe President Clinton reinforced an operation in 1993 to capture a tribal leader, a warlord, Mohammed Farah Aideed. This friend and Task Force Ranger shared that at the end of the Blackhawk Down incident, where America, frankly, lost the information war despite completely removing this militia, he shared with me over coffee recently and said, you know, little did we know that there were al Qaeda technical advisers who had served in Afghanistan fighting the mujahedin and were sent by Osama bin Laden to assist these groups because they were dealing with Americans and the consequences of leaving, when, in fact, he said if we had simply been able to stay, it would have sent a very different message. We could have accomplished the mission of apprehending the foe.

And to your point, again, the troops, I think, oftentimes inadvertently are used as human shields in debate, but we don't get down to the issues of what they really see on the ground and the perspective that they bring to this discussion.

Mr. CONAWAY. I appreciate my colleague's comment. This war, this fight has been compared with Vietnam. I think it is a lousy comparison. I think it is flawed on every level. But if we look at what happened when America withdrew, under Democratic leader-

ship, withdrew, Democratic House, withdrew from Vietnam, look what happened to the people of Vietnam, the boat people exodus, the death inside Vietnam, and then the spillover into Cambodia with Pol Pot, 2 million lives lost under that ripple effect.

But the one thing that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have yet to answer, in addition to how do you face that mom and dad as a part of this artificial deadline, how do you manage the disaster in Iraq if we did pull out tonight, if we did get our guys out of there? The regional fight, the spillover into other countries, the humanitarian suffering on an incredible scale, how do, in fact, we manage that disaster if your answer is that we have to get out of Iraq tonight?

Mr. SHUSTER. And the gentleman, the point he just made is they try to compare Iraq to Vietnam, and it is not a good comparison at all. But, when the United States Congress is going to make an attempt to micromanage a war, that is going to be a comparison to Vietnam, and the same outcome is going to be not a good outcome. And like you said, the disaster that occurred, what happens after we leave and there is a disaster, human disaster of people, mass exodus from the country? So I just wanted to make that point.

Mr. CONAWAY. Let me finish off, and I will yield back for a little bit. We are talking about young men and women's lives who have volunteered to do a fight for us on our behalf, to fight an enemy that is really bad individuals, to stand between us and those bad individuals.

I even hesitate to bring this point up, but you look at this supplemental that has been proposed, an additional \$21.8 billion added to it, and I would argue, and I am, on an individual basis, were it not in this bill, I would be for it. I think we have got some disaster relief and some other kinds of things that we could be for, but it appears to be an attempt to circumvent the PAYGO rules, that this, the other side beat our heads about, beat us about the head and shoulders with all during the campaign. In other words, if you declare the milk thing a disaster, then it doesn't have to be held up to PAYGO.

All of this emergency spending is outside the PAYGO rules under the Democrat leadership. So they have spoken with forked tongue, so to speak, that they would cling to the PAYGO rules, and yet on this first big appropriations bill, they come whistling in here with an additional \$21.8 billion.

I would even question part of the \$103 billion that the President proposed. I am not sure that Katrina is still an emergency. Yeah, we have issues with what is going on in New Orleans, and we have a got a lot of money in the pipeline backed up. I think we ought to figure that out first before we throw additional moneys at it.

So the \$99 billion that is for the war fight, for the reset, for the troops that

are in harm's way, we would, I think most all of us would agree on. But beyond that we have got some real challenges from a spending standpoint. Those issues pale in comparison to putting a hard deadline on getting out of Iraq and the serious consequences that that leaves our military commanders on the ground.

□ 2045

Mr. SHUSTER. I think it is absolutely right, and I think the gentleman is right to point out that is really going to be a defining moment for many Members of this body, especially our colleagues on the other side, who, as you quite eloquently pointed out, that the choice is either stay and fight and have a strategy work to help the people of Iraq or get out.

So I hope the folks that come down here, and there were some here tonight that have come down night after night and for the last several months have talked about the need, the desire to get out immediately, we are going to see. Are they going to stand up and be true to what they have been talking about to the Nation on this House floor for the past several months, or are they going to bend to the will of their leadership?

As well there are other Members on the other side of the aisle that have said they will not stand for micromanagement of the war, they will not stand for putting timelines in to give our enemy the ability to fight a different kind of war and hurt and kill our soldiers. So this is going to be a defining moment.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I think your point on that too, if I might interject, the Members of the other party, for whom I have great personal respect though I disagree in execution of the policy, are those that have been very staunch and very consistent in their opposition to the use of our troops in offensive operations overseas.

And the reason that I bring that up is that some of the statements that have been made, and I am not referring to provocative statements, simply positions that were taken, had been controversial in their own caucus as well as in the Congress in general. But the reason that I bring it up is that those convictions, I think, echo at one point where we have mutual agreement, and on a variety of issues. And the point I called for during the debate a few weeks ago on the resolution regarding whether one accepted the ability of the Commander in Chief to authorize the combatant commander to reinforce troops on the ground was this: that if we are going to have a real vote that affects real people in the field, then we need to use the power of the purse of the United States Congress to vote to cut or sequester funding related to that.

And I think that is a noble cause regardless of which side one is on in that from the standpoint of the Republic. I know where I am. I am with my former

comrades who are in a country right now to make sure they have the resources they need. But one of my friends, one of our colleagues, made a comment last Thursday night that there was a bit of a fishing expedition going on for votes, and the irony wasn't lost on me when I actually saw the list of appropriations he was talking about: \$120 million for the shrimp and Manhattan fishing industries, that would equip over 1,000 of our light infantry soldiers with what they need to do their job; \$5 million for those engaged in the breeding, rearing, or transporting of live fish, think what \$5 million can do from an operational standpoint.

We start going through this in detail, and we see \$16 million for additional office space for the House of Representatives.

Mr. CONAWAY. Here, here. All under the emergency basis. We are totally out of office space and it is an emergency that we don't have that office space sooner.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I wanted to talk a little bit more about the politics of this. And, again, I want to read something that The Washington Post wrote on March 13. I took bits and pieces out of there, but I think it is pretty consistent throughout the whole editorial. And again to remind my colleagues if they have forgotten, The Washington Post is no friend of the Bush administration, and it is no supporter of Republican causes. But I will give The Washington Post credit that it takes a position, thinks about it, and comes down many times on the different side of the issue, or at least they are thoughtful about it.

And this Washington Post editorial, "The Pelosi Plan for Iraq, it makes perfect sense if the goal is winning votes in the United States.

"The only constituency House Speaker NANCY PELOSI ignored in her plan for amending President Bush's supplemental war funding bill are the people of the country that the U.S. troops are fighting to stabilize. The Democratic proposal doesn't attempt to answer the question of why August 2008 is the right moment for the Iraqi Government to lose all support from U.S. combat units. It doesn't hint at what might happen if American forces were to leave at the end of this year, a development that would be triggered by the Iraqi Government's weakness. It doesn't explain how continued U.S. interests in Iraq, which holds the world's second largest oil reserves and a substantial cadre of al Qaeda militants, would be protected after 2008. In fact," The Washington Post says, "it may prohibit U.S. forces from returning once they leave.

"In short, the Democratic proposal . . . is an attempt to impose detailed management on a war without regard for the war itself.

"Will Iraq collapse into unrestrained civil conflict with 'massive civilian

casualties,' as the U.S. intelligence community predicts in the event of a rapid withdrawal? Will al Qaeda establish a powerful new base for launching attacks on the United States and its allies? Will there be regional war that sucks in Iraq's neighbors such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey? The House legislation is indifferent. Whether or not any those events happened, U.S. forces would be gone.

"Ms. PELOSI's strategy leads not toward a responsible withdrawal from Iraq but to a constitutional power struggle with Mr. Bush, who has already said he will veto the legislation. Such a struggle would serve the interests of neither the Democrats nor the country."

And, again, that is coming from The Washington Post. So don't listen to a Republican Member of Congress from Pennsylvania, a conservative Republican from Pennsylvania. Listen to what The Washington Post has to say. And they are pointing it out over and over again: this is a bad plan; this is a bad war supplemental. And, again, I believe that it uses our men and women in harm's way as bargaining chips and it makes it more dangerous for those men and women in Iraq.

And it also is going to destroy their morale. If they find out they are going to be pulled out in 2 months or 6 months or 18 months or whatever the Democratic proposal is, which we are not quite sure, what is going to give a young marine or ranger the will to go kick in a door where the bad guys are when he sits back in his quarters and says, Well, I could be out of this place in 3 months or 6 months. I mean, it is going to destroy the morale of our men and women.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. CONAWAY. I would like to add one aspect that hasn't been discussed. We hate to engage in too much speculation, but let us assume that this thing passes and the President vetoes it or let us assume that cooler heads prevail and this thing fails this week on the floor. What next? What is this Congress going to do to actually continue to provide the funds needed, this \$99 billion that is needed right now, this year, this fiscal year to fight this fight? What will be the next step? How will we, in effect, bring this about? What kind of a scramble will go on that is totally unnecessary?

Instead of dealing with the problem now in a rational, thoughtful manner, this Democratic majority sees fit to play a giant game of chicken, it seems like, to run at this thing in what I believe is an irresponsible manner with loading another \$21.8 billion of funding on it, getting away from what the true nature of it is, trying to incite a veto by the President, trying to flex muscle and see who is the strongest as opposed to what do we need to do to deal with the troops' needs and then separate that from the broader discussion of where we should be.

So I think we are on a collision course that has the potential for being

very disruptive and very harmful to the men and women who fight this fight on our behalf.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I would certainly like to welcome here tonight and yield to one of our newest Members of the House from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and appreciate the chance to say a few words. I was over making phone calls in my office and clicked on C-SPAN and saw what you guys were talking about and thought I would come over and maybe just share a few things.

For those who are advocating that we just up and leave, that our military come home, that concept scares me to death because of the message. And I know you have talked about this some here on the floor this evening. The message that sends to the people who want to do us harm and want to do people harm all over the planet is a dangerous message and it scares me to death.

And I am reminded of, if folks will remember, shortly after the 9/11 attacks, that terrible day, where the President gave several speeches, where he talked about the fact that if you are a country that harbors terrorists, finances terrorists, trains terrorists, and are looking to produce weapons that are going to cause great harm to a great number of people, if you are doing those things, we, the United States of America, are putting you on notice that we are not going to tolerate that. And it was amazing that shortly after those speeches that Moamar Kadafi, a guy who hadn't necessarily been a great leader around the world and not necessarily a good guy, how quickly after those speeches Mr. Kadafi suddenly found the Lord and saw the light and said, wait a minute, I want to cooperate with the United States of America now in their fight against terrorism around the world. He saw the message. He got the message. Now, if we do what some are advocating in the Out of Iraq Caucus, some are advocating that we just up and leave and not win in Iraq, not succeed in our mission, for those who are advocating that, think about the message that sends to the Kadafis of the world and how dangerous that message is for the credibility of the greatest Nation in history, the United States of America.

That is what scares me to death about those on the other side and what they are pushing not only in this supplemental but what they have been talking about for several months now. That is a scary, scary message when it comes to our foreign policy and the success of our mission and the safety of our men and women in uniform who have been fighting the good fight, defending those principles and values that make this country great. That scares me to death.

And that is a simple point I want to make, but I think it never hurts to reinforce that point, which is so fundamental and why we are still engaged in

this struggle and why I think it is so important that we win and we continue to do what the Commander in Chief and General Petraeus want us to do over there in Iraq today.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio.

And I think you are right. I think it is important. I think that one of the things that we learn as citizens, we learn here in Congress, is your word. Your word is what matters, and if your word is good, then people trust you and people know they can count on you. And I think that is exactly your point. If we pull out in Iraq, our word to not only our enemy, our enemy knows that if we pull out that our word is no good to stay there and fight them, but our friends around the world are going to say you can't count on America. And I think that is an extremely important point, and that is maybe the core of this. We need to stay and make sure the Iraqi people have control of the security on the ground. And I think that while it is too early to tell if the new strategy in Iraq will succeed, there are tangible indications that it is working.

The joint U.S.-Iraqi security crackdown is fulfilling its primary objective to reduce violence in Baghdad. Bomb deaths have gone down 30 percent. Execution-style deaths have decreased by nearly half in the last month. Iraqis are taking on an increased role in security of their country. Nine of the Iraqis' 10 army divisions are taking the lead in areas of operation. And today almost 329,000 Iraq security force members are working to secure their country. And the political benchmarks are being met. Last month the Iraqi Government approved a budget, approved a national hydrocarbon law, and just last week they convened a regional conference of 13 nations to discuss these concerns. So things are moving forward. There was a poll out, the largest poll done in Iraq in the last couple of years, the London polling firm Opinion Research Business found that in a survey of over 5,000 Iraqis that by a 2-1 margin, Iraqis prefer living under the current system than they did under Saddam. So there are positive signs there.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. I appreciate the gentleman's yielding. And the gentleman is exactly right. Of course we wish things had progressed quicker and faster. We wish all our men and women were home. But there is good news to talk about. And one fact that I think gets lost sometimes, every single life that is lost is a tragedy. We wish it didn't happen, whether it is our service men and women in uniform or whether it is an Iraqi civilian in that country, but the truth is there have been fewer American service men and women killed in 2006 than there were in 2005. There were fewer American service men and women killed in 2005 than there were in 2004. Of course, you would never know that fact if you just listened to the national news every night.

There are good things happening, as the gentleman pointed out. The other

thing I would just say is this: to get the kind of country that we need there and the kind of things happening that we need to happen, it is going to take a little time. I am reminded that in 1776 we declared independence. We made our quest for liberty and freedom here in the United States. It took us 13 years to get a Constitution that works and is still serving us well today. And we came from a culture that appreciated liberty and appreciated freedom.

It is going to take some time for this nation, which has never really known freedom or liberty, to get to that point where they can value those principles that make our country so great. So good things are happening, and we should talk about those more in our quest to make this country work.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman for coming down.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

I want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that as we talk tonight about an incredibly serious matter that those listening don't have a sense that we have a callous disregard for the men and women who are fighting this fight. We stand up here night after night and talk about the sacrifices made and the dedication of this all-volunteer force, and the phrase kind of rolls off our tongue very easily.

□ 2100

I want to make sure that those listening understand that each one of those lives lost is incredibly precious.

When I am out and about in the district in Texas talking to folks, I typically ask the question, how many folks have someone they know serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, and a lot of times a lot of hands will go up.

I will then ask, no, I need to know how many people out here have somebody in harm's way that when they hear about a death in Iraq, their stomach gets in a knot until they know it is not their loved one, and most of the hands go down. So we are fighting a fight there that while it has a dramatic impact on an awful lot of lives, broadly across this country, day in and day out, most Americans aren't really affected by this sacrifice, by this magnificent fighting force that we have in place.

I typically challenge that audience to say, look, anytime you hear about sacrifice for this country, dying for this country, fighting for this country, make sure you think about it in the terms of some specific person. Not the global group, because that defuses the impact. That lessens the tugs at our hearts and helps us deal with it. I want you to think about some specific person that has given their life on behalf of this country.

For me, it is a high school buddy of mine that died in Vietnam, a Medal of Honor winner. I look at all that I have done since he and I graduated from high school. He gave up all of that so that we could live in freedom today.

We have got the exact kind of men and women fighting in Iraq today and

in Afghanistan today and in other places around this world that we don't get to talk about that are laying their lives on the line, laying their futures on the line, laying their ability to walk a daughter down the aisle at her wedding, the ability to hold a grandchild, and all those kinds of things that those of us who make it into this stage of life have gotten to do. Yet our men and women volunteer to take on these responsibilities, take these risks, and put themselves between you and I and some really, really bad people.

So as we come to this Chamber night after night to talk about this fight, we need to make sure we understand exactly who it is we are talking about, who we are talking to.

We got an e-mail 2 weeks ago, 3 weeks ago, when we were debating that nonsense on the meaningless, toothless House resolution from a buck sergeant in Mosul who made the comment, he said, you know, the professional veneer we keep in place that says that debate, that conversation going on back in America, has no impact on our ability to fight, our moral, he said that veneer is very thin. Underneath, we are angry, we are mad. We think we are being sold out.

So the things that we say in this Chamber and in front of newspapers and televisions have a deep impact on the men and women who fight this fight. It is almost as if we taunt them when we talk about, well, we are going to support you, but we don't believe in what you do. We want to support you, but we think you are screwing things up. We want to support you, but we are not going to pay for it.

All of those kinds of things are a mixed message that has deep impact, and while I would defend my colleagues' rights to continue to say those things and have those opinions and debate those things, I would also challenge them to understand the deep impact they have as they make those statements, as they talk about their positions, as they put forth their ideas on what we should and should not be doing in Iraq. It comes with a great responsibility that each one of us brings to this Chamber when we talk.

Mr. SHUSTER. I think the gentleman makes an excellent point. This country, there are people in this country, the political discourse, we agree, we disagree, we debate, but the wonderful thing about it is we can do it, and people aren't tortured and drug off to prison and killed.

As a matter of fact, I was on the Mall last week in the morning with another colleague of ours, and we went up to the war protestors. They had their tents up and their signs up. It was really quite a magnificent picture of the war protestors, and behind it was the United States Capitol.

I started to talk. We were talking about why they were opposed to the

war and why I wanted to continue to support our troops there. I said, you know, in some countries of the world, Iraq, Iran, many of those countries, almost all of those countries in the Middle East, you cannot be doing this. They wouldn't allow you to do this. In fact, they would kill you. They would take you off and kill you possibly. And you would be lucky if you were killed because most of the time they would torture you before they would kill you.

So this country is a great country, and what we are doing over there is we are trying to help a nation stabilize, trying to help a nation build a democracy, and that is not easy. That is difficult. As our colleague from Ohio pointed out, the Revolutionary War in 1776, it took 13 years for the Constitution.

A story I like to tell, because it happened in my district, during the first year of George Washington's second term, we had already got a Constitution, we elected a President, George Washington, not once, but the second time. In that first year, the Whiskey Rebellion occurred in western Pennsylvania. The farmers in western Pennsylvania didn't like the tax, so they revolted. So George Washington, it was the only time that a Commander in Chief mounted up on a horse and took the soldiers into the field, had to ride up into western Pennsylvania and put down that rebellion.

We as Americans sometimes forget that it took us a long time until we were able to establish democracy. So it is not easy. We need to remember our history, that it takes time. It takes time especially when you are a nation that has never known democracy; never known democracy, but certainly has that feeling, has that sense of wanting freedom.

I think that there is no doubt that the Iraqi people, as well as any person, any people in the world, or every people in the world, want freedom. They have a desire for freedom.

Mr. CONAWAY. If you look at our history, if you look at the year 1776 and you study George Washington that year, he got up every day thinking that was the last day of the revolution. His army in many cases was in tatters, it was unpaid, it was underequipped. He could not have made the certification that the Democrats are demanding that this President make in order to send a single unit into combat; Washington could not have made that certification and he would have had to give up.

He got up every day thinking, This is the last day of the deal. I am sure there were critics all over the place saying we are done, it is over, this grand experiment that turned into America, turned into 230 years of a beacon for liberty and democracy around the world, would have failed had he not stuck to this plan and stuck to the understanding that we could win this fight. And it was hard. Good men lost their lives every day, and it was hard.

We are there at the same place today in Iraq. It is hard and good men and women risk their lives and some lose their lives every single day. I mourn with the families and I cry with them, just as you do, when somebody from the district is killed or maimed or injured. This has serious consequences to what we do. But failure in Iraq, a disaster that would be an immediate pull-out, is simply unacceptable on every level.

Let me switch gears for a minute, and then I will let my good colleague close, with some good news, totally unrelated to the supplemental except that it does have to do with this year's financial results.

As you know, I am a CPA and I like to look at numbers and all those kinds of things. If you look at the first 5 months of fiscal 2007, our revenue collections into this Federal Government are up \$81 billion over the equivalent 5-month period in fiscal 2006. An additional \$81 billion has been collected, not because we raised taxes, not because we had any changes to the Tax Code, because we haven't implemented any of those, but it is because this economy is ginning along. Expenses are also up almost \$26 billion. So the net of those two is that we have got a deficit for the first 5 months of fiscal 2007 that is \$55.5 billion less than the equivalent 5-month deficit for fiscal 2006.

I just wanted to inject a little great news into the conversation and get that into the record. These numbers come directly from the Treasury Department's monthly financial reports that are available on the Web for anybody to look at. I wanted to highlight those numbers tonight as we finish up this Countdown hour that we spent tonight talking about Iraq.

These are grave times, tough times, hard times, and I think our resolve is firm. We will see this week the integrity of our colleagues in this Chamber as to how they vote, how they have talked in this Chamber versus how they vote on this deal.

There are only two positions: stay and fight, win this thing and be successful; or get out, get our folks out now. There is no half step in between that you can orchestrate any kind of a justification that makes any sense. It will be interesting to watch our colleagues as they struggle with this vote this week, with their own integrity and their own ideas of what is right and wrong.

With that, to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, I will yield back. Thank you for having this Special Order tonight.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman for joining me and appreciate that report on the revenues to the government. Once again it proves that tax cuts do work. It increases the economic activity in this country, which generates more revenue not only for the government, but for the good people of America that are out there working hard every day. They are able to put

more of that money into their pockets instead of sending it to the bureaucrats in Washington to spend it.

I think it is important on this fourth anniversary that we did speak about what is happening in Iraq, and most importantly what is going to happen on this House floor.

The American people, I was told by Colonel Walt Piatt in Afghanistan when I visited there a couple years ago, and I was talking to Colonel Piatt, who is from my district, and we were talking about the effort and the needs of the troops and the military equipment, and he said to me, you know, America's power is not its soldier, it is not its weaponry, it is not the bombs we create. The strength in America is the will of the American people, because if the soldiers know that the people are behind what they are doing, in support of what they are doing, they can accomplish anything.

I think what is going to be said here on this House floor, because the House, we are the people elected, we are the leaders elected from our districts, 435 districts, and what we say here is going to go a long way in whether we are going to be successful in helping the Iraqis building a democracy, in stabilizing that country and helping long term what is going to happen in the Middle East.

So it is going to be very critical what is said here on the floor in this war supplemental. Are we going to use it as a political ploy, use it as a bargaining chip, use our men and women as bargaining chips to get spending to things that don't belong in this war supplemental, or are we going to do the right thing, and that is you support our men and women with the funding that they need? Are we going to support them?

That is going to be a large step in proving to them that we are with them, that we are behind them and that we are not going to put in arbitrary deadlines that are going to give our adversaries and our enemies a leg up on us.

So this is going to be an absolutely critical week for America. It is going to be a critical week and a defining moment I believe for the majority party, because I don't believe, and I think it is pretty clear, the American people don't like conflict, don't like war, don't like death, don't like destruction. Nobody likes that. But the American people do not want to lose in Iraq. I think that is very clear. And this war supplemental, putting in these arbitrary timetables, is a prescription for that.

It is micromanaging this war by the politicians in Washington, just like many on the other side of the aisle say is what happened in Vietnam. That was wrong in Vietnam, and yet they are standing up on the House floor this week and the past couple weeks proposing that we do just that, micromanage this war. 435 Members of the House, 100 Senators, they are not the Commander in Chief.

The Constitution is clear. When you are fighting a war, you need one leader. When you are fighting a war, you leave it to the professionals, you leave it to the generals, you leave it to the colonels, you leave it to the men and women that are trained to do this, not bring it on the House floor. And as I said and as The Washington Post has said, trying to micromanage this war is the wrong thing to do for the Iraqi people, it is the wrong thing to do for the American people, and it is the wrong thing to do for the men and women that are in harm's way.

So I hope we are able to come together on this House floor and strip out many of those things that are in here that just make it unworkable and bad for the American people and the military.

MARKING THE END OF THE 4TH YEAR OF THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALTMIRE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of my coming to the floor this evening, along with a number of my friends and colleagues on this side of the aisle, is to mark the fact that tomorrow will be the 4th year that our military forces instigated by the administration have attacked Iraq and engaged in what the administration has called a war in that country. Most people now have come to realize that we are not engaged in a war in Iraq, but we are engaged now in an occupation, the consequences of which are proving to be increasingly disastrous.

At 10:15 p.m. on March 19, 2003, in a televised address to the Nation, President Bush announced the start of what he refers to as "the war in Iraq."

□ 2115

The way in which the administration attempted to justify that attack has been a grave consequence for the United States, both internally and around the world. The President, of course, and others in his administration contended that there was a connection between Iraq and the attack that took place in New York and at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, that Iraq was somehow involved in that attack, when all of the evidence and information indicated that that was not the case.

In spite of that, the administration continued to make that allegation. They then went on to say that it was important that the United States invade Iraq for the safety of our country and for the safety of others because Iraq was a country that possessed what they referred to as "weapons of mass destruction," alleging that there was substantial amounts of chemical and biological weapons in Iraq.

They then went on to assert that Iraq had a nuclear weapons program, and the President of the United States in a 2003 State of the Union Address to a joint session of Congress and to the Nation here in this House asserted that the British Government had learned that Iraq had imported enriched uranium from Niger. When he included that sentence in his State of the Union Address, he was very much aware that the intelligence agencies in our country had said that there was no proof that that was the case. In fact, they had examined the documents upon which those assertions were being made, and they found those documents which had been stolen from the Nigerian Embassy in Rome were, in fact, forged.

So what we have here is an unnecessary and unjustified and consequently illegal attack on another country and a subsequent disastrous occupation which has gone on now for 4 years, and we will be beginning the fifth year starting tomorrow.

As a result of this occupation, over 3,200 American servicemen and women have been killed in Iraq since our invasion over 4 years ago. Over 24,000 troops have been wounded in action in Iraq, and the number of Iraqis killed is unknown, but the estimates range as high as 200,000 Iraqi civilians, mostly women and children, who have been killed in that country as a result of the military action.

We are spending now about \$275 million per day in Iraq. More than \$8 billion every month is being spent in that country. And as the Speaker of the House noted earlier this evening in her speech on the floor, at least \$10 billion of that money is completely unaccounted for, and much of the rest has been spent in ways that have not been productive, but have been extraordinarily wasteful.

The President in January called for what he referred to as a surge of nearly 30,000 additional soldiers into Iraq. So far that has amounted to 21,500 additional troops that have gone to Iraq in January, and 4,400 more just two weeks ago.

The circumstances there continue to deteriorate as a result of the corrupt and incompetent way in which this illegal invasion and subsequent occupation have been carried out by this administration.

Roughly half of all of the ground equipment that the U.S. Army owns is now located in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since the invasion, the Army has lost nearly 2,000 wheeled vehicles and more than 1,000 armed vehicles. To make matters worse, according to the GAO, the Army has not been keeping accurate track of what they have and what they need to reset the force, and they cannot provide sufficient detail for Congress to provide effective oversight.

Between 75,000 and 100,000 pieces of National Guard equipment worth nearly \$2 billion are now located in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is equipment that is

needed by the National Guard here in our country to carry out the obligations and responsibilities of the National Guard around the United States. And they are now increasingly being deprived of their ability to carry out their responsibilities and obligations because of the loss of their equipment.

The Regular Army has lost so much equipment which has not been replaced that they are now using the equipment of the National Guard to replace the equipment that they have lost and which this administration has failed to provide replacements for.

We have a situation that is confronting us now in Iraq which is increasingly damaging, dangerous, and on the verge of being disastrous for our country as well as for others in the Middle East.

We need this Congress to assert its obligations and responsibilities to oversee the activities of this administration, and that is clearly necessary because all through the 4 years during which this illegal invasion took place followed by this occupation, there has not been any significant oversight by this Congress, which, of course, was controlled by the Republican majority for all of that period of time.

Now that we have a Democratic majority in Congress, that oversight is beginning. Appropriate hearings are being conducted both in this House and in the Senate, and more and more information concerning the way in which this operation has been carried out is being made available to the American people, and as a result of that, more and more people across the country are realizing what a disaster this has been. More and more Americans are understanding how they were intentionally and purposefully misled and deceived by this administration in order to carry out this invasion which had absolutely nothing to do with the attack of September 11, and which cannot be justified in any way whatsoever.

This action is unlawful, and appropriate oversight and supervision based upon detailed and focused hearings by this Congress is now absolutely necessary.

We have with us this evening several of my colleagues who are interested in speaking about this issue, and I would now like to recognize my very good friend from Ohio, who will address the House at this time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) for his superb remarks and for his organizing this Special Order in order to express our opinions on behalf of our troops and for a course correction in Iraq and the Middle East in general.

When you think about it, we are being asked this week to vote an additional \$100 billion in what is called a supplemental, mainly to escalate the war in Iraq, and the money we are voting on will be just for today until the end of September of this year. This \$100 billion is put on top of what has already been appropriated to be spent on