Mr. Speaker, the Republicans in this House have done a

heinous thing: they have insulted one of the deans of this House in an

unthinkable and unconscionable way.

They took his words and contorted them; they took his heartfelt

sentiments and spun

them. They took his resolution and deformed it: in a cheap effort to

silence dissent in the House of Representatives.

The Republicans should be roundly criticized for this reprehensible

act. They have perpetrated a fraud on the House of Representatives just

as they have defrauded the American people.

By twisting the issue around, the Republicans are trying to set a

trap for the Democrats. A ``no'' vote for this Resolution will obscure

the fact that there is strong support for withdrawal of U.S. forces

from Iraq. I am voting ``yes'' on this Resolution for an orderly

withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq despite the convoluted motives

behind the Republican Resolution. I am voting to support our troops by

bringing them home now in an orderly withdrawal.

Sadly, If we call for an end to the occupation, some say that we have

no love for the Iraqi people, that we would abandon them to tyrants and

thugs.

Let us consider some history. The Republicans make great hay about

Saddam Hussein's use of chemical weapons against the Iranians and the

Kurds. But when that attack was made in 1988, it was Democrats who

moved a resolution to condemn those attacks, and the Reagan White House

quashed the bill in the Senate, because at that time the Republicans

considered Saddam one of our own. So in 1988, who abandoned the Iraqi

people to tyrants and thugs?

In voting for this bill, let me be perfectly clear that I am not

saying the United States should exit Iraq without a plan. I agree with

Mr. Murtha that security and stability in Iraq should be pursued

through diplomacy. I simply want to vote yes to an orderly withdrawal

from Iraq. And let me explain why.

Prior to its invasion, Iraq had not one (not one!) instance of

suicide attacks in its history. Research shows a 100 percent

correlation between suicide attacks and the presence of foreign combat

troops in a host country. And experience also shows that suicide

attacks abate when foreign occupation troops are withdrawn. The U.S.

invasion and occupation has destabilized Iraq and Iraq will only return

to stability once this occupation ends.

We must be willing to face the fact that the presence of U.S. combat

troops is itself a major inspiration to the forces attacking our

troops. Moreover, we must be willing to acknowledge that the forces

attacking our troops are able to recruit suicide attackers because

suicide attacks are largely motivated by revenge for the loss of loved

ones. And Iraqis have lost so many loved ones as a result of America's

two wars against Iraq.

In 1996, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said on CBS that the

lives of 500,000 children dead from sanctions were ``worth the price''

of containing Saddam Hussein. When pressed to defend this reprehensible

position she went on to explain that she did not want U.S. Troops to

have to fight the Gulf War again. Nor did I. But what happened? We

fought a second Gulf War. And now over 2,000 American soldiers lie

dead. And I expect the voices of concern for Iraqi civilian casualties,

whose deaths the Pentagon likes to brush aside as ``collateral damage''

are too few, indeed. A report from Johns Hopkins suggests that over

100,000 civilians have died in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, most

of them violent deaths and most as ``collateral damage'' from U.S.

forces. The accuracy of the 100,000 can and should be debated. Yet our

media, while quick to cover attacks on civilians by insurgent forces in

Iraq, have given us a blackout on Iraqi civilian deaths at the hands of

U.S. combat forces.

Yet let us remember that the United States and its allies imposed a

severe policy of sanctions on the people of Iraq from 1990 to 2003.

UNICEF and World Health Organization studies based on infant mortality

studies showed a 500,000 increase in mortality of Iraqi children under

5 over trends that existed before sanctions. From this, it was widely

assumed that over 1 million Iraqi deaths for all age groups could be

attributed to sanctions between 1990 and 1998. And not only were there

5 more years of sanctions before the invasion, but the war since the

invasion caused most aid groups to leave Iraq. So for areas not touched

by reconstruction efforts, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated

further. How many more Iraqi lives have been lost through hunger and

deprivation since the occupation?

And what kind of an occupier have we been? We have all seen the

photos of victims of U.S. torture in Abu Ghraib prison. That's where

Saddam used to send his political enemies to be tortured, and now many

Iraqis quietly, cautiously ask: ``So what has changed?''

A recent video documentary confirms that U.S. forces used white

phosphorous against civilian neighborhoods in the U.S. attack on

Fallujah. Civilians and insurgents were burned alive by these weapons.

We also now know that U.S. forces have used MK77, a napalm-like

incendiary weapon, even though napalm has been outlawed by the United

Nations.

With the images of tortured detainees, and the images of Iraqi

civilians burned alive by U.S. incendiary weapons now circulating the

globe, our reputation on the world stage has been severely damaged.

If America wants to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people, we

as a people must be willing to face the pain and death and suffering we

have brought to the Iraqi people with bombs, sanctions and occupation,

even if we believe our actions were driven by the most altruistic of

reasons. We must acknowledge our role in enforcing the policy of

sanctions for 12 years after the extensive 1991 bombing in which we

bombed infrastructure targets in direct violation of the Geneva

Conventions.

We must also be ready to face the fact that the United States once

provided support for the tyrant we deposed in the name of liberating

the Iraqi people. These are events that our soldiers are too young to

remember. I believe our young men and women in uniform are very sincere

in their belief that their sacrifice is made in the name of helping the

Iraqi people. But it is not they who set the policy. They take orders

from the Commander-in-Chief and the Congress. It is we who bear the

responsibility of weighing our decisions in a historical context, and

it is we who must consider the gravest decision of whether or not to go

to war based upon the history, the facts, and the truth.

Sadly, however, our country is at war in Iraq based on a lie told to

the American people. The entire war was based premised on a sales

pitch--that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction menacing the United

States--that turned out to be a lie.

I have too many dead soldiers in my district; too many from my home

state. Too many homeless veterans on our streets and in our

neighborhoods.

America has sacrificed too many young soldiers' lives, too many young

soldiers' mangled bodies, to the Bush war machine.

I will not vote to give one more soldier to the George W. Bush/Dick

Cheney war machine. I will not give one more dollar for a war riddled

with conspicuous profiteering.

Tonight I speak as one who has at times been the only Member of this

Body at antiwar demonstrations calling for withdrawal. And I won't stop

calling for withdrawal.

I was opposed to this war before there was a war; I was opposed to

the war during the war; and I am opposed to this war now--even though

it's supposed to be over.

A vote on war is the single most important vote we can make in this

House. I understand the feelings of my colleagues on both sides of the

aisle who might be severely conflicted by the decision we have to make

here tonight. But the facts of U.S. occupation of Iraq are also very

clear. The occupation is headed down a dead end because so long as U.S.

combat forces patrol Iraq, there will be an Iraqi insurgency against

it.

I urge that we pursue an orderly withdrawal from Iraq and pursue,

along with our allies, a diplomatic solution to the situation in Iraq,

supporting the aspirations of the Iraqi people through support for

democratic processes.