Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, there is nothing--

nothing--more serious that we will do in our lives as well as our

careers than to send young American men and women to war. And there is

no one in this body who understands the consequences of that decision

more than Jack Murtha who served 37 years in the Marines, won two

Purple Hearts in battle, and loves without reservation our soldiers in

uniform.

Over 2,070 Americans and tens of thousands of civilian Iraqis are

dead, thousands more are horribly injured in this war that many of us

believe to be completely unjustified. Yet the House Republicans are so

morally bankrupt that they would turn to cheap political stunts in

order to undercut Congressman Murtha's conscience-driven call for an

end to the Iraq war, which he calls ``a flawed policy wrapped in

illusion.''

But there is not a person in this House who is man or woman enough to

ever undercut the credibility of Jack Murtha, no matter how many

accusations they may throw at him, no matter how many names they call

him, and no matter how many ``clever'' tactics they try.

Shame on the Republican leaders for thinking it's ok to turn this war

into a game and Representative Murtha into a political football. Shame

on the Speaker for accusing Jack Murtha of insulting and demoralizing

our troops. Mr. Murtha, this decorated war hero, is right when he says

``what demoralizes them is going to war with not enough troops and

equipment to make the transition to peace; the devastation caused by

IEDs; being deployed to Iraq when their homes have been ravaged by

hurricanes; being on their second or third deployment and leaving their

families behind without a network of support.''

The Republicans don't demean Mr. Murtha, can't begin to demean Mr.

Murtha, when they make baseless allegations and engage in pointless

political stunts. They demean themselves and they demean the integrity

of this House of Representatives. Shame on you.

I support Jack Murtha's resolution to stop sending our soldiers to

die in Iraq. I support him when he says, ``It is time to bring them

home.'' The proper response from those who disagree with this revered

Marine would be to have a serious discussion about how we got into

Iraq, about the conduct of the war, and about how we get out. Instead

we see the typical slash-and-burn personal attacks that are

the mainstay of the Republicans, especially when they know they are

wrong. And you are wrong.

But you are no longer fooling the American people. In overwhelming

numbers they think it was a mistake to go to war in Iraq; they think

the Bush Administration mishandled the war; they don't trust the

President to tell the truth; and they don't support this war. On the

eve of Thanksgiving, even as our troops are doing their very best far

from home and family, the Republicans have chosen to pull a cheap,

demeaning political stunt. Shame on you.