Mr. Speaker, President Bush has cited oil as a reason

for our continued presence in Iraq. The Iraq Study Group is

recommending that Iraq oil law be changed to facilitate privatization

of Iraq's oil resources. The Iraq report says as much as 500,000

barrels per day, that is $1.3 billion per year in Iraqi oil wealth, is

now being stolen, which is interesting since the oil ministry is the

first place our troops were sent after the invasion. And we have

140,000 troops in Iraq.

How can we expect the end of the Iraq war and national reconciliation

in Iraq while we advocate that Iraq's oil wealth be handled by private

oil companies? And it is ironic that this report comes at the exact

time that our Interior Department's Inspector General says that oil

companies are cheating us, the U.S. people, out of billions of dollars

and the administration is looking the other way. Is it possible that

Secretary Baker has a conflict of interest, which should have precluded

him from co-chairing a study group which promotes privatization of Iraq

oil assets, given his ties to the oil industry? Is it possible that our

troops are dying for the profits of oil?