Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding. This is

aimed at the company Halliburton. That is very clear.

The papers are awash with Halliburton and have been for several

years. Halliburton employs lots of Americans. And I do not have the

exact number of KIA, but they, like our soldiers in the field, the

people that drive those trucks and work those logistics to support our

Marines out in the western area of operations out in Fallujah and our

Army personnel out in Mosul and Tikrit and other remote parts of Iraq,

those people risk their lives every day.

I will say to the gentleman, as I recall, over 20 of them have been

killed in action, people like the Halliburton drivers. People have been

captured by the enemy and some of them held hostage, unable to escape.

Most of the people, the vast majority of the people that work for this

contractor, like lots of contractors that support our American military

overseas, are good, hardworking people. And if you look, if you go up

and eat with the Stryker brigades up in Mosul, or the 101st in Tikrit

or the Marines in Fallujah, and you go into their mess halls and you

look at the operation and you see the fuel that is delivered, you see

the ammunition that is delivered, you see the treatment, the quality of

life for our military people, you will understand then that is

primarily a result of American corporations which support the war

effort. And that is a fact of life.

Now, the idea that prices have been unreasonable and that there are

contracts where they have abused the American taxpayer or abused the

contract process, let us take that under the regular order. And if that

is true, let's hold people accountable. Let's hold the corporation

accountable. But the idea that we single out a group of people which is

thousands and thousands of Americans who support our fighting personnel

and basically paralyze that operation is unreasonable.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Let me just say to my colleagues here who have stated that we should

hold up our contracts and not give new contracts until past contracts

are found to be reasonable versus unreasonable, Members have stood on

this floor and have called every weapons system since the first Persian

tank unreasonable in cost. The B-2 has been called unreasonable. Every

ship in the navy has been called unreasonable in the cost. Every

fighter aircraft has been called unreasonable in the cost.

The idea that you are not going to have any action on these contracts

unless you have a congressional hearing is not true. There is no

committee here that has the ability to enforce or not enforce a

contract. You have dozens, in fact hundreds, of government lawyers who

have every opportunity, indeed have the charge, of going through

complex contracts, and where they find that the contract was violated

by the contractor, and there are lots of contractors around who are

bankrupt to attest to this, that that contract is then acted upon,

damages are extracted; and all these are things that we have put in our

system of laws.

Now, the idea that you are going to take a major part of the support

of an ongoing shooting war and you are going to paralyze it and say,

well, it is only for present contracts, the next one that comes up next

month, that is going to be different, but you are going to allow

present contracts to continue. That could mean that you have got a

hiatus in capability, a hiatus in the expertise of these people who

have gone out, wearing the uniform of American contractors, put

themselves in harm's way and, over the last several years in this war,

developed a real expertise.

So I know the gentleman's amendment may play well politically in some

quarters, but I think it is bad for the men and women who wear the

uniform of the United States because the contractors we are talking

about are the people supporting them right now in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

One thing my distinguished friend from California (Mr. Waxman) has

not shown us is how American laws, existing laws in contract, that

govern the acquisition of systems and the acquisition of services, how

those laws are not applicable to this American corporation, and so,

therefore, we have to say, stop, we are not going to do anymore

business with this corporation.

In fact, all the laws that go toward the enforcement of contracts and

the contract itself, of course, are enforceable. Fines can be

extracted. Other remedies can be extracted; and if there is, in fact,

fraud, and I have heard the term ``fraud'' used in this debate, if

there is fraud, that is a crime in contracting. If you commit crime in

contracting, you can go to jail. There is no Member of this Chamber

who, if a contract is broken between the United States Government and

any of our contractors over there, there is no one in this Chamber who

is going to say that we should not extract our full remedy under the

laws we create and if people are involved in criminal action that they

should not be prosecuted.