Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the House, this is

a great opportunity in the amendment brought forward by the gentlewoman

from California (Ms. Lee). The reason this is a good opportunity, it

gets to the heart of what is tearing us apart and preventing us from

being as effective as we could in the Middle East. The best way to do

that is to clearly express, by statute, the fact that we are not there

to build military permanent bases. And the reason is that when we do

that we will alleviate a lot of the problem and suspicions that

currently exist.

Join us in this bipartisan effort to make sure that American

intentions in the Middle East are for the first time explicitly stated

by law.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment

offered by my distinguished colleague from California.

When the president took our country to war, he promised that victory

would be swift and that our troops would not stay in Iraq one day

longer than necessary.

Three years and 300 billion dollars later, with over 2,300 American

soldiers dead and more than ten thousand wounded, victory is nowhere in

sight.

The president and vice president, the secretary of defense and high

ranking generals have continued to assure the American people that our

presence in Iraq is temporary.

Yet, at the same time, the Department of Defense is paying

Halliburton subsidiary Kellog Brown and Root billions of dollars to

build 14 ``enduring'' bases in Iraq.

The Iraqis see what is happening on the ground, and they haven't

fallen for the Administration's misrepresentation.

According to recent opinion polls, a large majority of Iraqis believe

that the U.S. military has no intention to leave Iraq, and that it

would stay even is asked by the Iraqi government to leave.

The presence of American troops is fueling the insurgency in Iraq, as

acknowledged by General Casey and numerous other experts, and is

helping terrorist recruiters build their numbers across the globe.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot afford to continue sending these mixed

signals.

If we want to build the Iraqis' confidence about our intentions in

their country, if we want to stop adding fuel to the fire of insurgency

and terrorism, we must clarify our intent.

Because the Administration is unable to send a clear message about

America's intentions in Iraq, Congress must take this responsibility.

We must make our policy of no permanent bases explicit by force of

law.

Mr. Chairman, the concern raised in the gentlelady from California's

amendment is the same concern that has determined my vote on the

underlying bill. The Administration and the majority in this body

continue to evade the question of how long we will remain in Iraq, and

how much we plan to spend on this war.

It is with deep regret that I vote against passage of this

supplemental.

Since Hurricane Katrina wrought havoc on our Gulf coast, I have

decried the federal government's stingy approach to aid and

reconstruction.

I have joined with my colleagues for years in urging the

Administration to provide more funding for veterans' benefits.

I fully support increased LIHEAP funding, as well as aid to Liberia

and Sudan.

But, Mr. Chairman, I will not be held hostage by the majority's

cynical two-step trick to ensure continued funding for their failed

policy in Iraq.

The majority continues to separate Iraq funding from the overall

defense budget so that they can hide the true cost of the war and then

force the Congress to pass these so-called ``emergency'' supplemental

appropriations.

And the majority has bundled this war appropriation with funding for

numerous important programs that we all favor, in order to force the

legislation through and do an end run around real debate.

I am a Korean War veteran. I support our troops as much as anyone in

this body, but I do so by advocating redeployment out of Iraq as soon

as it can be safely done. I would vote any time for additional funds to

pay for such safe redeployment. For this reason I have signed on to the

proposal of my colleague Mr. McGovern, H.R. 4232, the End of the War in

Iraq Act.

Mr. Chairman, this vote is not about ``supporting the troops.'' This

bill is just one more attempt to tie the Congress' hands by forcing us

to give up our only means of control over the war, the power of the

purse. I will not be blackmailed into approving funding for an open-

ended continuation of our participation in hostilities in Iraq. If the

Congress acquiesces on this vote, it is in effect agreeing to fund this

disastrous policy for as long as this Administration sees fit. From all

indications, no end is in sight.

Mr. Chairman, the price for continuing this war is too high, not only

in budgetary terms, but in American lives, Iraqi civilian casualties

blamed on America and in the steady increase in the terrorist ranks

that this war is provoking around the globe.

The American taxpayers should not have to send one more penny on the

Administration's Iraq misadventure. Let's give our troops the supplies

they need to get out of Iraq safely. Let's bring our troops home.