Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the

Lee amendment prohibiting the use of funds to establish permanent

American bases on Iraqi soil. We must make clear to the Iraqi people

and to the American people that our operations in Iraq are not open-

ended and that we have no designs on Iraqi oil and territory.

Earlier this week, in a hearing of the Military Quality of Life and

Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee, I asked General John

Abizaid, the top American general in the Middle East, if he could make

an unequivocal commitment that the U.S. does not intend to establish

permanent bases in Iraq. His answer was that he could not.

Two days after our Ambassador to Iraq said that the U.S. has, ``no

goal of establishing permanent bases in Iraq,'' General Abizaid said

that the policy on long-term presence in Iraq had not been formulated.

Three years into this war, if administration officials cannot make up

their minds and articulate a coherent policy, it is time that Congress

did it for them. Support the Lee amendment.