Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished Chair of the

Rules Committee for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I want this war to come to an end now. I had

reservations when I voted in support of the supplemental a few weeks

ago, and I have misgivings about the conference report that is before

us today. I believe very deeply that this war represents one of the

biggest blunders in our history and that we must change course and

bring it to an end.

But, Mr. Speaker, to defeat this conference report tonight would

provide President Bush with a victory that he does not deserve and that

he has not earned, and it would affirm a disastrous policy in Iraq. A

vote against this conference report is a vote to support the status

quo, which is essentially a vote to support a failed policy.

Since the President decided to escalate the war in Iraq, the violence

has gotten worse. This administration has demonstrated a contempt for

the American people, who have demanded a change in our Iraq policy.

Mr. Speaker, this President is presiding over a policy and a war in

Iraq that is making the United States more vulnerable, not more secure.

He refuses to listen. He refuses to acknowledge the facts. He refuses

to compromise.

Now he has threatened to veto this conference report. And if he does

so, then this President will make perfectly clear to the American

people that the only way this war is going to end, the only way our

troops will ever come home to their families and loved ones, the only

way the Iraqis will ever be held accountable for governing their own

country and ending their sectarian violence, will be if Congress finds

a way to end it.

Every day it becomes more and more clear that the President has

decided to kick the ball down the field to make this war somebody

else's problem. Two years ago, President Bush announced his exit

strategy for Iraq. He said, ``That's a problem for the next

President.''

Mr. Speaker, that is unacceptable and it is false. It is a problem

for all of us. None of us in this Chamber wake up each morning in

harm's way. None of us stare death in the eye or see our comrades fall

to bullets and bombs. Not even the Green Zone provides a sense of

security any longer.

Instead of demanding reconciliation, we are building walls to keep

Shiites away from Sunnis. Every day, thousands of Iraqis are fleeing

the horror that has become their country. The best and the brightest

are leaving. The average shopkeeper, the next-door neighbor, all are

packing their bags and trying to find a way out of town, out of the

country, away from the violence, the death and destruction.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that whenever we finally leave Iraq, it

will not be pretty. This failed policy has left Iraq with few options.

But until we begin to leave, no one has to make the hard choices about

how Iraqis are going to live together or die together.

Mr. Speaker, this terrible chapter in our history must come to an

end, and I urge all my colleagues to join with me in saying to the

President of the United States, enough is enough.