Mr. Speaker, what are we doing? What in the world are we

doing? The President asked for funding for our troops in Afghanistan

and Iraq to meet our commitments to bring freedom to those people and

to protect the American people, and here we are with a bill that has

some $25 billion worth of spending over and above what the President

asked for. And if that is not bad enough, we handcuff our generals and

we handcuff our troops and we go about this backhanded way of trying to

end the war in a backhanded way because the votes are not there to do

it in a straight-up fashion.

Mr. Speaker, we are sent here by the American people. We have grave

responsibilities to them and to our allies around the world, and I

understand that there are deeply held differences over what is going on

in Iraq. But all of us understand what we heard today from General

Petraeus. All of us understand what we have heard over the last few

months coming out of Iraq.

The real battle in Iraq today is not with the Iraqis. The real battle

in Iraq today is with al Qaeda that has made this the central front in

their war with us. And let us remember, we did not start the war with

al Qaeda; they did.

It is al Qaeda that has made Iraq the central front in their war with

us, and if we are not willing to take on al Qaeda in Iraq today, when

will we? When will we stand up to radical Islam that is spreading all

over the world, endangering our allies and endangering our citizens?

When will we stand up and fight? We did not do it like other world

leaders for some 20 years because America, like the rest of the world,

looked up, looked away, and just hoped the problem would go away. It is

not just going to go away.

People who are raised to believe that killing Americans and our

allies and killing freedom and hating freedom is the answer to get to

Allah is not just going to go away. And so we can look up and we can

walk out, we can walk out of Iraq, just like we did in Lebanon, just

like we did in Vietnam, just like we did in Somalia, and we will leave

chaos in our wake.

Now, if dealing with al Qaeda is not enough of a reason to finish the

job that we have in Iraq, what about the issue of the Iranians? The

Iranians are trying to spew their hate all over the Middle East and

elsewhere. You see Iranians who are bringing new devices into Baghdad

to kill Americans and our allies. It is Iranians who are bringing funds

and doing training to stir up sectarian violence in Baghdad. Are we

just going to look the other way again?

I say to my colleagues, and I have said this before, every generation

of Americans has had their obligation. Every generation of Americans

has had their obligation to stand up and to protect our country, not

for just today but for tomorrow and for the next generation.

After looking away for 20 years during the 1980s and 1990s, what was

America to do after 3,000 of our citizens died on 9/11? Just all hope

it goes away, hope they do not care anymore?

I say to my colleagues that we have a solemn obligation to the

American people to finish the job that we started. And while Iraq may

not have started out as the central front in our war with al Qaeda, it

may not have started out with a fight against the Iranians, all of us

in this Chamber today know, all of us know that this is the central

front in our war with al Qaeda, and this is the battleground with Iran.

You all know it. You know it as well as I do.

And the question is, are we going to stand up and fulfill our

obligation to the American people? Are we going to fulfill our

obligation to the Iraqis who are struggling to create a government of

the people, by the people and for the people?

I think they are on clear notice that they have got a job to do on

their own, but if we step out today, we are ensuring that they will

fail. We are ensuring that we will leave chaos in our wake. We will

embolden our enemies, and it is our kids and their kids who will pay a

very, very steep price.

This is not the right thing to do, in my opinion. I respect those who

have opinions that are otherwise, but as I stand here as a Member of

Congress, we need to think seriously about what we are doing, think

seriously about the message that we are sending to our enemies around

the world and ask ourselves, is this what our forefathers would have

done? Is this the message that we want to send to the world? I would

suggest to all of you it is not. We should vote ``no.''