Mr. Speaker, I am compelled to come to the floor this

evening to talk about the war in Iraq one more time. I know that this

is the focus of this Congress, whether we want it to be or not. No

matter what we do or what we try to do, we are met head-on with the

fact of the matter that Iraq stands before us as an issue, as something

that must be solved.

The fact of the matter is we have now over 3,600 soldiers who have

been killed in Iraq. Over 27,000 soldiers have been seriously injured;

wounded. I am talking about the kinds of injuries such as brain

injuries, loss of limbs, eyes gouged out, the kind of injuries that

certainly will interfere with these soldiers' ability to have a good

quality of life, to be able to be employed, to

pursue the kinds of careers that many of them perhaps dreamed of

because, unfortunately, they have found themselves in this war in Iraq.

Many of these soldiers are very patriotic. When their President told

them that we were in danger, that we were at risk, that somehow Saddam

Hussein was responsible for weapons of mass destruction and 9/11, they

eagerly and gladly signed up to go to war to defend their country, only

to learn that there were no weapons of mass destruction.

We say this over and over again. But the American people and we all

must be reminded that many folks supported the President. Many of the

Members of Congress supported the President because they believed the

President. They believed him when he said that he had to wage this war

on terrorism because we were at risk and Saddam Hussein was responsible

for 9/11.

So here we are. No weapons of mass destruction. We have destabilized

Iraq. There is a civil war that is going on. Many of us were in denial

about the civil war even though we watched it developing. We watched

the Sunnis and the Shias and the Kurds begin to turn on each other and

to fight each other. We watched the militias grow. We watched as this

country has simply been torn apart.

Mr. Speaker and Members, we are now at a point in time where the

American people are sick and tired of this war. The polls show it. They

are not happy, certainly, with the President of the United States. But

they are even less happy with the Congress of the United States.

I am a Democrat. The people of my party thought they voted for us to

come here in November and end this war. While many of us would like

very much to end the war, we still have some Members who are not so

sure. They don't quite have the courage yet. They don't want to be

thought of as unpatriotic. They don't want to be thought of as pulling

the rug out from under the soldiers. But the American people will not

tolerate this war much longer. They have said so in so many ways.

I am just hopeful, I am just hopeful that we will gather the courage

that is needed and step up to the plate and let this President know

there will be no more dollars, no more dollars appropriated by this

Congress to continue this war in Iraq.

Now, I know a lot of people, and a lot of Members of this House don't

want to go there yet. They are trying to say everything that they can

possibly say in so many ways to let the President know that we should

get out, that there should be a time certain. But they are not yet

ready to talk about defunding this war.

Well, I stand here proudly this evening as one person, one Member of

Congress, elected by the people of the 35th Congressional District. I

am prepared to defund this war. I do not think we should spend another

dime on this war that has destabilized Iraq. We have those who talk

about the fact that, and the President of the United States has said,

we must stay there until we train the soldiers in Iraq to provide the

security for Iraq. That is laughable. Not only have we misled the

people about the numbers that we were training in Iraq, the soldiers,

many of whom that we have trained, have turned on our soldiers, have

undermined them at the point of contact and confrontation. So I simply

say this evening, we have to get out of this war.