Madam Speaker, the supplemental appropriations bill to

continue our military operations in Iraq and in Afghanistan will soon

return to the House for another vote. I voted against it in the first

place, and I am going to vote against it again. I cannot support it

because it will prolong our military involvement in Iraq and it will

increase our military buildup in Afghanistan.

I would gladly vote to fund the safe withdrawal of our troops and

contractors out of Iraq. But the supplemental gives me a feeling of

deja vu. Haven't we been there before, voting to include billions of

dollars for the occupation of Iraq?

Congress has voted to increase funding for Iraq many times, even

though the American people want the occupation to end, and it seems the

Iraqi people want us out of their country as well.

The supplemental also calls for sending more troops to a foreign

land, this time Afghanistan, with no exit strategy. Talk about

repeating past mistakes. Talk about deja vu. Afghanistan feels exactly

the same as Iraq did to me.

President Obama has said that a campaign against extremism will not

succeed with bullets and bombs alone. He is absolutely correct about

that. But the money in the supplemental is overwhelmingly devoted to

military operations. It includes very little for the economic

development, humanitarian aid, and diplomatic efforts that we really

need to stop extremists in Afghanistan and in Pakistan.

The ratio is 90-10, 90 percent to the Department of Defense, 10

percent to the smart alternatives. I believe the supplemental also

violates the spirit of President Obama's historic speech in Cairo where

he offered the Muslim world the hand of friendship. In that speech he

said that we must leave Iraq to the Iraqis. But the supplemental will

only delay the return of sovereignty to the Iraqi people.

And then there is the little matter of the recession, Madam Speaker.

When the American people are feeling such great pain and need so much

help right here at home, we can't afford to squander another $100

billion on foreign military adventures that will not make our country

safe.

Instead of approving the supplemental bill, the House should be

urging the administration to fundamentally change our mission in Iraq,

and our mission in Afghanistan. We can do this in several ways.

First, we should support the bill offered by Jim McGovern of

Massachusetts, which calls upon the administration to submit an exit

strategy for Afghanistan.

Second, I urge my colleagues to consider the plan that I have offered

in House Resolution 363. It's called the Smart Security Platform For

the 21st Century. Smart Security attacks the root causes of violence by

fighting poverty and giving people hope for a better future. It

controls the spread of nuclear and conventional weapons of mass

destruction, and it strengthens our national security by reducing our

dependence on foreign oil.

And finally, we should insist that at least 80 percent of all future

funding for Afghanistan be devoted to the Smart Security I just

described. Right now, the supplemental, as I told you, devotes more

than 90 percent of its dollars to purely military efforts, efforts that

are getting us nowhere.

Madam Speaker, we must not repeat the mistakes of the past. We've got

to stop writing more blank checks for open-ended occupations. This is

what the American people want, and Congress must listen.