Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq is a monster storm. It is a

social tsunami battering the positive components of our potentially

great society. The billions of dollars being poured into this war could

solve dozens of major catastrophic problems that are facing our Nation.

Recently, a new report was released, authored partially by our own

Science Committee, which said that we have a dangerously inadequate

education system. When I came to Congress in 1983, Ronald Reagan was

saying the same thing. He had a commission which came out with a report

that said, our Nation is at risk. We still have not done anything of

great substance to deal with the problems that were highlighted. We

still have not appropriated the money to build laboratories in public

schools, junior high schools and high schools. We still don't have

adequate libraries. We still don't have the money which pays salaries

which would produce the science teachers that are necessary.

We have a crisis in health care. Forty million people are not covered

at all and there are many others who are inadequately covered. We have

falling standards of living with gross inequities. The assets that

reflect wealth among black Americans total less than $20,000 per

family. $120,000 per family for white Americans. Both standards are

falling, not climbing.

I am a member of the Out of Iraq Caucus. I welcome the opportunity

tomorrow to begin a debate which would at least allow us to discuss in

an open forum the problems we are facing. Any discussion is important

because this is such an important problem. We have employment problems

that are mushrooming, we have all kinds of things that should be

discussed, and now is the time for all Americans to come forward and

make their contribution toward a solution known.

Common sense is welcome. It might shed a lot of light on some of the

problems and offer some real solutions. Scientific expertise is

welcomed. Mother wit. We need the fresh visions of the young and we

need the seasoned wisdom of the elders. Everything we can do is needed

in order to solve these problems. Let every question be set forth. Let

every possible solution be stated. We Americans are faced with a

problem which is far more complex than the inner workings of a nuclear

bomb, I assure you. The present explorations of the vast universe by

astrophysicists are not as challenging as the need for a meaningful

solution to this war blunder in Iraq.

There are many possible questions and solutions that I would urge

should be placed on the agenda for discussion. However, I want to focus

on just two of them tonight. One is the distribution of oil revenues.

The other is the arrangements for the sharing of power among the

majority Shiites and the minorities, mainly the Sunnis and the Kurds.

Oil revenues. We need a transparent, open, full discussion of what

are the arrangements that have been proposed, or are being proposed, or

are already in place for the distribution of the oil revenues from the

oil in the ground in Iraq. Oil is their greatest resource. They have

one of the greatest resources in the world. They are number three or

number four among the nations producing oil. Yet there is very little

discussion about what we are doing. To what degree is Halliburton going

to control the revenues as their payment for the reconstruction that

they have done of some of the oil wells? To what degree are the oil

companies going to control revenue because of their arrangements for

the pipelines and the shipping and the retail outlets in various

countries? What is going to happen to the oil? These are questions that

are being asked by the people of Iraq, I assure you. These are

questions that are stumbling blocks, I assure you, in the completion of

a government. Everybody in every section of the country wants to know

how the oil revenues are going to be distributed. If I live in a

province where there is no oil, will my area benefit? These things need

to be dealt with.

Sharing power relates closely to this. We need to let them know they

all share power. Regardless of whether they are Sunnis or Kurds or some

other minority, the majority Shiites need to share power in some way.

We have a problem with sharing power across the world. There are many

nations now struggling with this problem, so we should bring to bear

all of our possible solutions and try to help resolve the problems in

Iraq. We need the most creative approaches possible for power sharing

which gives all Iraqis a stake in their new democracy. Ending the war

in Iraq, ending the massive death and injuries, ending the waste of

billions of dollars must be our number one agenda. These problems must

be solved. We must pass and implement the Murtha resolution now. We

must bring the troops home now.