Mr. Speaker, a remarkable document showed up in our

mailboxes this afternoon. It is called a ``Confidential Messaging

Memo'' for the floor debate on Iraq and the global war on terror.

This is apparently a memo that Republican leadership provided to

Members on their side so they would know how to go about rubber-

stamping the President's every thought and deed and could do their best

to make sure that we don't have the kind of debate that the American

people deserve.

The American people deserve to have us talk about what is really

going on in Iraq and how it does or does not make us safer. They

deserve to have mistakes acknowledged and paths forward discussed

honestly and frankly, admitting problems and working together to make

things better.

They deserve a Congress that is more interested in their security

than in scoring points for the November election.

According to the Republican leadership's tactical memo, this is

precisely what the American people will not get. Instead, there will be

confusion and intentional misdirection. There will be ad hominen

attacks, and that means attacks on individuals, and attempts to make

Saddam Hussein and 9/11 more or less the same thing, attempts to call

Democrats' legitimate questions about the administration's rationale

for war and conduct of the war into what, and I quote, ``policies to

concede defeat on the battlefield.''

The memo is filled with advice on how to deflect, confuse, conflate

and con. I would like to enter that memo into the Record so everyone

will be able to read it and not be confused when they hear the debate

begin tomorrow. They will know what the script is that the other side

is following.

Mr. Speaker, let me read some portions now because I think we all

have a right to know what Republicans are advising their Members to say

and think.

``During this debate, our Republican Conference should be focused on

delivering these key points:

``The Importance of Our Actions. It is imperative during this debate

that we reexamine the conditions that required the United States to

take military action in Afghanistan and Iraq in the aftermath of the

attacks of September 11, 2001.''

In other words, the Republicans are being told to continue the big

lie that Iraq was behind 9/11 or had something to gain from 9/11, and

it is all tied together in one neat package.

Secondly, the Republican leadership wants to make the point that they

are smart and tough enough because they don't look back, they don't

analyze, they don't admit errors, and they don't learn.

Now if they were a baseball pitcher who was this bad, Rumsfeld would

have been jerked five innings ago. But, of course, our President ran

the Rangers and gave Chicago Sammy Sosa, so we know his judgment in

baseball.

Now to do anything else, according to their memo, is to be ``prone to

waiver endlessly'' or ``to abandon our efforts'' against terrorism. It

is as if the Republicans believe there is only one kind of effort

against terrorism that has validity, and that any kind of thoughtful

consideration of alternatives is a sign of cowardice and weakness.

``Republicans believe,'' the memo says, ``victory in Iraq will be an

important blow for terrorism.'' Yes, of course, it would be. But what

is victory in Iraq and how do we get off the path we are on presently

and onto that victory path?

We are forbidden to talk about those questions. It would be wrong for

435 fairly well-educated, loyal Americans, who have been sent here by

their districts to help govern this country, to start raising questions

about what we ought to do.

There will be one proposal with no amendments; that is it. It would

be ``weak'' and ``wavering'' and a sign of ``abandoning our efforts''

if we attempt to make those efforts more rational and successful and

relate them to the goal of making Americans safer.

We are in trouble in Iraq. We don't have a plan except to keep

plowing ahead with the same old policy: a strategy that is getting

Americans and Iraqis killed and driving Iraqis to despair and

helplessness. We don't have a Congress that can step up and take

responsibility and try to make the administration listen to reason.

The President's policy is to put the control of this in the hands of

the Iraqis. When they stand up, we will stand down. Who is going to

tell the Iraqis when to stand up? The clerics, of course. The Shiia and

Sunni clerics will decide when they stand up. What if they don't tell

them to stand up? We are there until it ends.

This is a charade. We will go through it tomorrow, but it will not

shed any light on where we ought to be going as Americans.

And we don't have a Congress that can step up and take responsibility

and try to make the administration listen to reason.

So the Republican leadership scheduled public relations time in the

House in an effort to stop the Republican free fall in the polls.

Republican leaders cannot tell the American people what they intend

to do except more of the same.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better. I call on the Republicans to abandon

the cynical strategy put forth by their leaders and think for

themselves.