Madam Speaker, these attacks against the gentlewoman

from California (Leader Pelosi) and Senator Durbin are nothing more

than an attempt by the congressional Republicans to divert attention

away from the war in Iraq to comments made by two of our Democratic

colleagues.

Republicans know that the war in Iraq is not going well right now.

They have an administration that is clearly not leveling with the

American people. Earlier this month, Vice President Cheney told a

national audience that the insurgency in Iraq was in its last throes.

Well, we all know that is not the case.

I think Washington columnist Richard Cohen got it right this morning

when he wrote that these partisan attacks are the latest in a series of

attacks by Washington Republicans to silence the opposing views. Cohen

wrote,

Democrats will not be silenced.