Mr. Speaker, in a few short days the Congress of the

United States will have an opportunity to end the war in Iraq if it so

pleases, or we will vote to approve the supplemental and give the

President of the United States the money that he is asking for to

continue the war possibly through the end of his term.

In the next 5 minutes, I would like to discuss the implications of

Congress's action and a plan that would enable us to take a new

direction in Iraq, to bring our troops home, to stabilize Iraq, to

close our bases, to end the occupation, and to end the war.

Last week, I submitted to this Congress such a plan embodied in H.R.

1234. H.R. 1234 is a plan to end the war, and it contains a number of

elements which were arrived at with the help of people who have long

experience at the U.N. in peacekeeping missions and security missions,

experts in international relations, and military experts.

Two days ago, the administration said that it has no plan B for Iraq.

As a matter of fact, a senior general said, ``Plan B is plan A,'' which

means that the administration is committed to a course of action which

would keep our troops in Iraq through the end of its term. That is

simply not acceptable.

In November, the American people voted for a new direction. In

November, the American people changed the leadership of the Congress,

voted to turn both the House and the Senate from Republican control to

Democratic control, and I submit the issue was the war.

All across this country there is a great concern about the rising

number of casualties; about that even when our troops serve and they

come home after being injured, they are not being cared for; about the

costs of the war, how we are seeing our budgets for housing and health

care, for education, for seniors services, and, indeed, for veterans

affairs reduced.

America is losing not only the lives of our soldiers, not only are we

going into a great financial debt borrowing money from Beijing to fight

a war in Baghdad, but we are losing our moral position in the world,

continuing to prosecute a war that is simply based on lies. Let's face

it, every assertion made that took us into Iraq has been ripped away as

being a lie.

So what are we to do? H.R. 1234 does the following: It is predicated

on Congress taking action to end the war, stop the funding. At that

point, the administration will go to the world community and say,

``Look, the money is no longer here for the war. We are going to close

our bases, we are going to end the occupation, we are going to bring

our troops home.'' Only by asserting that we will end the occupation

will we be in a position to be able to get help from the world

community, which really doesn't want anything to do with this war

absent the United States taking a new direction.

The insurgency is fueled by the occupation. It is well understood. So

we end the occupation. But then that is not enough. We need the

international community to help us build a peacekeeping and security

force that would move in as our troops move out.

The elements of the plan embodied in H.R. 1234 are the following: Not

only do we end the occupation and bring our troops home and get the

international community involved, but we also create the context for a

program of reconciliation between the Shiites, the Sunnis, and the

Kurds. Right now there is no movement towards reconciliation, because

with the U.S. occupying, the Shiites don't have any incentive at all to

do that. We need to move out so that we can set in place a program of

reconciliation and a program of honest reconstruction. No more theft

from the American taxpayers or the Iraqi people by these contractors

whose performance has been absolutely abominable, who have stolen

billions of dollars. Give the Iraqi people a chance to have their own

reconstruction program, with the jobs going to the people of Iraq so

they can feed their families. In an economy with 50 percent of the

people unemployed, we need to take a new approach and end the

reconstruction program as it exists and start a new one.

In future presentations to this Congress, I intend to lay out the

rest of H.R. 1234, which is the plan to end the war, bring our troops

home, stabilize Iraq, and take a new chapter in America's relationship

with the world.