Mr. Speaker, I wanted to follow up on the debate which

we have just temporarily postponed until tomorrow morning on the

supplemental appropriations bill for the Iraq war, and I wanted to

start off by reiterating the statement made by Mr. Shadegg of Arizona

in which he said he knew of no point in history where a country at war

declared an end date for when they would be getting out of that war,

the point being that most countries fight wars until the war is

finished, based on the war situation, and not based on a calendar and

an arbitrary date at that.

I think that is very important as we have this vote tomorrow because

we are, in fact, hurting our troops if we make the announcement right

now to the enemy that by March of 2008 we will be leaving. We know

particularly in the Middle East and in Iraq that in cities such as

Tikrit and Fallujah, as we have been there the last 3 or 4 years, that

whenever the enemy wants to, it can lay low and wait till our troop

situation or troop level shifts, and then they come out of the

woodwork. I think if we do announce that we are going to be gone in

March 2008, no matter what happens on the field of battle, then that

enemy is going to use that same tactic to just wait until the Americans

are out of town.

If we do leave that country before the job is done, then what

happens, Mr. Speaker, is it could cause chaos. A civil war could erupt,

and a lot of people say, well, I do not care if a civil war erupts. But

how do you know it is going to stay in the boundaries of Iraq? Why

would not the Shiites in Iran, for example, get involved in it? We

already know they are getting involved in supplying the Shiites in Iraq

with things. We do not know what will happen in that volatile area.

What happens to our ally Israel? We know that the Arab countries want

to wipe Israel off the map. Are we doing Israel any favors if we

abruptly withdraw and arbitrarily withdraw from Iraq?

And what happens to the oil reserves? I know it is interesting,

everybody likes to say no war for oil, but the reality is you cannot

fight a war without oil, and you cannot run our economy without oil,

and petrodollars can stir up a lot of trouble around the globe. Just

ask Hugo Chavez in Venezuela what he has done with his petrodollars,

street money, and here we would be turning over the second or third

largest oil reserves in the world over to a terrorist anti-American

state.

Think about this for a minute in that context. America drilling and

tapping into all the reserves that we have, we control 3 percent of the

world's oil reserves. We use 25 percent. We import 60 percent. If you

wanted to declare war on America, you would look at our oil supply, as

countries have always looked at the energy or food supply of any

country that they have planned to invade.

I want to say this. I represent Fort Stewart. This week the 3rd

Infantry Division starts on its third deployment to Iraq. General

Lynch, the commanding general, just left on Tuesday. But back in

Hinesville, Georgia, there are 318 memorial trees that have been

planted in memory of 3rd Infantry soldiers who have lost their life in

Iraq. I have gone to some of the ceremonies. It is a sad thing, but

even as you leave the field, the memorial field, soldiers say, we want

to complete this job.

I have visited soldiers in the hospitals in Baghdad and at Walter

Reed and in Ramstein, Germany, in Landstuhl, and they all say they want

to go back and finish the job. But I do not want to tell you that I can

speak for the troops because there is thousands of them, and I always

resent when people come here and say this is what the troops want,

because the troops are just like the rest of America, we want a lot of

things, and America is divided on this.

But I want to say to the Democrats, I think that you have done the

right thing. This war has needed more oversight. I believe we as

Republicans were remiss in not having more oversight. I think putting

up goals in the form of what we would like the Iraqi Government to do,

I think that that is fitting and proper, but I think to have hard and

fast deadlines is unreasonable.

We, in this over 200-year constitutional government, cannot do things

that we should do. Last year, for example, we were not able to pass a

budget. We did not pass all of our appropriation bills. The important

thing is the Republican Party, certainly as the majority party, we are

guilty, but the point is we could not even do that in our own

government. How do we expect the Iraqis to do it by an arbitrary date

set?

So I recommend that we recommit this bill, hammer out some of the

differences, and then bring it back to the floor in a different and

improved product.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the time.