Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for

yielding.

For all that we disagree on here today, we agree on one thing: We all

want a stable, independent Iraq. What I can't understand is how anyone

can still believe that our continued, open-ended military intervention

there will lead to a stable nation. In fact, it's doing the opposite.

The Iraqi Parliament and ministries are in unprecedented disarray.

The President's own report to Congress will say that we haven't met any

of our political benchmarks there, and an estimated 13,000 Iraqis are

dead since the escalation began.

The fact is, as someone much wiser than I said, the Iraqis today are

paying wholesale rather than retail for their political decisions. So

long as we are the military bodyguard for every major Iraqi political

group, so long as we are subsidizing the political decisions of Iraqi

political leaders, they will never make the difficult political

concessions necessary to create a stable society there.

I support this bill, Mr. Speaker, because not another American

soldier should die for a strategy that is unfathomably making Iraq less

safe and less stable.