Mr. Speaker, as your Congressman, I'd like to share with

you the difficult reality our Nation faces in the religious civil war

in Iraq. The truth is things are bad in Iraq and getting worse--with no

end in sight.

After 4 years of conflict, with more than 3,400 courageous American

soldiers dead--and counting--with more than 650,000 civilians killed,

and after spending billions and billions of our hard-earned tax dollars

on private no-bid contractors, the Iraqi government is still not

standing up to help themselves.

I was shocked to learn that 1/3 of the elected Iraqi government

does not even live in Iraq--they live in London, England--even as our

own children are being killed in their centuries-old religious civil

war. And their parliament, well, in the middle of a war--they're about

to take a 2-month vacation--even as our children continue to make the

ultimate sacrifice.

Unfortunately, today's vote cannot, and will not, end this war,

because we do not have enough democratic votes to overcome the

president's veto. And make no mistake--Iraq is President Bush's war--

and he is the only one, today, who can stop it.

The current commander of our forces in Iraq told Congress the civil

war in Iraq cannot be won militarily--it can only end with a political

solution, not a military one.

I have been working hard to find a way home for our troops, and I

have supported every effort to improve the safety and readiness of our

soldiers, to guarantee they receive expert medical care when they come

home, to increase their pay, and to deploy our forces away from Iraq--

and back after al Qaeda. But, the President vetoed, or threatened to

veto, all of our attempts to support our troops. In my opinion, the

President is unable to see and hear the realities on the ground in

Iraq. Plainly put, Congress cannot follow a President with poor

judgment--period. Enough is enough.

I have been listening to many Wisconsin veterans at the American

Legion, the veterans of foreign wars, and to parents and grandparents

of fallen soldiers. Military veterans from Appleton to Green Bay, from

Ashwaubenon to Pulaski, and from Waupaca, Clintonville, Shawano and

Marinette have shared their feelings with me.

Please, just for a moment, listen to their heartfelt thoughts:

Today, I voted to support our troops by protecting them from a

President who cannot understand reality. I support our troops, but not

this failed policy.

Finally, allow me to share with you the pain of a grandmother whose

grandson perished in Iraq: ``Oh, Steve. It is so hard to talk about. He

was such a bright young man. He wanted a college education and was

going to use the money he was being paid to go to school.

Where is this war getting us? We got Saddam. Let's bring our military

home.

I have another grandson ready to go over to Iraq. Let the higher-ups

send their kids to Iraq. I don't want to see it happen to anyone else.

Enough is enough.''

And remember this: The vote today was not about ending the Iraqi

civil war. it was about supporting our troops by protecting them from a

President who cannot understand reality. Congress cannot continue to

give a loaded gun to a President with poor judgment. I will always

support our troops, but not this failed policy. I believe there is a

better way to do things in America. By working together, we will find

it as we build a better and more secure nation for all of us.

Thank you for listening, and God Bless America.