Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as

I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague on the other side of the

aisle, because in many ways he has really made the case for us. The

argument on his side has been that we can't just use our military, the

tools that they bring us, the great treasure that we have in them. We

cannot solely look to them. And I think our great consternation over

this war has been that we have not used our political, our economic and

our diplomatic tools to represent the great Nation that we are.

I have to tell my colleague that I was really saddened when the

veterans of my community asked me, and I have asked our generals and I

have asked the President, are we in fact a military at war and not a

Nation at war? The generals told me that we are a military at war. I

think the President disagreed with that. But the reality is that we

have not brought our Nation to this effort in the way that I think is

appropriate to have done. And so when we talk about the strategic risks

that are there, when we talk about the fact that we need to understand

those risks, we are doing it in a context that we know that when we

went to this war, we didn't properly assess those risks.

We failed to do that, and we can't fail to do that any longer.

So what we bring to the table and what we bring to this discussion

and this debate, and I think it has been a good debate, Mr. Speaker, is

I think it is important, as a lot of my colleagues have said on both

sides of the aisle, that we represent the people of our community.

I often go into schools and talk to students about what

representation means and tell them that it would be really impossible

to take their entire class to Washington and have everybody there to

speak on the floor of the House. Well, we are honored, and I know that

my colleague is too, to be in the House, to be able to make those

presentations, and we do it for people who actually sometimes disagree

with us as well as agree with us. But it is important that we do that.

I think what we bring to this debate is to try and understand what

these strategic risks are today. You made my case, and I appreciate

that, because there are many conflicts, and we need to understand them.

That is why only focusing on a troop escalation, which isn't 20,000

troops, Mr. Speaker, we know there are probably another 15,000 in

support troops, and those 15,000 troops, which are there for support of

combat troops, sometimes get in the way. We know that, and we know we

have had many deaths from our support troops as well. So we need to

think about this as a much larger troop escalation.

But the reality is we need to utilize all of our other tools, and we

want to put the pressure on our country, on this administration, on the

Iraqi people and its government and all of our friends around the world

to help us and step up to the plate; not to just rely on our military,

not to just rely on our treasure. We believe that is essential to make

the statement.

So I want to close, Mr. Speaker, by saying that this has been a good

debate. It will continue. It will continue into tomorrow. Then Members

will have an opportunity to vote and to let their constituents know how

and why they chose to do that.