Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to address

you and of course all the Members here on this floor of the United

States Congress. I would point out here in the beginning that it is

about 8:15 here this evening, and the President will be giving his

major address on Iraq at about 9:01 and so I intend to be asking for an

adjournment just right before 9:00 so there is an opportunity to do

that transition and that the President does have an opportunity to use

this channel to speak to the American people.

To begin this presentation this evening, and we listened to the

members on the other side of the aisle talk about supporting the 100-

hour agenda, Mr. Speaker, I point out that this 100-hour agenda was a

number just kind of picked out of the air or off the wall and it turned

into a promise. And inside of that promise of 100 hours and to

accomplish these five or six things within 100 hours are a whole series

of other promises, and it appears as though the most important promise

of all is we are going to do all this in 100 hours. The 100-hour

promise. And not the promise for bipartisanship and not the promise for

the most open Congress in history, and probably not the promise for the

most ethical Congress in history. The jury is still out on that, Mr.

Speaker, but this thing that preempts all, that trumps all is this idea

of 100 hours.

Well, 100 hours to the American people might mean at midnight on

December 31 when the ball dropped and hit the bottom in Times Square,

the clock might start to tick on the 100 hours here in 2007, the new

110th Congress. But I don't take that position necessarily, Mr.

Speaker. I take the position that when we gaveled in and went to work

here, if you want to count 100 hours, that is fine; if you want to make

a promise to get something done in 100 hours, that is also fine. But

that 100 hours didn't start for the first week. It didn't start for the

first week because we were voting on things other than the six things

on the agenda to be accomplished in the 100 hours.

And so then the promise that it was going to be bipartisan and an

open process, we found out, I guess after Congress began, this 110th

Congress, that this open process couldn't be opened up until the 100

hours were over, or otherwise they couldn't get everything accomplished

in the first 100 hours. So bipartisanship went out the window a victim

of the 100-hour promise, and so did the open kind of a system. The

bills didn't go through subcommittee. They didn't go through committee.

They didn't go through rules. No amendments are allowed. And yet that

was all decided before the 100-hour clock began.

So we set up a clock, a legitimate clock, one that actually keeps the

time here that Congress is in session. From when we gaveled in this

110th Congress, we gavel in the morning, open with a prayer and the

pledge, and we gavel out in the evening. That clock has got a tick on

that. We are paying people here to work around this Capitol the whole

time the 100 hours is moving.

So I set up this clock so the American people can keep track of what

the hours are, and I point out this: When we started this morning, we

were at 31 hours that ticked away since. And these are just business

hours. It is not a stretch; it is not 24 hours a day. It is the hours

that this floor is in operation. In fact, yesterday, it was scheduled

to be at 10:00, so a lot of people made their plans to be here at

10:00. It didn't work on Monday because of the football game. And I

will just reserve my opinion of that tonight, Mr. Speaker. But the

10:00 time to start got moved back to 10:30, got moved back to noon and

then got moved back to first votes at 5:30 yesterday afternoon. So some

of that is not taken into account here, but as of about now, this 100

hours has clicked up to 42 hours, Mr. Speaker, have ticked away. And

there have been a couple of things that have been passed, and some will

claim that to be an accomplishment. And I don't intend to take up that

issue either tonight, Mr. Speaker. But I would point out to the

American people that we are at 42 hours and counting.

If you can't count time, you also can't count dollars or people. And

it is important to understand the cost to the United States of America

and the taxpayers that fund it. And we will be doing some of these

tallies after hours tonight to come back with some better numbers

tomorrow, and I will bring this chart then to the floor every day until

the 100 hours ticks over, and we can make this 100-hour promise

something that goes into the dust bin of history.

But this 100-hour promise has trumped the other promises. It has been

more important than an open system of government. It has been more

important than allowing anyone to offer a single amendment to any bill

that has come forward here, and each one of those bills are going to

change the destiny of America. Maybe a little bit, maybe a lot. But

each one will change the destiny of America some. And the people I feel

sorry for, all of those new freshmen Democrats, the ones that were

elected to office having promised that they were going to represent

their constituents here, they would have a voice, they would be

effective. They bring with them the vitality of America. They bring the

new ideas into this Congress, the fresh blood. The best responsiveness

to constituents that you ever will see on average comes with the

freshmen. We are glad when they come here every new Congress because it

adds new vitality.

But that large crop of Democrat freshmen and that smaller crop of

Republican freshmen I think have gotten their eyes opened up a little

bit. I think they believed they would come here and they would be able

to come to

a subcommittee and do a markup on a bill and offer an amendment to

improve the bill and see it go over to full committee, offer an

amendment, improve the bill and bring it to the floor, where amendments

would be offered and the bill would be improved and perhaps perfected

and passed out of this Chamber, on over the Senate, where we would have

negotiations working with them and they would have done the same thing.

The sad news for those freshmen is that they don't have a voice in

this process. Not a single freshman had an opportunity to offer

amendment to engage in debate in a subcommittee, to engage in debate in

a committee; didn't have an opportunity to go before the Rules

Committee and make their argument as to why their amendments should be

made in order. None of that was allowed to the freshmen. And, in fact,

the small little group of people that put together this policy didn't

consider the wisdom of Congress; they considered the wisdom of the

people within that room, and I guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, that didn't

include the freshmen, either the Democrats or the Republicans, who now

have to reassess what kind of a system they thought they had gotten

elected to.

And I hope this 100 hours ticks away, and I hope it can be put away

into the dust bin of history, and I hope those other promises can be

rejuvenated and brought back to life, those promises about having an

open system, a system that is bipartisan and a system that allows for

amendments so that we can improve the legislation that comes.

We are at 42 hours, Mr. Speaker, and the clock will start again.

Actually, it will shut off when we adjourn here about 9:00 and it will

take up again tomorrow morning when we gavel back in.

But, Mr. Speaker, I come here to talk about a big subject. It is a

subject that has been consuming the thoughts and the prayers of the

American people since September 11, 2001, and that subject is a subject

the President will take up here in a little more than 35 minutes. It is

the subject of this global war on terror, and primarily the

battleground, the main battleground, which is Iraq, in this global war

on terror.

I have certainly been involved in this since the beginning of the

operations in Iraq. I have been over there four times. I have traveled

into Afghanistan as well. Each time I go over there, I always stop at

Landstuhl in Germany and visit our wounded troops there. And the last

time I was over was over Thanksgiving, just a little over a month ago,

when I ate Thanksgiving dinner with wounded troops in Landstuhl at the

hospital in Germany, and that was the most meaningful Thanksgiving I

have ever had in my life. I don't expect to ever top that for a moving

Thanksgiving where one can really be in awe of true courage, true

patriotism and true sacrifice.

And I believe we are going to hear a speech from the President in a

few minutes from now that is going to be, I think the tone of it could

have been written by those people that have sacrificed the most, our

soldiers and Marines and airmen that have perhaps given a limb, perhaps

been wounded and crippled for life. I have not yet met a wounded

soldier who said to me, ``This is a lost cause.'' They believe in the

cause. They want to get back to the fight. They want to get back to the

people they feel responsible for, and they want to complete the

mission.

The wounded troops will stand with the President in the speech he is

about to give and the families of those who have given the ultimate

sacrifice, the Gold Star families, the families that have traveled

across America and been here in Washington, D.C., a number of times and

were in my office a week before I went over to Iraq. Some of those Gold

Star families, those that have lost a son or a daughter over in Iraq or

Afghanistan, some of them have also traveled over to the Middle East,

also traveled into Iraq and got to visit the Iraqi people. And one of

the fathers who lost his son killed over there in Iraq said to me: ``We

cannot pull out of there. It is different now. We are committed to that

cause. Lives have been lost. The soil in Iraq is now sanctified with

American blood. It is not so simple that we could just walk away. We

cannot. We must stay. We must prevail. We made the commitment to go

there; we are invested in it; we must prevail.''

As I looked him in the eye, I know what kind of pain he has been

through, that soaked in with me, Mr. Speaker. And so I traveled over

there in the aftermath of their trip, and as I went alone this time, I

didn't go with a congressional delegation, I just went alone, and I had

an opportunity to sit down with General Abizaid and close the door and

talk and ask questions and probe a line of reasoning and then take on

another line of reasoning. I had the opportunity to do the same thing

with General Casey, although staff was in the room for that one. I also

sat down with General Corelli and did the same thing. I had two

meetings with Ambassador Khalilzad. And then each time I walked into a

mess hall, or I would just holler out, ``Is anybody here from Iowa?''

And invariably there would be Iowans there. And there is an instant

connection between you and someone from your State. You know where they

are from. You know what they believe in. You have an understanding

about their background and where they come from. You know what sports

teams they support, or at least you can find out quickly, and we have

those little arguments, Mr. Speaker. But when I index the things that I

hear from our top officers that are in the field and what I hear from

the people on the ground, and as I talk to people through all ranks and

travel across Iraq and also Afghanistan in this last trip, put back

together a kind of strategy and come to a conclusion as to where we

need to go and what we need to do.

And let's look at this thing, Mr. Speaker, from two broad

perspectives. One of them is the idea that I am hearing over here on

this side of the aisle, and this is not a new idea from the people on

that side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker; they slipped language into the

Department of Defense appropriations bill that would have by now

prohibited all operations in Iraq. And that was Mr. Murtha's language

that went in there that prohibited any basing rights negotiations in

Iraq, which would have meant, had that language prevailed that when our

agreement on any of our bases in Iraq had expired, we couldn't

negotiate a new one. So, over time, we would have had to give up base

after base after base until we had to pull our troops completely out of

Iraq.

That is not a lot different than the amendment that came out of an

appropriations bill on this floor, Mr. Speaker, back in 1975 when a

large Democrat majority took over and decided that they would take us

out of the operations in Vietnam, and they introduced legislation

successfully that forbid a single dollar from being used to support the

South Vietnamese military. Not a dollar that can go for a bullet, for

food, for a helmet, for a pair of khaki uniforms, no air cover, and

nothing could go on offshore in South Vietnam either. So they shut down

their operations in South Vietnam. And the South Vietnamese had

defended their own country for 3 years, but when their resources dried

up, their military collapsed.

Some of those things are being maneuvered right now, and I can hear

this come out of the debate on the other side of the aisle.

But here are the scenarios: One scenario is listen to the people over

here, Mr. Speaker, who would say, well, let's unfund this operation.

Let's bring our troops home now. Let's get out of there because it is

sectarian strife and you can't resolve a civil war and it is just

brother fighting against brother and why do we want to get involved in

a family feud? All of that that substitutes for rationale.

But what they are really looking at is if they get their way, the

reality in Iraq is different than their perception, I believe, and I

would like to have them pay a little more attention, maybe go over

there with a real intention to learn.

But a year ago in Iraq there was violence over most of the entire

country scattered around. And the argument I heard from this side of

the aisle over here was, well, let's get out of there right now, get

the Americans out because, after all, they are the targets and Iraqis

just want to have their own country. They object to Americans walking

on their soil. So if we would leave, there would be nobody for them to

shoot at, and then peace would

break out all over Iraq, and the government would take over, and

everything would be peaceful and fine. That was their argument then.

Well, it was flawed, of course. But there was violence over most of

Iraq.

A year later, now, most of the violence is confined to Baghdad.

Eighty percent of the violence is in the Baghdad area. So peace has

broken out over most of Iraq. And if you talk to the soldiers that have

been over there that are running missions and convoys and doing

patrols, they will tell you that most of Iraq seems very, very normal,

that you go down the street and off on the road and the Iraqi kids come

out and wave and the Iraqi people are open and friendly. The men are

open and friendly. The women are a little more shy and a little demure.

That is their culture. But they travel where they want to go, and the

only thing that makes them realize that there is a war is when an IED

goes off. So we are getting there, and the Baghdad area is the area

that needs to be controlled and pacified. The rest of the country is

pretty good.

If we pulled out now or if we pulled out in the near future, the

involvement and the interference that comes from Iran would be imposed

on the Shiia section of Iraq, which is actually a little more than the

southern area of Iraq, which has got most of the oil in it. It would be

Baghdad and some of the areas to the north of there and all the way

south down to Basra, into the hands of the influence of the Iranian

Shiia, who are right now funding and training, equipping and arming

terrorists in Iran and sending them into Iraq and supporting some of

the militia personnel there like Muqtada al Sadr.

I happen to have his picture here. This fellow has been a nemesis for

a long time. And I put the date down here. That was the date that I was

sitting in a hotel in Kuwait City watching Al Jazeera TV. Muqtada al

Sadr, the head of the Mahdi militia, came on Al Jazeera TV, and as I

watched that he said in Arabic with the English crawler underneath:

``If we keep attacking Americans, they will leave Iraq the same way

they left Vietnam, the same way they left Lebanon, the same way they

left Mogadishu.'' Muqtada al Sadr.

Now here he is being supported by the Iranians, funding his militia,

helping to train his militia, and paying some of them to plant IEDs and

attack Americans. Iran is conducting a proxy war against the United

States from the sanctuary of their sovereign nation of Iran and sending

in the munitions and the militia and the insurgents to attack Americans

there, and this man is their surrogate, and he must go.

It is more complicated than the people on the other side of the aisle

would say. They would argue that it is just Shiia and Sunni that are

fighting each other. There are six to eight different factions fighting

each other there. Sadr is one. The Badr Brigade is another. Al Qaeda is

another. There are Sunni criminal groups that are fighting. There are

other groups, the former Baathists, that are fighting.

You can add these pieces up, Mr. Speaker, but in the end it is more

complicated than just simple sectarian strife. It is a power struggle,

a power to provide security and safety within some areas of the

community, the effort on the part of Muqtada al Sadr and others to

drive some of the Sunnis out of Sunni sections of Baghdad so that they

can have their internal hegemony within the city of Baghdad.

But this all happened because there was somewhat of a vacuum there

and we didn't go in and take this man out when we needed to do that.

And he has been to some degree protected by Prime Minister Maliki, who

this afternoon made a statement that essentially puts Muqtada al Sadr

on notice. He tells the Shiite militias to give up.

``Prime Minister al-Maliki has told everyone that there will be no

escape from attack,'' said a senior legislator who is close to Maliki.

``The government has told the Sadrists,'' Muqtada al Sadrists, `` `if

we want to build a state, we have no other choice but to attack armed

groups,' '' this being the armed groups, Mr. Speaker.

So I will say there are two main points that I want to hear the

President address tonight, and one of them is militias must be taken on

and taken out and they are getting an opportunity to surrender right

now because Prime Minister Maliki has put them on notice. They must be

taken on and taken out if they don't surrender. This is the lead that

has got to go.

The second one is Iran must cease and desist from their proxy war

against the United States from the sanctuary of the sovereign nation of

Iran by sending in insurgents who are trained, equipped, funded, and

armed by the Iranians.

And, by the way, IEDs that are being detonated that are blowing up

Americans and killing Americans are being made in Iran and smuggled

into Iraq. If we pull out of Iraq now without a successful safe country

there, the result will be Iran will control the Shiia section of Iraq.

They will control most of the oil in Iraq. They control the Straits of

Hormuz now. They would control the outlet, the mouth of the Tigris and

Euphrates River, the Umm Qasr ports, the export area for Iraq's oil.

They would have a stranglehold on 40 percent of the world's oil, which

is a death grip on the world economy.

They would be in a position to continue to enrich themselves, and

their money chest would be pouring over. They could then accelerate

their nuclear weapons development. They could either build more and

build them faster or buy them where they could get them, perhaps from

North Korea, and you would see Iran much more quickly become a dominant

nuclear power with an ability not just to put a nuclear missile into

Tel Aviv but the ability to do so into Western Europe and within just a

few years the ability to do so clear into the United States of America

with a death grip on the oil and the world, 40 percent of the oil,

which controls the market, Mr. Speaker.

That is what we are looking at if we pull out of there. The stakes

are too high, and that is why the President rejected, I will say

politely ignored, the Iraq Study Group's recommendations.

But we should keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, that there was a million

dollar appropriation here that went to the United States Institute for

Peace and out of that came the Iraq Study Group. Now, why, if we wanted

to figure out how to win a war, would we go to the United States

Institute for Peace and ask them to give us some advice? That makes

about as much sense as going to the Syrians or going to the Iranians

and saying, can you help us solve this problem? Why don't you give us

some constructive recommendations?

It is not in their interest to give us constructive recommendations.

It is in the interest of the Iranians and the Syrians to undermine our

effort there so that they can get us out of the Middle East and they

can impose their influence on Iraq, not the other way around. We will

not get constructive advice from Iran or from Syria any more than we

got advice on how to win a war from the Iraq Study Group because I

believe that they thought that their charge was how do we get out of

this? Let's figure out how to get out of this. Not how do we win?

But the President, to his credit, went to the Pentagon and said, I

don't want to hear from you how we get out of Iraq. I want to see a

strategy for victory.

I wish he had done that a couple years ago, but I am glad he did it

now. I am looking forward to his speech; and, as I said, I will be sure

we adjourn here before the President's speech that will happen right at

9 o'clock.

I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for his

commitment to this country and the passion that he brings to everything

he does. I point out, that meeting in Africa, we arrived from different

locations and almost by coincidence, by providence, we arrived at the

same location to address the things we were concerned about in South

Africa at the time. I also note that Mr. Wamp shows up to address these

issues spontaneously on occasion. I very much appreciate your

leadership, Zach.

As we sit here tonight, I will review some of the things that Mr.

Wamp addressed. He listed a number of books that he recommended that we

read.

Among them was the book ``While Europe Slept'' by Bruce Bawer, and that

is, I think, one of the most profound reads I have ever gone through.

It tells the story how the author has traveled from New York City into

Holland to make his life there, and realized he could never become a

Dutchman in Holland the same way you can become an American in the

United States. So he moved to Norway to become a Norwegian and found

out that although he could develop his language skills and understood

the culture and history of Norway, he would never be a Norwegian

because they don't have a system of assimilation that we have or at

least had in the United States.

So he traveled throughout the countries in Europe and gathered

anecdotes and data and studies and compiled an understanding of what is

happening with the ethnic enclaves that have been created in Europe,

those enclaves that are Muslim enclaves.

Our idea has been in this country to promote assimilation. Everybody

can become an American. That, we have considered to be

multiculturalism. But the multiculturalism in Europe is different. That

is, let us create an ethnic enclave here, and look at us. We are no

longer this blue-eyed, blond society, or whatever it happens to be in

the Scandinavian north or whatever the complexion might be in some of

the other areas in Europe. We now have multiculturalism by ethnic

enclave, and the ethnic enclaves being primarily Muslim have not

integrated into the rest of society, and they have brought more and

more from their home country and grown their enclaves to the point

where Bruce Bawer's analysis comes down to that skepticism that France

will ever be French again within the next generation, and that the

takeover that takes place without the assimilation by rejecting the

host country's culture and importing the culture of the newly arriving

immigrants transforms these countries and explains why you can see

second generation British of Pakistani descent setting off bombs in the

subways in London.

It explains that, and it shows what is happening to the culture in

Europe because they have opened up their borders and not promoted

assimilation. When it is done, Bruce Bawer's analysis comes down to the

choice for Europe will be either one of two things: total capitulation

or mass expulsion. That is what Europe is faced with, and I am not

optimistic that Europe will recover and come back to being a partner

for the free world again because the people that are in those countries

that are slowly by birth rate taking over don't believe in the freedoms

that we believe in, Mr. Speaker. They reject them. They reject Western

civilization and our Christian culture. The reject the Judeo-Christian

belief system. The wahabists that Mr. Wamp talked about, they believe

they have an obligation or at least a right to annihilate those who

don't believe like they do.

That is the enemy that we are up against. And this geopolitical

dynamic needs to be understood by the Members of this Congress, and I

am thinking the best way they can understand it is when the American

people study it and get their voice into the ears of their

representatives, the 435 here in the U.S. States House of

Representatives.

But to take on a little more of this, I would point out that a major

question needs to be asked and answered, and I hope the President has

asked the question and I hope he has answered the question, and that

is: Can we live with, here in the United States, a nuclear armed Iran?

That is part of this overall equation. It isn't just confined to Iraq.

As I spoke earlier, Iran is conducting a proxy war against the United

States in Iraq by training and funding and harboring terrorists and

sending them munitions and equipping them and also making IEDs and

other munitions that go into Iraq that are being used against Iraqis of

all stripes and being used against Americans. That has to stop.

But can we tolerate a nuclear-powered Iran, an irrational nuclear-

powered Iran that has Ahmadinejad who is fuming and making allegations

about the annihilation of Israel and the annihilation of the United

States.

All we have to do is listen to these tyrants and believe what they

say. Every action that they make makes it clear that they will develop

a nuclear bomb. They will develop more than one. They are developing

the means to deliver it now, as they are developing a bomb now. Why

would we disbelieve them? Why would we think that we could talk them

out of it? When you go into negotiations, you never get something for

nothing. You have to have something to offer.

I ask the President, and I hope he will tell us tonight, that he has

put the cross hairs on Iran, and directly on their nuclear capability

and sent through a back-channel message to Ahmadinejad and the mullahs

that run him that Iran's nuclear days are numbered and that there is a

decision that has already been made that they will not have a nuclear

capability. And if they cease and desist from their proxy war against

the United States that they are conducting within Iraq, then they will

be allowed, perhaps, enough negotiation time that they can save some

face before they dismantle their nuclear endeavor.

Should they proceed, then the decision needs to be made whether to

take out Iran's nuclear capability. We saw 4 days ago, there was

intelligence or I will say a press leak that came out of Israel that

they have a contingency plan to take out Iran's nuclear capability with

limited tactical nuclear weapons. If they have to do that, I am afraid

there is an all-out conflagration in the Middle East, and all Arab

countries will descend upon Israel. If somebody has to do it, it is

better if we do it. It is better if Ahmadinejad dismantles his nuclear

capability.

That is where I would start: Cross hairs on Ahmadinejad, put the

cross hairs on their nuclear capability, and then if they back out of

Iraq, then we can have a peaceful Iraq. We still have to remove Muqtada

al-Sadr and some other militia leaders. If those two things happen,

that shuts off the money, the munitions and the operations of violence

that are there. As long as there is money there, somebody is going to

set an IED. I can see that. But most is controllable by the Iraqis.

I have watched as thousands of Iraqi troops have been trained, lined

up in ranks. I first saw them and reviewed those troops in October

2003. Those troops were trained by General David Petraeus. He headed up

the Iraqi military training operations when he was over there during

the last deployment, and now he has been appointed to command all

military operations within Iraq. He is the most impressive military

person I have met in my life. If anyone can run this operation in Iraq

successfully, it is David Petraeus. He has the love and respect of many

of the Iraqis, the Kurds and Sunnis and Shias. And in Mosul, where the

101st Airborne, which he commanded when they went in to liberate Iraq,

there in Mosul, they went in and liberated Mosul in the latter part of

March 2003. By the end of May 2003, General Petraeus had held open

elections in Mosul in those three provinces there, and elected a

governor and a vice governor, and I also recall a business

representative at the table in those discussions that we had. That was

an impressive means to win the hearts and minds of the people, and also

from a military tactical perspective.

But to give you an understanding of how effective General Petraeus

has been, there is a sign, and I have a picture of it as a street sign

on a broad street in the city of Mosul in Iraq, and it said: 101st

Airborne Division. They misspelled ``airborne'' and ``division'' so I

was pretty sure that it was a sign put up by the Iraqi people in

appreciation for the 101st Airborne led then by General Petraeus who

will be taking over and commanding all military forces within Iraq.

We can win this. We must win this. We do not have a tactical threat

against us. We can and will prevail. The American people need to stand

together. Mr. Wamp said that, and I agree with him.

We need to stand with our Commander in Chief. It isn't really up to

the President to convince the American people that we should move

forward on this, but it is up to us to support our military. And if we

are going to support our military, we must support their mission, Mr.

Speaker.

So I look forward to the President's speech. It is a pleasure for me

to have the honor and privilege to turn over, I will say this network,

to the President of the United States as he lays out a

plan for victory in the battlefield of Iraq, which will take us on to a

final victory in the overall global war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. Hunter),

who was the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee.