Mr. Speaker, if the Republican leadership wanted to

work on a bipartisan expression of support, we would have been able to

get some place today. They could at least have had an opportunity for

Congress to step back and examine what we have learned.

We were prepared to win the war in Iraq. It was never an issue. A

major concern is that we were not adequately prepared to win the peace,

either in terms of equipping or staffing the occupation of Iraq nor

preparing the American public for the full scope of the cost and

consequences.

Giving too much money to the wrong people to do the wrong things in

Iraq is a legitimate object of debate, and I hope that we will some day

have it. But, in the meantime, the most important unanswered question

is whether the massive investment of the troops, the money, and the

attention was best spent rushing to Iraq rather than concentrating on

continuing the global struggle against al Qaeda and the other forces of

terror.

By delaying for over a year and a half the concerted efforts in

searching out bin Laden, it has allowed al Qaeda and other terrorists

to gain strength, to metastasize, making bin Laden almost irrelevant

other than as a symbol of our policy failure. Our unwillingness or

inability to launch a concentrated effort to mobilize global support

when we had the entire world united on our side is a sad by-product of

this administration's policies.

We are long on celebration; we are short on analysis. We are long on

talking; we are short on accomplishment. Congress's job is to know what

is going on, define the policy, to fund the right things, and provide

oversight. That is our job, and we are falling far short of the mark.