Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote ``no'' on the

previous question on the rule on the defense appropriation bill so that

the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Pelosi) might give us an

opportunity to vote, to consider and vote on her amendment, which

actually contains a strategy for success in Iraq by allowing or asking

the President to tell us, within 30 days after the enactment, what is

his plan for success to bring the troops home.

Whether you voted for or against the war, or whether you are

concerned about it, everyone has to be concerned about our troops that

are there. The way this war has been waged is putting a huge strain on

our men and women in uniform, and has become a threat to our armed

forces' capacity to meet future needs. And if you take a look at what

is happening with our military being spread through 120 countries, you

will recognize that the administration's so-called ``strategy''

requires more troops to add on to the troops that are already in Iraq.

The problem that we are having is recruitment. We are not finding,

notwithstanding the increases in bonuses up to $40,000, that we are

getting the recruits that we need. We also find that they reduced the

standards. One no longer has to be a high school graduate; they are now

taking sub-high school graduates. And all the while, the President has

still made no direct appeal to areas of this country, other than those

where jobs and opportunity are lacking, to join the service and share

in the sacrifices needed to defend this great republic.

So I am hoping if you are concerned about our troops, you will give

us a chance to ask the President, how in the heck are we going to get

out of this so that we can preserve our armed forces and stop taking

advantage of the heroes who have served far more than their fair share?