Mr. Speaker, the Governor of my State recently went

on a trip to Iraq. When she returned, she announced that the

President's Iraq policy should not be the subject of political

discussion. That suggestion is as problematic as it is unrealistic.

Foreign policy and defense policy are always legitimate topics of

political debate. That's how we do things in a democracy. The voting

public has every right to a full and open airing of different points of

view--especially when the lives of our service members and the treasury

of our Nation are being committed.

Now, with this resolution it seems the Republicans want it both ways.

They tell us Iraq policy is out of bounds for political discussion, and

at the same time they present us with this resolution. This document

amplifying the administration's spin is nothing less than an election-

year endorsement of the President's Iraq policy. It will no doubt be

denied that it has anything to do with politics. In fact it's blatantly

political. It's transparently political. It's in-your-face political.

Our troops deserve better than this cursory salute swaddled in

suffocating layers of political celebration. They've earned our

gratitude for their patriotism, courage and spirit of sacrifice. More

to the point, they deserve a solid commitment to their well being and

the well being of their families. But that is something the majority

refuses to do. Last week in the House Budget Committee, Mr. Edwards and

others proposed some simple measures along these lines: TRICARE for

reservists; a boost in imminent danger pay; improved military housing;

higher pay for senior enlisted personnel; increased family separation

allowance; and more funding for family support centers.

All of this is to be offset by a very modest rollback in the tax

bonanza we granted to people making a million dollars a year and more.

The majority's response? Forget about the troops--our allegiance is to

people making a million or more. I don't have any statistics, but I

suspect there aren't too many millionaires serving in Iraq or en route.

So let's not pretend this resolution has nothing to do with politics.

It's about the politics of deception underlying this war. It's about

the politics of delusion that we can remake the world in our own image.

It's about the politics of desperation flowing from the realization

that we're becoming stuck in a no-exit quagmire.

As for the troops, they're getting thin rations from the majority in

this House. Saying you support the troops is easy. The issue here isn't

whether anyone in this House supports the troops. We all do. The issue

is whether we can fashion a policy worthy of their valor, dedication

and sacrifice.