Mr. Speaker, this war is a terrible tragedy, and it is

time to bring it to an end. This is a straightforward bill to redeploy

our military forces from Iraq and to end the war in Iraq, and I want to

thank the leadership for bringing it to the floor today.

This bill would allow the administration and joint chiefs 3 months to

plan a safe and orderly redeployment process, and then an additional 6

months to carry it out. It provides for the orderly transfer to Iraqi

authorities the military bases and facilities we have constructed and

occupied on their national territory, as General Petraeus himself has

always insisted would happen when we depart from Iraq.

The bill permits U.S. Armed Forces to remain deployed in Iraq in

order to protect U.S. embassy and diplomatic personnel. It also allows

limited special operations to pursue members of al Qaeda and other

global terrorist organizations, and it continues the training and

equipping of Iraqi security forces.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does not walk away from Iraq or the Iraqi

people. It specifically continues diplomatic, social, economic, and

reconstruction aid; and it allows the President to provide asylum or

other means of protection to those Iraqi citizens who might be

physically endangered by our leaving Iraq because of services they

provided to our military personnel.

Finally, this bill leaves all the decisions on the locations outside

of Iraq to which our troops will be redeployed wholly in the hands of

our military commanders. They may be deployed to neighboring countries

or transferred to Afghanistan. Many, I hope, would be sent home by

commanders, grateful that their service is now completed. And many of

our proud Guard and Reserve units would, I hope, return to their

stateside duties to protect our homeland.

Mr. Speaker, there is no nice, neat, easy way to leave Iraq. Every

Member in this Chamber understands that. But it is the right thing to

do. The American people have chosen us to act on this matter, and we

must act.

Redeployment of our troops will set a new dynamic into motion in Iraq

and the region. It will force the Iraqis, their neighbors, and the

international community to finally confront the tough issues of

reconciliation. Until we leave, no one has to make the hard choices

about how Iraqis are going to live together or die together.

Like all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I stand in awe

of our uniformed men and women, who have performed fearlessly and

tirelessly in Iraq. But we should no longer demand that their sweat,

blood, and lives be sacrificed on the altar of Iraqi sectarian

violence. They are needed elsewhere, in Afghanistan, in the region, and

here back home. Their duties, their global mission and purpose

continue, but Iraq must find its own way.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. For four long deadly years, this

administration and their allies in Congress have been flat wrong about

Iraq. The time has come for us to begin redeploying our troops from

Iraq in a safe and orderly manner.

Now, every one of us, whether we voted for or against the war, has a

responsibility for the men and women who have been put in harm's way.

It is easy to say stay the course; but I would remind my colleagues,

none of us will wake up tomorrow in the midst of a civil war in Iraq.

None of us will have to go on patrol in Fallujah or Baghdad. We owe our

troops better than rhetoric; we owe them honesty and action.

For me, this is a vote of conscience. For me, this is a way to

restore the good and decent name of the United States. For me, this is

a way to best serve our men and women in uniform, by bringing them home

to their families.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill and vote to end the war.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for

yielding me the time, and I thank all of those who participated in this

debate today.

Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle apparently

believe in and want to continue the status quo. That is their right.

But I believe they are wrong. They have been wrong for 4 long, deadly

years. So it is time for new leadership, for a new direction, for a new

policy, a policy based on reality, not spin, not press release, not

intimidation.

My friends say that we can't leave Iraq until the Iraqis ask us to

leave. I saw a story that appeared on the Associated Press wire today

which states that a majority of Iraqi lawmakers endorsed a draft bill

calling for a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign troops and

demanding a freeze on the number already in the country.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we just heard from the gentleman from California

that the Iraqi Government represents the Iraqi people, and apparently

the Iraqi Government is telling us they want us to have a time certain

when we leave.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. Our friends on the other side of the

aisle argue that the best way to support the troops is to ask them to

participate in a failed policy. Well, I disagree.

The question before us is simple: Do you want to end this war? If you

do, then you will vote for the bill before us.

Mr. Speaker, let me end this debate the way I began it, by reminding

everyone in this Chamber, Republican and Democrat, reminding everybody,

whether you supported the war initially or whether you opposed the war,

that we all have a responsibility. We have a responsibility to those

men and women who we have put in harm's way, and that responsibility is

to act responsibly, to make sure that we are giving every consideration

before we put them in harm's way.

We are now entering the fifth year of this war. We have a President

who refuses to admit one error, one misjudgment. The fact of the matter

is, there are two ways to end this war: one, with the cooperation and

the help of the President, which we all want. The other way is for

Congress to do its job, to take its responsibility seriously and to do

what is necessary to bring this war to an end.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote for the underlying bill.

I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I would simply

say that obviously this is yet another cynical attempt to try to avoid

dealing with the issue that I think both Democrats and Republicans want

to deal with, and that is whether or not we should have a timetable for

withdrawal and redeployment from Iraq.

This is a procedural motion that, as the gentleman from Wisconsin

pointed out, is so broad, this could justify keeping us in Iraq forever

and ever and ever. And for the ``regional security of the Middle

East,'' what does that mean? This is an open-ended invitation for our

military involvement and for our permanent occupation of Iraq forever.

This in and of itself is not particularly well thought out.

I understand what you are trying to do, and that is to avoid giving

people the opportunity to vote on this. But essentially what you are

doing is gutting this legislation.

I would strongly urge my colleagues to vote ``no'' on this motion. We

are on our fifth year, our fifth year of this war, no accountability

and no admission that perhaps we need to take a different course; and

the best you can do is come before us with this motion that would,

again, if passed, would allow us to stay and occupy Iraq indefinitely.

I think this is a bad idea. I think it is a cynical idea. I think the

people on the other side should have the guts to vote ``no'' on the

timetable if you don't want to withdraw our troops. If you want a

never-ending war, then have the guts to vote for it, but this is not

the way to do it. I urge rejection of this motion.