Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for

yielding.

Mr. Speaker, let's just say that the critics of the war, and I don't

mean the Members of the House, but the critics in the general public

who often say ``Bush lied'' and put up posters to that effect and they

bring in Halliburton and Blackwater and bumper stickers that say ``No

War for Oil,'' let's say all that is true, absolutely true, that

everything was a trick to get us there, and just say we can agree with

that, and Hillary Clinton and John Kerry never made the statements that

Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, which, of course, they

did make those statements.

But if all that was the case, regardless, we are there and we are

there now.

I met with the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq today, and he said, in

fact, the surge is working. And maybe he has a view that might be

suspect by some. But I have also spent a lot of time this week looking

at a report of indexes in Iraq put out by the Brookings Institute,

which, as you know, is left of center. But they track the number of

civilian deaths, the number of IED attacks. They track the number of

newspapers and radios, economic and political progress. They track the

benchmarks, revenue sharing, oil sharing, and elections and so forth.

And in that there is a glimmer of hope that is important to know that

there is some progress that is being made.

But I think between the Brookings Institute and the Prime Minister's

report, there is a very bleak picture; but it is a picture nonetheless

that progress is being made.

If you pass this legislation today, you wouldn't just erode that

progress. You would sign a death sentence to people like this Prime

Minister and his family. Now, I agree that the Republican Party

probably lost the majority in the House because of the war as much as

anything else, but for us that is just politics. It is a political

death. For the people over there that we are helping, this is real

death. What would happen to this Deputy Prime Minister if we pulled

out, and what would happen to all the other Iraqis who have been there

trying to take a step forward as Sunnis, as Shiites, as Kurds, trying

to work together in a cooperative agreement? Do the proponents of this

bill believe that Iraq would suddenly say to them, Okay, you all can go

home; we are going to switch governments? If this passed, there would

be more chaos and a civil war that we have never seen before in the

Middle East, and it would spill over to other countries in the Middle

East.

One of the things the Prime Minister said that Americans have failed

to understand is there is a cultural shift going on in the Middle East

right now, and it is not unique to Iraq, and that is that al Qaeda is

becoming a mainstream group. Al Qaeda and an Islamic radical

fundamentalist movement with sights on the West is growing.

If we withdraw from Iraq, it is victory to them. A defeat means it is

not just going to stay in Iraq, but the momentum probably would go to

Israel next. It would probably encourage the Iranians to get nuclear.

Saudi Arabia would follow suit. They would need to have nuclear

weapons, and Jordan. The good, the bad, and the ugly in the Middle East

would happen.

The previous speaker said the troops did win the war. I agree. But we

have not finished the war. We should vote this down and give Petraeus

time, which is very much needed.