Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank the chairman for

allowing me to be a part of this special hour and be with my

colleagues. I am humbled from just listening to the remarks of the

gentleman from Kentucky who just spoke and others.

Mr. Speaker, I had the great opportunity to visit Iraq

on two occasions: in December of 2003, five days after the capture of

Saddam Hussein, and then again in February of this year with my

colleagues on the Committee on Rules. I want to say what I noticed in

Iraq, in the theater of operation, was I met soldiers' soldiers and I

met commanders' commanders; and I want to say, too, that the gentleman

from California (Mr. Hunter), the chairman of our Committee on Armed

Services, is a chairman's chairman. It was said earlier by other

speakers the sacrifice he made himself while serving in Vietnam, and

his sons now serving in Iraq.

This is the kind of support that we need to show and let those young

soldiers who are over there right now, maybe some of them are having a

needed break, an opportunity to get out of harm's way and possibly

watching the deliberations that are occurring right here this evening

as we praise them and give them our support.

In the previous 5-minute litany that we heard from the other side, I

think it was just the opposite. It was a little sad to hear them read

names and then condemn the Commander in Chief, to condemn the cause.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to throw out a couple of names of

young soldiers that gave their life in Iraq. I could mention Specialist

Justin Johnson from Armuchee, Georgia, just 2 years out of high school.

His dad, Joe Johnson, actually is in the Reserves now serving,

activated, asked to be activated, and yet he gave his son in the

ultimate sacrifice.

First Lieutenant Tyler Brown, president of the student body at my

alma mater, Georgia Tech, had an opportunity to be in Arlington in the

Honor Guard. But, no; instead he chose, he asked, to go to serve in

Iraq, and, 2 weeks after he arrived there, was killed by a sniper.

President of the student body at Georgia Tech just 4 years ago. I think

of his family. I think of his mom and his dad and his brother and his

sister.

I think of Command Sergeant Major Eric Cooke, who at age 43, after 19

years of service and four combat tours of duty, 1 day after I met him

that first time in December of 2003 that I went to Iraq, on Christmas

Eve, he gave his life by sitting in that seat in a Humvee so that one

of his soldiers could get some needed rest.

That is the kind of men and women that I want to honor and remember

here tonight as we talk about these great patriots that are serving us

so well.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is all about one thing that we can remember.

Those of us who are not veterans, those of us who are veterans, no

matter what war we are talking about, and this country has been through

a few in the 235 years of our history, the soldiers, particularly those

who have given their lives in combat, they do not want us to forget.

They do not want us to forget. That is all they ask of us.

And I am often reminded of that poem that was written by a Canadian

physician serving with the Allies in World War I in Flanders, Belgium,

when his buddy gave his life in combat. He wrote a poem, a tribute to

him, and that is the great poem that we all know called ``In Flanders

Fields.'' I will try to recite it, Mr. Speaker. I might not do a very

good job, but it goes something like this:

That little poem that Dr. McCrae wrote in World War I, of course, is

a very famous poem today, and it just says one thing, Mr. Speaker. It

says, do not forget us. We died for our country. No matter what the

cause, even if you do not agree with it, as we hear from the other side

tonight and other times on this floor, we have got to remember the

sacrifice, otherwise these 2,000 soldiers who have given their lives,

and four times that many who have been injured, will indeed have died

in vain. We will have forgotten them. We will not have taken up that

torch that they are passing to us and they are asking us to hold it

high.

That is our obligation. We do not necessarily have to be veterans,

combat veterans, like the gentleman from California (Chairman Hunter)

or the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Davis) or the many men and women,

too. And I think of the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. Wilson) and

others who have served in this country. We are all serving. And I do

not question the patriotism of the people on the other side until I

hear them talking about the Commander in Chief and saying that he lied

to the American people and that we did not need to be there, that we

struck first. How quickly, Mr. Speaker, how quickly they forget 9/11.

God bless our troops. God bless the gentleman from California

(Chairman Hunter). We are behind them 100 percent, and we are winning,

and we will continue to win and bring these soldiers home safe with a

victory in hand.