Mr. Speaker, today we learn the Bush administration

plans to ask Congress for another $80 billion in emergency funds for

the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. This $80 billion comes on top of an

additional $200 billion that we have spent in Iraq since the beginning

of the war 2 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the Bush administration never leveled with the American

people about the kind of sacrifices they would have to make in order to

fight this war. You will remember that before the war, President Bush

and his war cabinet said the sacrifices would be minimal. They falsely

claimed the majority of the war costs could be paid for by the

royalties Iraq received on the sale of its oil. Nearly 2 years have

passed since the beginning of the war, and we have yet to see one cent

from the sale of Iraqi oil.

You would think my Republican colleagues, particularly the ones who

repeatedly come to the well of the floor to rail against the waste,

fraud, and abuse in our Federal Government, would be demanding some

accountability from the administration about the cost of the war. You

would think they would be calling for congressional hearings demanding

to hear from Defense Secretary Rumsfeld on exactly where the Pentagon

spent the $200 billion Congress already appropriated for the war.

Unfortunately, Republicans have abdicated their oversight

responsibility and are giving the Bush administration a free ride on

the enormous miscalculations we have all witnessed in the Iraq war.

Mr. Speaker, during World War II, then Senator Harry Truman created a

war investigating committee charged with exposing any fraud or

mismanagement in our Nation's war efforts in both the Pacific and the

Atlantic. Truman was, of course, a Democratic Senator serving in a

Democratic Senate majority, overseeing the Democratic administration of

President Franklin Roosevelt. Truman never worried about the fact he

was investigating a President of his own party. He refused to allow

politics to get in the way of good government; and as a result, his

investigations saved the American taxpayer more than $15 billion.

Now, that was a lot of money back in the 1940s, and it is still a lot

of money today. But I wonder just how much more money we could save the

American taxpayer if congressional Republicans took their oversight

responsibility seriously.

Where is the Republican Party's Harry Truman? Why are congressional

Republicans so worried about asking the Bush administration for

specifics on where it is spending the $200 billion Congress has already

appropriated? Could it be that congressional Republicans are afraid of

what they would uncover if they looked too closely into the

administration's handling of the war?

The Bush administration has awarded Vice President Cheney's old

company, Halliburton, billions of dollars of no-bid contracts since the

beginning of the war. Despite the lack of congressional oversight, we

discovered that Halliburton was charging for meals it never served our

troops. Obviously, that is a waste of America's taxpayers' money. How

many other examples of fraud and abuse are out there?

Mr. Speaker, I opposed giving President Bush the authority to begin

this

war. I also opposed the $87 billion emergency supplemental because I

believed the administration had to explain to those of us in Congress

exactly how it planned to spend the money.

The days of handing a blank check to the Bush administration should

be over. It is time for Republicans to realize that our Founding

Fathers gave Congress oversight responsibilities for a reason. We are

not here to be lap dogs to any administration. As we prepare to debate

another Iraq supplemental, I would hope congressional Republicans would

keep that in mind.