Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from

Ohio for his comments, and I am very excited about the fact that some

Members of the Congress are watching out for our veterans, making sure

our veterans are receiving what they deserve.

We talk about silver and blue hair once again, but there are a number

of veterans that were in the first Gulf War, in Korea, even some in

Grenada, definitely in Vietnam and World War II, and other conflicts

that we have been involved in over the years; and it is important they

receive the care they need not only at our veterans hospitals but also

because these veterans were told when they signed up and they went into

harm's way on behalf of this country, on the philosophy of our

leadership and this Congress, that we would provide those kind of

benefits.

That is the reason why in the President's budget, as we heard in the

last hour where we said how can we talk about Social Security and not

talk about the budget, that it is important that we realize that this

budget is deplorable as it relates to keeping our promise to our

veterans and to our young veterans. We have a lot of young veterans out

there that are trying to raise families and dealing with real issues.

Some are on 50 percent benefits, some are on 100 percent benefits

because they laid it down for this country, Democrats and Republicans.

I will tell you once again, when you see the land of milk and honey,

when it comes down to the top 1 percent and what they get and the

promise that is kept to them by this administration and by the majority

side, it is really night and day. If you are in the top 1 percent, you

are in good shape right now. You are receiving every tax cut that you

could possibly get at this particular time, and I am pretty sure there

are some Members of this body that would have some other great ideas

for you. But what happens to that individual that works every day? What

happens to that individual that puts it on the line every day?

We are talking about Iraq Watch, and this is the hour that usually

our colleagues come to the floor to talk about Iraq. I just recently

returned with a bipartisan group going to Iraq and Afghanistan to visit

our troops and also to visit some of the civilians that are over there.

I will tell you that news reports are not even covering half of what is

happening there. Tomorrow we will have the opportunity on the Committee

on Armed Services to hear from Secretary Rumsfeld. We will have an

opportunity to hear the administration's vision as it relates to Iraq,

and also to talk about this budget in the Department of Defense. But it

is important that we have past statements and hopefully not to say that

we want to have the Secretary responding to misstatements or anything

of that nature, but we want to make sure that we are giving voice to

those future veterans and we are giving voice to the troops that are

over there in harm's way right now. There are individuals,

and God bless them, they want to do and they are doing the right thing

that they are being told to do. But we just had the Iraqi elections.

New elections are going to be coming up in December. Hopefully the

Iraqis will be ready or close to being ready for taking responsibility

for their country and for the security of their country.