Mr. Speaker, over this past weekend, five more American

soldiers were killed in Iraq, bringing the number killed in April to

over 100 U.S. soldiers. It was the deadliest month for American

soldiers this year. Sadly, the total number of Americans killed now

stands at 3,351, along with thousands of innocent Iraqi men, women and

children.

The realities on the ground that our brave soldiers continue to face

day in and day out stand in stark contrast to President Bush's

pronouncement 4 years ago that major combat operations in Iraq were

over.

If major operations were over 4 years ago, what have our troops been

fighting the last 4 years? If indeed our mission was accomplished 4

years ago, as the banner behind the President on that aircraft carrier

proclaimed, what are American troops still doing in Iraq?

If the President truly wants to bring our mission to a just

conclusion, he should work with Congress instead of simply vetoing our

funding bill as he did. It's now up to the President to decide if he

will support accountability for Iraqis, benchmarks for success, and new

direction in Iraq, for we cannot stay this course.