Mr. Speaker, this week, the Senate finally passed the

latest of the Iraq war supplemental funding. The $82 billion package

brings the war's total cost to date, both in Iraq and Afghanistan, to

$300 billion. This month will be the 2-year anniversary of the

President's speech on the U.S.S. Lincoln announcing,

So what has and $300 billion got us so far?

We have defeated Saddam Hussein's regime, yet we find ourselves marred

in an endless occupation. This past January, we witnessed a successful

election in Iraq, yet progress on developing a functioning government

has been slow at best. Terrorism and insurgency are as strong as ever

and continue to be escalating at certain times. Today, we saw that in a

very serious way with more than 79 Iraqis killed in a terrorist act.

Over the weekend, we lost again a number of our fellow citizens,

bringing the total of U.S. soldiers killed to nearly 1,600 and 12,000

wounded. The economy in Iraq is stalled. The civil society cannot form

a consensus, and millions of Iraqis remain without the basic services

and functions of a civil society and government.

Our brave men and women are fulfilling their obligation and their

duty to the United States Armed Forces and continue to fight valiantly,

but the battle has taken its toll. As I said, nearly 1,600 fellow

citizens have been killed. These are brothers and sisters, sons and

daughters, mothers and fathers, aunts and uncles and Little League

coaches and members of churches and other parts of their community who

will no longer be with us. And more than 12,000 soldiers have been

wounded. The strain is so great that recruiters for the Armed Forces

cannot meet their enlistment goals. Last month, the Army alone missed

its recruitment goal by 42 percent. The Pentagon now says they are

stretched so thin, it would be difficult for the Armed Forces to meet

other obligations should they need to do so.

Mr. Speaker, Operation Iraqi Freedom was a war of choice, and as

President Kennedy once said, to govern is to choose. One can only hope

that this choice is the right choice. In fact, while we have been

fighting in Iraq, North Korea multiple times over the last 2 years has

crossed red lines that have existed through Democratic and Republican

administrations and has flaunted those goals. While we have been tied

down in Iraq, North Korea's situation has gotten far worse.

Mr. Speaker, every other President in the history of the United

States, when this Nation has gone to war, has thought about America

after the war: how to build an America on the shoulders of that

military victory so that victory overseas is also a victory here at

home; how to build a stronger America for tomorrow.

Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War not only envisioned

reconstruction but he envisioned a transcontinental railroad,

envisioned land-grant colleges. President Roosevelt lead the Nation

through the Great Depression in World War II, and he then in the

closing days thought of a GI Bill and, 11 months before the close of

the war, signed a GI Bill into law, allowing millions to buy a home and

receive a college education. President Eisenhower, in the days of the

Korean War, envisioned an interstate highway system. President Kennedy,

during the struggles of the Cold War and Vietnam, envisioned a man on

the moon and saw that America could envision something greater. Every

President in every Congress throughout our history during the days of a

war has thought about how to bring that victory home and mean a victory

for the American people, not just a military victory.

So what do we have in these days of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan?

President Eisenhower envisioned an interstate highway system; we have a

President who is talking about vetoing our highway bill.

President Roosevelt thought of a GI bill, thought how to build

America after the war. This President has eliminated and canceled

vocational training programs and cut Pell grants, as well as President

Johnson, during the days of the Vietnam signed into law the Medicaid

legislation. This President's budget cuts $10 billion from Medicaid.

All this because we are sagged down having added in the last 4\1/2\

years a little over $2 trillion to the Nation's debt. Our dreams for

America are limited now, and literally weighed down by a Nation, by a

debt that has been accumulated over the years that we cannot see an

America with not only an interstate highway system, but we should have

a broadband system for all of America to move it electronically forward

into the future. It is the debt that is weighing us down and this,

unlike in past military victories, this country has not seen the

victory overseas to bring it home and make sure that all of America is

also victorious.