I thank my friend from Connecticut for

yielding, and I also thank him for his ongoing leadership on this and

so many other issues of importance here in our Congress.

Let me just pick up on a few comments that were made with respect to

oversight and accountability. And I find it particularly ironic, when

one studies the tragic history of our involvement in Iraq, and whether

it begins with the misuse of prewar intelligence or whether it begins

in effect with the reasons that we were given for going to war, none of

which turned out to be accurate, all of which turned out really to be

more about marketing a war than about a real threat that imperiled our

safety and security, that we are now being told by these very same

people that have led us so far astray, that have so weakened our Nation

and so exposed us to a war on terror that we must fight much more

vigilantly than we have thus far; we are now being told that these are

the people that we must continue to keep in leadership positions in

order to keep us free and safe. And, in fact, it is their very

leadership, and I am speaking specifically about the Secretary of

Defense and other civilian leaders in the Pentagon, that have led us so

far astray.

When you chronicle the mistakes that were made in Iraq, we best-cased

the result of our involvement in Iraq and we worst-cased the threat

that was there. We invaded with too few troops. We have certainly

sufficient troops to overthrow a regime that spent a fraction on

defense relative to what we spend on defense, but we invaded with too

few troops to secure the peace. We failed to secure the borders. We

failed to secure ammo dumps. We failed to see to it that our troops

were properly equipped and outfitted, and that was because the

leadership of the Pentagon refused to accept the warnings that had been

given by so many different experts in this area, that we weren't going

to be welcomed with open arms, that we weren't going to be treated as

conquering heroes and liberators, but in fact we were going to be

viewed as occupiers and invaders.

But our troops arrived with insufficient body armor, with

insufficiently armored vehicles because this insurgency was not

recognized or anticipated. And yet we have these very same people

telling us that they are the ones that are going to keep us safe.

I will just say one other thing, and then yield back. I think this is

an administration that specializes in giving us false choices. We are

now being presented with the latest false choice, and that is that

those of us who do not support the ``stay the course'' in Iraq can be

accused of wanting to abandon the war on terror.

Nothing could be further from the truth. There is not a soul on our

side of the aisle that would advocate abandoning the war on terror.

Everyone on our side of the aisle would advocate continuing to wage

that war, but to wage it with the full resources of this Nation and to

wage it much more intelligently than we have thus far.

The sad truth about our involvement in Iraq is that it has stripped

us of the resources that we need to wage the war on terror. It is why

Osama bin Laden remains at large 5 years after September 11, and it is

why al Qaeda remains as powerful as it is.

My sense is that New Yorkers have not been

fooled. My sense is that New Yorkers, and there is hardly a New Yorker

who did not lose a loved one or did not lose a friend in the Twin

Towers, most New Yorkers recognize that we are fighting two separate

and distinct wars, despite, as you say, the administration's efforts to

blur the distinction and to cojoin them in an effort to justify

something that the vast majority of Americans now recognize was a

tragic mistake.

When I go around my district, one of the questions I ask people is do

they feel safer today, in August of 2006, than they did on September

12, 2001, and the answer overwhelmingly is no. The answer

overwhelmingly is no.

I think most people recognize in my district, and I am grateful for

this, that the war in Iraq, which was purportedly to make us safe, make

us more safe, has in fact imperiled us beyond where we were the day we

invaded.

I think that that is an important recognition and an important

distinction for those of us who recognize the distinction needs to

continue to be made.

It seems like we are being treated to a late

summer/early fall offensive, I would say smoke screen on the part of

this administration to convince the American people that we need to

stay the course in order to be safe.

Basically what they are doing is they are engaged in defending the

indefensible. The only way they can defend a war that the American

people have clearly turned against is to present it in a context that

makes it appear to be reasonable or defensible, but in fact quite the

opposite is the case.

I think all of us as elected officials, we have no more solemn

responsibility than to provide for the safety and security of those who

have elected us to represent them. But I think a fair-minded person has

to look at the record of where this administration has taken this

Nation and where this Congress, complicit in the strategies and

objectives of this administration, have taken this country.

Every single place you look, it reeks with failure. The 9/11

Commission presented to us 41 carefully crafted bipartisan

recommendations. This Congress has only acted on 20 or 21 of them. The

9/11 Commission, again a bipartisan group, has given this

administration and this Congress 14 Ds, 5 Fs and 2 incompletes on those

recommendations.

Fourteen Ds, five Fs and two incompletes; and

this is a leadership that is going to keep us safe and secure?

We are approaching the fifth anniversary, and

we have outstanding work on the part of this commission, bipartisan

work which is what we ought to be striving for. We ought to be

approaching the safety and security of this Nation in a bipartisan way.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I am not aware of anything on the calendar.