Mr. Speaker, the sad fact is that our proud men and women

are not being treated with adequate dignity and respect when they come

back, and some do not come back from Iraq. There are a thousand

frustrations that we have been hearing across the Districts. Let me

just give you one. I think it is typical of what happened, a small

instance.

I have been working with the family of a soldier who was killed. He

drowned in the Tigris River while trying to save an Iraqi policeman

when they were on patrol. He died a hero in the service of his country.

We tried to get his brother in from the Philippines to go to his

funeral. You would not think that would be too much to ask when a man

gave his life for his country and his family lost a husband and a son

for their family. We could not even get the State Department to let his

brother in for the funeral of this American soldier. Now, this was

incompetence of the highest order.

I want to point out two things from my District as I now meet with

the families who are now sending their sons and daughters and husbands

and wives in the biggest movement of American military since World War

II. That is going on right now, and thousands and thousands of

Reservists and National Guard personnel are leaving their families and

their jobs to go to a multi-year mission that we have no definition how

long it will be unfortunately, and what I hear from them is two things.

Number 1, they believe that they deserve an administration that will

shoot straight with them when it comes to their duty in this war, and I

hear over and over again that they believe they are getting the short

end of the stick because they are not getting the straight scoop even

today about what is going on in Iraq. I will give you an example.

I had lunch with a proud father whose son is a marine who is I think

in Baghdad tonight, just left a few weeks ago, and he is proud of his

son, rightfully so. But he told me in no uncertain terms that he has a

very high level of anger that his son is going into harm's way on a war

that was based and started on a false premise, a false premise about

the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and he says what

he is most mad about is even today, when we know that premise was

false, that the President of the United States continues to stonewall

an inquiry to find out what happened in this sorry state of affairs.

That is what makes him angry; that when this Commission goes to look

for this information, the President says, oh I do not have time, I will

only give you an hour. He has time to go to rodeos; he has time to go

to Ohio and time to fly to Florida, and he ought to have the time to

answer the inquires of that father of that proud Marine who is in

Baghdad tonight, and tell us why the Americans did not get the straight

scoop when we went to Iraq?

This man told me this, and I thought this was an interesting comment

because I would not think he would be thinking about fiscal issues

while his son is in Baghdad, but he told me that he is angered that

even today, when we are hundreds of billions of dollars into the Iraq

expenditure, that even today, when this administration has run up a

$500 billion deficit, the largest deficit in American history and that

is getting larger by the minute, even when we know we are going to be

in Iraq for goodness knows how long, the President of the United States

has not been square with the American people as to how much it is going

to cost.

We have a $500 billion deficit and we are spending billions of

dollars today in Iraq. The President sends up to this Chamber a budget

which is supposed to be an honest, forthright, meaningful prediction of

the cost associated with running this government and he leaves out one

thing, any money for fighting the Iraq war. Now, what does the White

House think; that the American people do not know we are going to be

spending billions of dollars in Iraq? This administration does not have

the courage, I guess, to tell us how much it is going to cost or put $1

in their budget for it.