Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, there have been many justifications for why we went to

war in Iraq. Take your pick: We invaded to capture Saddam's weapons of

mass destruction, or we invaded to oppose a

dictator and bring democracy and human equal rights to the Iraqi

people, or we invaded to fight al Qaeda and prevent them from attacking

us here.

So many reasons have been offered that you can mix and match one from

column A, two from column B.

Whatever your favorite reason for invading Iraq, the one reason that

was never offered was that we are invading Iraq to occupy their land,

establish permanent bases and control their oil. Yet, among Iraqis,

this perception is that the establishment of permanent bases is

precisely why we invaded. The insurgents use that perception to recruit

fighters and incite attacks on our troops.

The bill before us today, introduced by our colleagues, Barbara Lee

and Tom Allen, along with Jim Moran and David Price, will help combat

that perception. It states that it is the policy of the United States

not to establish permanent bases in Iraq and not to control Iraq's oil

resources.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time that the House has spoken on

the issue. Six separate times the House has passed legislation

prohibiting or expressing opposition to the establishment of permanent

military bases in Iraq. Three of those bills have been signed into law.

Yet, from the President, we continue to get mixed messages.

In May, the President's spokesman talked about a U.S. presence in

Iraq that looked like our presence in South Korea. Last month,

Secretary Gates suggested that the President was considering a long and

enduring presence in Iraq.

Whatever your position on the war, I don't think anyone here in this

House believes that we should be in Iraq for over 50 years. In case

anyone needed any further convincing that pursuing a long-term presence

in Iraq is unwise, the Iraq Study Group was unequivocal on the point of

permanent bases. ``The President should state that the United States

does not seek permanent military bases in Iraq''. But instead of

standing down when the Iraqis stand up, the President seems intent on

putting down roots. It is the wrong policy yet again.

The Lee-Allen bill will send an important message again that the

United States has no interest in permanent bases.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.