Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr.

Hinchey) for his superb remarks and for his organizing this Special

Order in order to express our opinions on behalf of our troops and for

a course correction in Iraq and the Middle East in general.

When you think about it, we are being asked this week to vote an

additional $100 billion in what is called a supplemental, mainly to

escalate the war in Iraq, and the money we are voting on will be just

for today until the end of September of this year. This $100 billion is

put on top of what has already been appropriated to be spent on

the war, and it is typical of this administration's mishandling the war

and its accounting, always underestimating every year what it will

really cost to carry out the activities.

If you look at the chart that shows what we are spending in Iraq, it

is absolutely escalating every single year.

The best advice we were given on a recent trip to Iraq, Afghanistan

and the region was from our generals, who said: What does victory mean?

Victory means one-third military, two-thirds diplomacy and good

governance. The two-thirds is missing. So, therefore, we are asking our

soldiers to bear all of the burden of a flawed strategy for Iraq and

the surrounding regions that is ripening terrorism in every single

country, and we are losing respect. The coalition of the willing has

dried up. The neighbors of Iraq have not been convened in a

constructive way, and we watch other nations in the region border on

destabilization because of what we are doing in Iraq.

My deep concern is that the violence could spill over into Jordan,

Turkey, Bahrain, Kuwait, Pakistan, Lebanon, even Saudi Arabia. And so

America has to face a strategic challenge much larger than Iraq, and

the administration is not leading us there.

This evening I wanted to say a word about the theater in which Iraq

is operating. She is not alone. So many of our soldiers, our patriotic

brave soldiers, are in Iraq, and they are the finest military in the

world, but they exist in a sea of discontent. And I would like to say

that the face of terrorism that we see springs from a view, fair or

not, that the United States allies with the rich but not the poor

across the undemocratic Islamic world. And how can America stand for

democracy in Iraq, but not in all of the oil kingdoms and theocracies

to which our Nation has been tethered for most of the last century and

now into this century?

Why would I say that? I would say that because recent polls in the

region show exactly that. It shows that America is viewed as not on the

side of rising popular expectations for a more democratic way of life.

Rather, we are seen as tethered to an old power structure where the

poor remain poor, and the rich, outlandishly rich, and becoming more

so; and where religion has become the metaphor for political change of

those excluded economically and politically.

Unfortunately, the Gallup poll shows how harshly the United States is

viewed across the region. Right or not, the people there view us as a

promiscuous culture in moral decay, and Abu Ghraib affirmed their

views.

If we look at our closest ally, Turkey, a valued ally of ours for

over 50 years in NATO, the disapproval rating of our country has risen

from 48 percent in 2000, and we weren't doing so well back then, to 88

percent this year. So 88 percent of the citizens of Turkey disagree and

disapprove of what we are doing.

The ruling secular party of Turkey has lost control of its

Parliament, and now at the local level who is winning elections in

Turkey? Parties that are tending more and more religious. And I am not

saying that the religious parties of Turkey are like those of Pakistan

or Saudi Arabia, but we have to recognize what is happening across the

region as America falls into disrepute.

In Pakistan, home to tens of thousands of madrassas, schools funded

by Wahabi donors from Saudi Arabia, young boys are being turned out by

the thousands to revenge against America.

America's favorability ratings in Pakistan have fallen to 27 percent.

When we were visiting Pakistan a few weeks ago, a female

Parliamentarian was assassinated on the western side of the country,

people who are trying to relate to the broader world outside of

Pakistan.

In Egypt, which signed a peace treaty with Israel three decades ago,

70 percent of the public unfavorably views the United States. And more

than 90 members of the anti-American Muslim Brotherhood were elected to

Parliament recently, and that Parliament has about as many members as

we do. So 90-plus members is a significant number in the Egyptian

Parliament.

I could go down the list. King Abdullah of Jordan was here a couple

of weeks ago. What did he ask us for? Peace now, time is short; peace

now, time is short. The U.S. favorability rating in Jordan dropped to

15 percent. Are we paying attention to what is going on?

My dear colleague Mr. Hinchey talked about Saudi Arabia, where the

majority of 9/11 terrorists had come from. The United States is

disliked by three-quarters of the people in Saudi Arabia. So we look at

our troops inside of Iraq because the Commander in Chief of this

country sent them there, but if we look at what is happening in the

region, America is not winning.

One of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle just said, just

measure the body count. Measure the American losses as a sign of how

well we are doing.

It is taking us twice as much money every year just to keep the body

count where it is now. Look at the casualties. Look at the Iraqi

casualties that no one wants to talk about. Look at what is happening

in the region. We are not being successful in the war on terrorism, as

hard as our soldiers try, because they cannot do it alone.

Why are we asking the military to bear the full burden when the

diplomatic channels of this government have crashed?

Can you believe that the neighbors of Iraq have not been assembled by

our Secretary of State in any constructive way now going on 4 years?

Unbelievable.

Can you believe that we have allowed nations with which we have been

friends for 50 years just to fester at the end of a failed diplomatic

pipeline?

The President's job is not just to be Commander in Chief. It is to be

Diplomat in Chief for this country, and yet across that region we see

ties that have been forged by this country for generations just ripped

into shreds. What a tragedy.

I was thinking yesterday, I grew up in an era when John Kennedy

talked about the Peace Corps and the great alliance for progress across

Latin America. Look at the Latin Americans demonstrating against the

United States.

We cannot ask our soldiers to fill a gap, a failed diplomacy and

failed politics across the region. The world wants change. The world is

begging us for change. The world is demonstrating for change. It just

is not America that is demonstrating for change.

So this evening, Mr. Speaker, I would thank my colleague so very much

for allowing me some time to talk about regaining America's standing in

the world by correcting what has gone wrong in Iraq.

I just might end by saying today in USA Today there was a major story

of Poland, people risking their lives going to Iraq, asking the Iraqi

people what they think. What it shows is compared to 2005, just a

couple years ago, when 71 percent of people in Iraq said their life was

fairly good, today it has dropped to 39 percent.

In Baghdad, where so many of our soldiers are being sent, what

percentage of the people rate their basic household needs as being

served by the current regime? You know what the number is? Zero. Zero.

Fallen in the last 2 years from 78 percent of their basic household

needs. That is like food, water, down to zero.

Electricity, you know what percent of the people in Baghdad say their

service is good? Zero. Zero, down from only half in 2005.

What about clean water? In 2005, 68 percent said they could get clean

water. You know what the number is? Zero.

How can this be good? How can America win this? How can we ask our

soldiers to fill a failed policy? Our soldiers will do anything we ask

them to do. We have the best military in the world. We have the most

committed generals, the most committed soldiers. We love every single

one of them, but we do not want to give them a mission impossible in a

sea of discontent where the Diplomat in Chief has abdicated his

responsibility to them and to the kind of strategy that can win America

friends again.

I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and it is a real privilege

to be able to participate in this Special Order this evening.

Mr. Speaker, the Wall Street Journal reported last week

what most Americans may not realize, that for the first time in

history, our U.S. military is now guarding the major Iraqi oil pipeline

that leads to its major refinery in Bayji. Yes, our brave soldiers from

the 82nd Airborne are now maintaining around-the-clock presence at

Iraq's largest oil pipeline and refinery to fight the corruption,

smuggling and sabotage that characterize Iraq's oil industry, its

premier industry.

The article talks about the flourishing market in stolen Iraqi oil.

It says U.S. military officials estimate that as much as 70 percent of

the fuel processed at the plant is lost to the black market, an amount

valued at more than $2 billion. Iraq's oil reserves may be the largest

in the world. Future access to them is now being determined by a group

of people we generally don't see on the evening news.

Do you know them? It's important to figure out who those people are

and who exactly is now involved in writing Iraq's hydrocarbon law. How

transparent are these oil deliberations?

Indeed, it is amazing how little we hear about them, as trillions of

dollars are at stake. Meanwhile, oil smuggling has earned lots of shady

characters hundreds of millions of dollars since the beginning of the

war. Why did we let this go on? Until now, we can catch Saddam Hussein

in the spider hole, and yet somehow we could not figure out who is

smuggling Iraqi oil?

Americans deserve answers to so many questions. Who has been earning

the money from the oil smuggling? Which global oil companies will

benefit once the U.S. leaves Iraq? What percent of oil resources in

Iraq will be left for the Iraqi people?

Traveling to Iraq and Kuwait a few weeks ago, I had the chance to

witness how technology and power systems transformed endless deserts

into oil supply lines. It is an awesome sight. Yet I couldn't help but

ask, what is America doing in these deserts? Who does our oil addiction

benefit? How have we let ourselves become tied to oil dictatorships?

Why do we pay nearly $400 billion a year to import petroleum rather

than become energy-independent ourselves here at home?

Our able colleague, Congressman Bill Delahunt of Massachusetts, gave

me a book last week, and I looked on page 96. This is called ``The

Price of Loyalty,'' by Ron Suskind. It explains how Donald Rumsfeld

used our Defense Intelligence Agency to map Iraq's oil fields and lists

companies that might be interested in leveraging the precious asset

long before the Iraqi war was declared.

Judicial Watch obtained Mr. Rumsfeld's map through a Freedom of

Information request because Mr. Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz would not

share it voluntarily. Imagine that. Our taxpayers footed the bill for

this map to benefit private firms.

The book attests Rumsfeld and his cohorts in the Bush administration

were not concerned with legitimate reasons to go to war; they only

concerned themselves with how and how quickly to penetrate Iraq's oil

fields. Mr. Wolfowitz had written as early as 1999 that the United

States should be committed, should be prepared to commit ground forces

to protect a sanctuary in southern Iraq where the opposition could

safely mobilize. As we pay dearly for this violent war, and our

soldiers die in Iraq, just coincidentally we have to remember the

world's largest untapped oil reserves are in Iraq.

Most other nations in the Middle East have guarded their oil reserves

as national treasures, but I will tell you what: Halliburton,

ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips, ChevronTexaco and foreign companies like

Total, Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum have been identified by

reporters like Antonia Juhasz, who said last week in the New York

Times, these oil companies would not have to invest their earnings in

the Iraqi economy, partner with Iraqi companies, hire Iraqi workers or

share their new technologies. In fact, she says, only 13 of the 80 oil

wells, oil fields in Iraq would be for the Iraqi people. The other ones

are being bargained away as the hydrocarbon law is written. Why do we

hear so little about this on our evening news?

John Perkins, in his book ``Confessions of an Economic Hit Man,''

talks about how Saudi oil money through petrodollars has been

reinvested in our economy, holding up so many of our equities and

certainly our U.S. Treasury securities. Why can't America become

energy-independent at home? Why do we have to be dependent to the 20th

century view of dependency on foreign oil?

``Almost immediately after the [1973 oil] embargo ended,'' Perkins

writes, ``Washington began negotiating with the Saudis, offering them

technical support, military hardware and training and an opportunity to

bring their nation into the twentieth century, in exchange for

petrodollars and, most importantly, assurances that there would never

be another oil embargo.'' Congress did not negotiate this--the overall

management and fiscal responsibility lay with the Department of the

Treasury, and according to the book, the ensuing agreement, which was

negotiated in intense secrecy, ``fortif[ied] the concept of mutual

interdependence.'' The very goal of this agreement was to ``find ways

that would assure that a large portion of petrodollars found their way

back to the United States'' so that ``Saudi Arabia would be

drawn in, its economy would become increasingly intertwined with and

dependent upon ours'' and, of course, we on them. It is a ridden

economy.

Is this the America you want? Do you want U.S. soldiers risking their

lives guarding Iraqi oil? I want an America free of counterproductive

foreign entanglements. I want an America free of support for

dictatorships, no matter how tempting their treasures. I want an

America free of foreign oil. I want to invest our dollars here at home

in energy independence--in solar, wind, hydrogen, clean coal, new

turbine systems, fuel cells and so much more.

I think most Americans, if they understood the extent to which we are

hurting ourselves, would want the same. Some global interests are

getting so filthy rich year after year, that they would risk a free

America for the sake of their bloodied oil profits. It's worth changing

how we do business in order to regain our freedom.