Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, the disaster that we now see unfolding in the Middle East with the war in Iraq was set in motion when this President, against the advice of so many generals and military people, and against the advice of so many Middle East experts, made the decision to invade Iraq.

It was a war of choice, a choice not made by the American people, but a choice made by this President. And he set in motion the disaster that we now see. We understand that this decision that he made has been paid for by the lives and the injuries and the harm done to our men and women in uniform.

Last night he asked for a continuation of that disastrous choice with no new plan to change the outcome, but to simply extend the time in which our military will be engaged in Iraq.

It is foolhardy to believe that we should be sending our troops into Iraq based upon the theory that the Shia majority in Iraq for the first time in 100 years and the growing Shia majority across the Middle East is going to negotiate away their ability to act as a majority. This is a foolhardy trip, and we ought to vote against the President's proposal.

IRAQ NEEDS TO DEFEND ITSELF

(Mr. AL GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is time for the Iraqis to stand up and defend themselves.

Mr. Speaker, we have freed them from a ruthless dictator. We have lost more than 3,000 lives. We have more than 20,000 wounded. We have helped them to construct a constitution, to reestablish their constabulary. We have helped them hold an election, and we are spending more than $177 million, not per year, not per month, not per week, but per day.

It is time for them to stand up and defend themselves. Do not send 20,000 in; bring 20,000 troops home. It is time for them to stand up and defend themselves.

OPPOSE PRESIDENT ON ESCALATION

(Ms. WATERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, last night the President of the United States addressed the Nation. He had promised us that he was going to come up with creative solutions because he acknowledged his failures. He has designed what he called ''a new way forward.'' That is another one of his sound bites.

He tried to cloud the escalation by saying sending 20,000 new troops was a surge of some kind. There was nothing new or creative about his message.

Remember, it was the President of the United States who promised us that they were going to get rid of the weapons of mass destruction, only for us to find out there were no weapons of mass destruction.

Remember when he rolled out on the battleship saying ''Mission Accomplished''?

Remember when he promised us that we would get the proceeds from the oil in Iraq and that would be used to rehabilitate Iraq?

Remember when they promised us that we would be welcomed with open arms and we were winning the war?

Well, there this is no new real exit strategy. This is no new way forward. As a matter of fact, this is a new way backwards. And then on top of that, he had the audacity to tell us he wants a billion dollars to give to the Iraqis for jobs and employment. Give me some of that money for our cities and our rural communities. We could really use it. We have to oppose the President on this escalation.

DON'T VETO HOPE

(Mr. COOPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, the American people want us to stop bickering in Washington and to start making progress on the many problems we face.

Well, many millions of American families face dreaded diseases: cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, you name it. And today we have an exciting opportunity to vote for a chance towards curing those diseases.

Last year in the Republican Congress, the vast majority of this body and the Senate voted for embryonic stem cell research. This year, the majorities will be even larger.

I urge the President not to veto this legislation as he did last year. It is the only veto of his entire Presidency. He is the first President since Thomas Jefferson to have vetoed so few bills, but he chose last year to veto hope. I urge the President not to veto hope this year.

FAILED IRAQI POLICY

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the President persists, despite the contrary advice of his most experienced and senior military officers in the field, that escalation is the answer to the chaos, the sectarian strife, in Iraq.

He is not only perpetuating his failed status quo stay-the-course strategy; he actually is going to undermine the U.S. forces and our allies in the most critical conflict.

Remember his phrase, ''Fight them there or fight them here''? Well, that is true, but not in Iraq. That is true in Afghanistan.

Remember ''Osama bin Ladin: dead or alive''? The Taliban, al Qaeda? Well, they are resurgent and they are going to threaten Kandahar we are told by our commanders in the field in the spring, and they have asked for reinforcements.

And what is the President doing to perpetuate his failed policy in Iraq, an unnecessary war in an area that doesn't threaten the United States of America? He is withdrawing U.S. troops from southern Afghanistan and sending them on a failed mission in Iraq.

He could be the only President to lose two wars at the same time.

□ 1030

SAVING LIVES OF AMERICANS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is not often that we have such serious moments in the House to save lives, so I rise today to offer to the President an opportunity to not use the United States military for 9/11 calls, to bring our troops home, and to focus on a political-diplomatic solution of solving the contentious civil disunity between Sunnis and Shiites. I oppose the escalation.

But I rise today to save the lives of those who suffer from Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's by asking for an outstanding and enthusiastic vote for stem cell research. We must realize that even though amniotic fluid research is going on, it is not a substitute for embryonic stem cell research.

We can do this together. We can save American lives. We can do the right thing and ask the President, do not utilize your veto. Help to save the lives of Americans. Bring our troops home, and support stem cell research.

ALLOW IRAQIS TO CONTROL THEIR FUTURE

(Mr. KAGEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, we must begin to think differently in America, because the path we are on now is morally unacceptable. More than 3,000 brave Americans have perished in Iraq and more than 650,000 Iraqi civilians are dead. President Bush's newest war proposal is not a complete and comprehensive plan, and more importantly, it is not based on realities on the ground and in the region.

The President believes that 20,000 additional U.S. troops will change the outcome in Iraq. He was wrong to invade Iraq, and he is wrong now. Instead of decreasing the violence, last night's proposal will increase the risks to everyone in Iraq and the surrounding region, and it will not bring an end to the Iraqi civil war. Clearly it was bad judgment to have invaded Iraq. It will be even worse judgment to remain.