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I thank the gentleman from Ohio for initiating this needed debate on our policy in Afghanistan. Indeed, I opposed the war in Iraq because I felt it distracted us from finishing the job we had started in Afghanistan--finding and bringing to justice those who attacked us on 9/11. I think we have to acknowledge that the current Administration has accomplished more in less time to address the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan than the previous Administration did during its eight years in power. The capture of Mullah Baradar and the disruption of the Quetta, Pakistan-based Taliban leadership group headed by Mullah Omar--these significant tactical successes are the direct result of President Obama's current policies, particularly his success in pressuring the government of Pakistan to live up to its obligations to help us root out the remaining Al Qaeda and Afghan Taliban elements at large in Pakistan.

That's the good news. The bad news is that every time we take out one of their field commanders, several more rise to take their place. This is the nature of insurgency, it is the nature of the problem that confronts us, and it is not a problem that will be resolved by the continuous, endless use of military force. I came to the floor in December 2009 and posed a series of questions about our policy in this war, and many of those questions remain unanswered. However, several events over the last few months have answered at least one question: Are we fighting on the wrong battlefield?

Congress must push the Administration to think anew about this problem, as this conflict is not confined to Afghanistan and Pakistan. We saw that with the Ft. Hood terrorism incident, and with the near-tragedy on Christmas Day in the skies above Detroit. The ideas that motivated Major Hasan and Mr. Abdulmuttalab are propagated around the world via the mass media and

the internet. Going to a training camp in the Pakistani tribal areas is no longer a requirement for a radicalized individual who wants to commit an act of terror.

The extremist ideology that is used to motivate these people itself occupies a safe haven--the internet and the global mass media. Unless and until we confront that reality, we will not prevail in this struggle. That is why we must think anew about how we're approaching this problem. I encourage the President to do that, and I encourage my colleagues to do that.