The House met at 8 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. McNulty).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:
WASHINGTON, DC, February 16, 2007.
I hereby appoint the Honorable Michael R. McNulty to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, House of Representatives.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:
Almighty and Eternal God, we pray that You bless this country we love with all our hearts. We thank You for those who founded this Republic upon faith, respect for law, and constitutional rights of individuals and the common good of the Nation.

Fan the flame of freedom in the hearts of all Americans, and especially those who serve in the Armed Forces. Strengthen the resolve of all the Members of the United States House of Representatives, that they, attentive to Your commands, may follow their consciences and always do what is right as they wrestle with complex issues.

Grant that what they say with their lips they believe in their hearts, and what they believe in their hearts they may bring to practice in their lives and in the Nation.

May Your light so shine upon America that the world may see in us a glimpse of Your glory both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day’s proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.
Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. Linder) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.
Mr. LINDER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:
I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION
The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 157, proceedings will now resume on the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res 63) disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.
The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.
The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed on Thursday, February 15, 2007, 8 1/2 minutes of debate remained on the concurrent resolution.
Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 157, and as the designee of the majority leader, I demand that the time for debate be enlarged by 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the leaders or their designees.
The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, that will be the order.
The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) now has 35 1/2 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) has 33 minutes remaining.
The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Emanuel).

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, we gather today to consider a question that is profoundly simple: Do we support the President’s plan to further escalate America’s involvement in Iraq, or not? After 4 long, painful years in which we have seen so many young lives lost, are we now willing to put even more of our brave heroes in harm’s way, or will we acknowledge that the current course is failing, that doubling down on the status quo while hoping for a better result would be foolish.

There are those who oppose this resolution because they say it would hurt the troops’ morale. Hurt morale? Our leaders promised them they would be greeted as liberators. Instead, we have put them smack in the middle of a shooting gallery, policing someone else’s civil war, backing an Iraqi government that refuses to stand up for itself.

We have sent our soldiers back time and again. We have sent many of them without the life-saving equipment and armor they needed, and now they say this resolution would hurt troop morale? To suggest that more of the same just won’t do.

They have done their duty with courage and discipline. Now it is time for Congress to do its duty. They deserve not to be sacrificed in the furtherance of a policy that failed for the last 4 years.

From the beginning, this war has been a saga of miscalculations, mistakes and misjudgments for which America will pay in many ways for years to come. Let us not compound those bad judgments by ratifying another.

The President assures us that this escalation of war is the most promising path to a more peaceful Iraq. For the
past 5 years we have accepted the President’s assurances on Iraq, only to learn that the facts on the ground belied his aggressive assertions and rosy rhetoric. We accepted his assurances about the presence of weapons of mass destruction and Saddam’s links to al Qaeda. We authorized a war on that basis, only to learn that much of what we were told simply wasn’t true.

Against stern warnings, we accepted his assurances and those of the Vice President and Secretary of Defense that, post-Saddam Iraq would welcome our presence and overcome deeply engrained sectarian differences. It simply wasn’t true. We accepted their assurances when they told us General Shinseki was mistaken when he said we needed far more troops to stabilize Iraq than the administration planned, and that the cost of this war would be minimal. It simply wasn’t true. We accepted their assurances when they told us many of those Cold War years were not pretty. Between 1970 and 1980, the Soviets increased their influence in Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Nicaragua, Grenada, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, South Yemen, Libya, Iraq and Syria. We watched and were timidity. We even had Members of Congress who continued to kill Israelis, we continued to urge caution. For 21 years we urged that great friend of ours not to respond in kind. We were timidity. After the attacks began against America, beginning with the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centers, we remained timidity. We chose not to engage all of the opportunities we had to be bold. In the face of a declared war against our government and our people, we were timidity.

And then September 11, 2001. We stood together on the Capitol steps in solidarity that lasted a good week, and then it became politics as usual.

I don’t know if this fight for freedom can succeed when about half of our Nation doesn’t know or do not care. I don’t know whether our Nation can come to an honest conclusion about what we are engaged in when all they see is the worst side of everything that freedom meant to the world. And even threaten us; he threatened all the shores which didn’t threaten us. The doughboys at Vimmy Ridge knew why they were there.

I ask you, how long must this grim line of photographs grow before we acknowledge that this policy is not working? How many corridors must these memorials fill before we see, not on my watch? How many more lives must we lose? How many more hearts must be broken?

It is time for this Congress to tell President Bush that his assurances are not enough. This escalation does not mean stability in Iraq, it will mean more loss and more photographs in the corridor.

I urge you to vote “yes” on this resolution.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield myself 1½ minutes to respond to the first assertion just made by my colleague, to the effect that we sent the troops in without what he called life-saving equipment.

When we finished the Clinton administration, virtually no one in any of the 10 Army divisions, which, incidentally, had been cut from 14 Army divisions when that administration went into power, none of the 10 divisions that were left, virtually none of them had any bullet-proof vests, any of this body armor that we talk about that our troops have today.

When we went into the first operation, we had much more than the Clinton administration had. At that point we had a number of the inserts, of the so-called Small Arms Protective inserts, that incorporate those inserts with all of our Marines, with all of the infantry units going in with the U.S. Army. And very quickly after that, we developed a plan in which we fielded body armor for not only the people on the front lines, the infantry, the artillery, the armor, but also everybody that is in theater.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely outrageous to tell the American people that the Americans were dangerously unprepared when we went into Iraq. We went in with better equipment than we have ever had in any wars that this country has ever fought. And today, we have fielded over 40,000 pieces of new equipment that we didn’t have 4 years ago that makes our troops yet more efficient.

I would like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER).

Mr. LINDER. I thank my friend for yielding.

It has been interesting to listen to this debate over several days. Two thoughts stand out. One side says non-binding resolutions achieve nothing and insult the troops. The other side has retired to opinion polls. The American people want to end this cost of human and financial treasure. They said so in the last election.

Thank God John Adams never consulted public opinion polls. There was never a time when more than a third of our Nation didn’t know or do not care. Thomas Paine said, “If there must be trouble, let it be in the home; if there must be blood, let it be on our own grounds.”

World War I was not America’s war, no one attacked us; but an attack was made on freedom, and we responded. The doubters wondered why we would spend money on a war so far from our shores which didn’t threaten us. The doughboys at Vimmy Ridge knew why they were there.

Hitler didn’t attack us, he didn’t even threaten us; he threatened all that freedom meant to the world. And while we were engaged in Southeast Asia after Pearl Harbor, we still sent troops across the channel on D Day. Many mistakes were made. Troops drowned before getting to the beach. Support aircraft bombed the wrong areas. 9,386 Americans died in the Battle of Normandy and are buried there on that hill.

But the Boys of Pointe Du Hoc climbed that ridge under withering machine gun fire. They silenced the machine guns, took out the embankments and walked across Europe, and in 11 months Europe was free. We then spent billions of dollars to rebuild a free Europe.

After World War II, we spent 50 years in a war against an idea. It was a battle on two great religions, communism and freedom. When Whittaker Chambers left communism for freedom, he told his wife that he feared that he was moving to the losing side. He knew that communism could not survive if its people believed in a higher faith; he concluded that freedom could not survive if they did not. He had become a believer; he was unsure if we remained believers.

Many of those Cold War years were not pretty. Between 1970 and 1980, the Soviets increased their influence in Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Nicaragua, Grenada, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, South Yemen, Libya, Iraq and Syria. We watched and were timidity. We even had Members of Congress who continued to kill Israelis, we continued to urge caution. For 21 years we urged that great friend of ours not to respond in kind. We were timidity. After the attacks began against America, beginning with the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centers, we remained timidity. We chose not to engage all of the opportunities we had to be bold. In the face of a declared war against our government and our people, we were timidity.

And then September 11, 2001. We stood together on the Capitol steps in solidarity that lasted a good week, and then it became politics as usual.

I don’t know if this fight for freedom can succeed when about half of our Nation doesn’t know or do not care. I don’t know whether our Nation can come to an honest conclusion about what we are engaged in when all they see is the worst side of everything.

When I was last in Iraq, a young man told me about going through a city and all the residents came forth to say thank you and throw flowers. He asked the embedded reporter if that was worth a picture; he was told, “That’s not news. I don’t know how the whole story gets told.”

I do know this: This President knows that he and his commanders have made some wrong decisions, but he knows, as we must know, that this war has always been about the principle, the virtue, the idea of freedom, and to walk away now will have catastrophic consequences for its future.

President Bush believes that our Nation, more than any other, ought to defend the right of people to live free. That is the only victory we can ever have over an ideology that cannot survive in a free society.

President Bush knows why Lincoln said that he often found himself on his
knees because there was nowhere else to go.

He also knows, as did Lincoln, that a President must continue to fight for posterity, even when it becomes unpopular to do so. If you believe, as I do, that the idea of freedom is still worth defending, you will vote against this resolution.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise with deep concern that this President has chosen to escalate the war in Iraq instead of charting a course towards peace.

Today, I am reminded of the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., when he spoke out against the war in Vietnam on April 4, 1967. He said, “The world now demands a maturity of this Nation that we may not be able to achieve. It demands that we admit that we have been wrong from the beginning of our adventure in Vietnam,” we could substitute Iraq, “and that our actions have been detrimental to the people of that Nation.”

Mr. Speaker, war is messy. War is bloody. It tends not just to hide the truth but to sacrifice the truth. And the truth is that this was a war of choice and not a war of necessity. It was ill-fated from its inception at the highest levels of Government, and persisting in error will not fix a policy that was fundamentally flawed from the very beginning.

Thousands of our sons and daughters have been left dead on the battlefield, and tens of thousands are changed forever, wounded physically and spiritually by the brutality of war. Our soldiers are the best men and women in the world, willing to sacrifice all they have at a moment’s notice to protect our freedom. They do not deserve to pay with their lives for the errors of this administration.

Mr. Speaker, we will never find the answer to the problem we have created in Iraq down the barrel of a gun. The lasting solution to this crisis will rise from skillful diplomacy, not military might. The Good Book said, “Come let reason together.”

We must never, ever be afraid to talk. What harm comes from sitting down with Syria, Iran and our allies in the Middle East to help bring the warring parties together? John F. Kennedy once said, “Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.”

My greatest fear here is that the young people growing up in the Middle East will never forget this American invasion. My greatest fear is that they will grow up to hate our children, our grandchildren and generations yet unborn, a legacy of what we are doing today in Iraq.

Yes, we must maintain a strong national defense. We must defend our borders. We must bring an end to terrorism. But not at the expense of our democracy, not at the expense of the very principles this Nation was founded upon.

I want to close by asking a question of old, Mr. Speaker. We understand it a profit a great Nation to give the whole world and lose its soul? Gandhi once said, “It is either nonviolence or nonexistence.”

Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, “We must learn to live together as brothers and sisters or perish as fools.”

It is better to heal than to kill. It is better to reconcile than to divide. It is better to love than to hate. That is why we must vote for this resolution.

We must do more.

We must not place more of our young people in harm’s way. We must not continue to make our soldiers sitting ducks in a civil war. As Members of Congress, we must continue to stand up, speak up and speak out. It is our duty, it is our right, it is our moral obligation. We may get in the way until we bring our young men and women home, and not to continue to escalate this war.

Vote for this resolution. It is the right thing to do. We must send a powerful and strong message to this administration to stop this madness.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution. But, as this debate progresses, we should be proud of the sincere expressions of concern by our colleagues on both sides of the aisle and both sides of this resolution, for the lives and well-being of America’s defenders who are now at risk in order to protect our country, our communities and our families.

All of us have been to heartbreaking wakes, funerals, burials; all of us have gone to the bases to see off our Reservists and our National Guardsmen and to wish them Godspeed; and all of us have been on the tarmac to greet them when they return, sometimes having lost comrades, killed or wounded. All of us want to do what is right for our defenders and for the future of our country.

So we need to be extraordinarily careful. Whatever we do today honors their efforts and their sacrifice. We should not be committed to a policy that ensures the lives of these American heroes have been lost in vain. If at the end of this episode our country is at greater risk, then indeed their lives will have been lost in vain.

I am supporting this last effort, this last chance, if you will, to see that our commitment to Iraq will not result in failure. A failure now will have consequences that are worse than the price that we are now paying in blood and treasure. We do not have the option of walking away without consequences. No amount of midwest corn pressed into ethanol will allow us to ignore the Middle East.

Helping establish moderate democratic governments in the Middle East is not just a favorite of the people there, but it is an imperative to our own prosperity and security. Our dependency based friendships with oil-rich yet dictatorial regimes has set the parameters for the decisions American leaders have made. It has skewed our ability to be a force for freedom and progress. And it is freedom and progress that shield us from the whims of feudalistic, corrupt despots, despotic religious dictators. It is the onslaught of freedom that will change that reality that we are now dependent upon.

That is what we had to deal with, and now we have come to this moment of decision. I wish it were not so. But it is a sad reality that what is right is usually not easy. The right course is, in the long term, usually frustrating and heart-wrenching. There are stalls and reverses to every historically significant and underhanded actions. It is the removal of the United States from the Muslim world.

The current conflict in Iraq has several dimensions; and, yes, it is between the Sunnis and the radical Shiites sects of Islam, a bloody duality, with one face to Tehran and the other to Riyadh.

But don’t be fooled, Mr. Speaker. The murderers, torturers and the haters on both sides revile the United States. The sword of Sadr and the bombs of al-Qaeda have turned on each other, but they both have a dream that is close to their hearts, and that dream is a nightmare to those who cherish freedom and to those who stand with liberty and seek comity among the people of the Middle East, and they are there, but it is an imperative to our democratic governments in the Middle East.

You see, there is another force in Iraq and throughout that part of the world, where the majority of people are guided by the visions of the prophet Mohammed. Those of whom I speak are those Muslims who desire liberty and justice, who want government to be elected and directed by the people, who do not want to live in fear and who choose a positive relationship with the western world.

They are there, as we have witnessed in one of the most devout Muslim countries of the world, Afghanistan. It was not the American soldiers but the Afghan people themselves who drove out the Taliban and al-Qaeda from their country. Similarly, moderate Muslims, people of good will all over the Middle East, and they are there and they tremble that America will lose its resolve and retreat before a radical form of Islam.

An American retreat condemns them to suppression under the heels of fanatic Muslims who hate our way of life.
and are willing to murder anyone who suggests that Islam and the West can live in peace with one another and that we can respect each other’s faith and build a better, more peaceful and, yes, a freer world.

Mr. Speaker, if the sole superpower cannot stabilize Iraq, we are not a superpower. If we cannot thwart such a gang of bandits and savages as we face in Iraq, who will stand with us anywhere? Who will be our ally? We must not lose in Iraq.

But what does that mean? That means we must not leave that country defeated and in retreat or we and our families will lose and in the short run pay a horrible price. Yes, if we retreat from Iraq, these ghouls who kill civilians, who would kill civilians and are currently killing civilians by the tens of thousands, they will follow us home and they will be emboldened.

The sides are chosen, the game is in play. We will determine, not the terrorists or the radical lunatics, who stands and who falls, who marches forward and who retreats. All of this will be determined by our military capabilities, our technological advantages, but even more so by our will, by our desire and by our sure grit.

What we do today makes the future. We choose how it will be shaped.

Mr. Speaker, by nearly all measures, the situation in Iraq is a mess. And yet what seems crystal clear to most Minnesotans the President says that we still have a realistic chance to achieve his vision for a free and democratic Iraq. But can we, with the world’s lead nation, give the Iraqi people a while longer, a slot or a chance? Mr. Speaker, I am one who is not anxious to declare defeat and retreat from Iraq. I am willing to give the Iraqi people a while longer, a slot or a chance. That region in chaos would disrupt the entire world economy. Shifts of power would channel enormous resources into the hands of the enemies of Western civilization, enemies of the United States. It’s a frightening picture that doesn’t need to happen.

How is this different than a year ago? The difference is 1,000 American losses and in a dangerous, foreign land. America is a war weary. I am truly weary. Any story of another young person, blown apart, ripped at my heart. Those of us in uniform who are volunteers, bear all. We owe it to them not to call it off and change direction in haste. To withdraw quickly, without honor, that would indeed mean their lives were lost in vain. It would mean the next front line battle will be the home front.

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America has a crucial role to play in this world and we are America. Let us not fail in this our historic responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to Mr. Peter Peterson, chairman of the Agriculture Committee, my friend, Mr. Peter Peterson.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. I thank the gentleman.

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Woodrow Wilson, who faced down in the face of great danger? their policy of retreat and defeat?

600,000 lives lost.

earth, even though he had to wage the greatest, most powerful nation on

Union that, in time, would become the Nation cleave into two. But Lin-
cans would have preferred to save the

opinion, that is unacceptable, and I say, enough is enough.

The soldiers of the Minnesota Na-
tional Guard are performing their du-
ties admirably. They are performing well or better than the regular Army.

They are serious about completing their mission; and, from my experi-
ence, they will always do more than what is asked of them.

Another group of people that I would like to speak up for the Guard’s fami-
lies. They are not in harm’s way, but they wake up every day worrying, not
knowing what that day will about bring for their loved ones. They didn’t
enlist for the military, but they share their day to day of this war.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to oppose this plan.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes to Mr. WEST-
MORELAND, the gentleman from Geor-

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, if this undemocratic, smoke-and-mir-
rors Congress had been in power throughout our Nation’s history, I am
not sure we would have much to cele-
brate this weekend when we commemo-
rate Presidents Day. On Monday, we
honor the Presidents who guided our
Nation through its toughest moments,
Presidents who made tough decisions
in the face of public skepticism despite great unanswerable imagi-

Not all Americans supported General George Washington’s campaign against
the British, yet our Nation’s father led a ragtag band of underfed and under-
equipped soldiers to victory over the greatest military of its day.

Not all Americans supported Presi-
dent Lincoln’s decision to go to war to
preserve the Union. It seems inevitable
today, but, at the time, many Ameri-
cans would have preferred to save the
lives and misery and just let the Nation cleave into two. But Lin-
colin decided to preserve the Union, a
Union that, in time, would become the greatest, most powerful nation on
earth, even though he had to wage the deadliest war in U.S. history, with
600,000 lives lost.

I wonder what the forebears of to-
day’s Democratic Party would think of
their policy of retreat and defeat? What would they think of the timidity
in the face of great danger? In my

What happened to the legacy of Woodrow Wilson, who faced down
American skeptics to lead us to victory in World War I?

What happened to the legacy of FDR, who faced down American isolationists
to defeat the evils of German fascism and the militarism of imperial Japan?

What happened to the legacy of Harry Truman, the first President to
realize the peril of the Soviet threats and enter into the nation into the
fight against the spread of commu-

The wisdom of their decisions wasn’t
necessarily clear to all Americans of their day, but a judgment of history
validates their leadership.

Today, our Commander in Chief sees
the danger to our Nation’s security and
freedom posed by Islamist extremist forces in the Middle East. Many in this
Congress choose to believe that the vi-

There is this love of dead Democrats
among many Republicans. Democrats who, when they were alive were
trashed by the right wing, once they are
dead and safely no longer possibly candidates for office, get lionized.

Nothing of course shows that better than Harry Truman, but it is
John Kennedy, and it is other-

The assertion that the Democrats
who are supporting this resolution, and the unspoken Republicans who will be
joining with us, that we somehow op-
pose the use of force today. It is wrong. In fact, the most recent en-
tirely successful use of military force
by the United States came from a Democratic President, Bill Clinton—
he’s still alive, so don’t say good things about him—and supported by Demo-
crats in Congress, and it was opposed
by many of the Republicans, including
many of the current Republican leader-
ship.

And yet Bill Clinton, American mili-
tary forces were used quite success-
fully; and the result is not perfection
but a much better situation in the
former Yugoslavia than we had before.

And the Republicans brought forth,
given what, nonbinding resolutions.

Now, they pretend to be upset about
nonbinding resolutions. Frankly, I was
a little encouraged when I heard the
Bush administration criticize non-
binding resolutions, because, up till
now, I had thought that Bush and Che-
ney thought that everything we did
was nonbinding with regard to national
security. So they were at least implic-
itly conceding that some things can be
binding.

But the fact is the that Democrats
strongly supported—I didn’t mean to
make it partisan, they did—the effort
in Yugoslavia over Republican opposi-

And then let’s talk about terrorists.
We were attacked in 9/11 from Afghan-
istan and overwhelmingly, with only
one exception, Democrats in the House
and Senate supported the war in Af-
ghanistan. We are continuing to sup-
port that war in Afghanistan.

I am critical of an administration
which has diverted military resources
and energy and political resources from
Afghanistan. They are weakening the
terrorism, which is in Afghanistan. And that is
one of the reasons for opposing this
war in Iraq.

Now, the war in Iraq has been, in my
judgment, the greatest national secu-
rity threat in America history. And it
isn’t one in which we got sucked in and
had to defend ourselves. It was an en-
tirely voluntary error. This adminis-
tration unwisely went into Iraq on in-
accurate grounds; and not only did
they make the wrong war, they have
been disastrously wrong in virtually
every decision. So the question now is,
are we doing more good than harm to
the causes we care about?

I believe, in fact, that fighting ter-
rorism, fighting extremism, fighting
that particularly radical fundament-
alist form of Islam, not all Islam, ob-
viously, by all means, that that is
Weakened by our being in Iraq. It has clearly weakened our effort in Afghanistan. The commanders in Afghanistan beg for more troops, and instead they go uselessly to Iraq, uselessly not because of the lack of capacity of the fighting people but because they are condemned to fight in a very mistaken strategy.

It has emboldened radicals elsewhere. This administration predicted that our overthrowing Saddam Hussein would strengthen the forces of moderation. In fact, it strengthened them.

Let's remember that when America invaded Afghanistan with the overwhelming support of both parties and the united support of this country, we were popular in the world. We mobilized the world. And since that time came the invasion of Iraq. And because of the mistaken decision and the poor way in which it is carried out, I do not think there has been a time in recent history when America has been less able to influence in the world the things we want to accomplish.

So then the question is, okay, but isn't this escalation going to change that? There is zero reason to think that. First, we are told this is what the administration says. If every group of people forfeited their right to be list

tened to, it is the collection of people who have shown an aggressive incompetence with regard to Iraq. Can anyone think of a single decision from the invasion forward that has been correct, that has been borne out by events?

So why do you take people who have been wrong about everything, wrong about the politics, wrong about the military situation, wrong about the economy, and then you say, oh, but this time we think they got it right. Maybe it is the theory of random occurrences, that people, having been wrong so often and so consistently, they can be right one. But that is not a basis on which we ought to be making a decision.

This war in Iraq continues to hurt rather than help our efforts overall. If I thought we were doing some good there, then it would be a different story. But the causes of the disaster, in addition to the rampant incompetence of this administration at virtually all levels, the cause of the disaster is internal, it is ethnic and political and a whole range of other things within Iraq. It is not a lack of American firepower.

So to try to resolve this disaster by taking the advice of people who created the disaster and have been wrong about it would be a terrible error, and I hope the resolution will correct that.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, let me just take 2 minutes to respond to my colleague who has just made a number of points.

First, there are a number of live Democrats that I like to refer to. When somebody asks me whether or not Saddam Hussein was indeed a dangerous terrorist in and of himself, I like to take the words of all of the Democrat leadership of this country in the 1990s, when, in their words, there was no Bush administration to trick them, who made that point very, very forcefully.

Secondly, the invasion of Iraq and the taking of Baghdad in record time with very low casualties has been described by most military leaders as being a remarkably efficient and effective operation. While we had some people saying that our troops would be bogged down, the same talk shows would be interrupted with a news flash that Tommy Franks had taken yet another stronghold of Saddam Hussein.

We took Baghdad with very low casualties, very, very quickly, in a very effective and efficient military operation.

Lastly, I don't think that the gentleman can say that there have been no ripples, no ripples whatsoever in the Middle East with respect to freedom and democracy and people wanting to be free as a result of the elections in Iraq. There clearly was action in Libya where they moved lots of parts of their nuclear weapons program which are not now residing in the United States. I think as a result of American actions there. Clearly actions toward freedom, toward ejecting the Syrians from Lebanon and moving toward multiparty elections in Egypt. All imperfect to be sure but nonetheless reactions from our operation in Iraq.

Lastly, I would just say to my colleagues, there are no smooth roads. The smooth roads not taken, that have been held out by the armchair critics, like we should have kept Saddam Hussein's army in place, that was an army with 11,000 Sunni generals. What are you going to do with an army with 11,000 Sunni generals? Certainly, not establish stability in a country in which you have a Shiite majority.

The idea that we needed to have 300,000 Americans in Iraq and yet at the same time pretend on the face of it, a number of the critics have said, on the military apparatus.

So I think a number of the gentleman's points have been strongly disproven by the American operation in Iraq. We are in the second period right now of a three-phase operation: stand up a free government; stand up a military capable of protecting that free government; lastly, the Americans leave. Let's give the second phase a chance to work.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you, Mr. HUNTER, for your leadership, your military service, and your son's military service.

Mr. Speaker, complete discussion regarding the war in Iraq is impossible, because the conflict is as complex, as diverse, and as difficult as it is. But the United States has a fundamental interest in ensuring that Iraq is a stable, prosperous, and democratic nation. Our national security and the security of our fellow citizens depend on it.

To the gentleman from California wants to claim that the current situation in Iraq is a success, he is entitled to his opinion. I want to make it clear that it is a central front in the global war on terrorism. In January 22, 2007 transcript, Zawahiri boasted, "The backing of the jihad in Afghanistan and Iraq today is to back the most important battlefields."

The enemy know Iraq is the central front of the global war on terrorism. In the January 22, 2007 transcript, Zawahiri boasted, "The backing of the jihad in Afghanistan and Iraq today is to back the most important battlefields."

We must put our trust in the commanders on the ground who are living the situations we are merely debating. General David Petraeus in Baghdad is an accomplished general with a proven record of success. He has expressed his confidence that victory in Iraq can be achieved—provided he has the personnel required to do so. General
Petraeus has just been unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate to lead our troops in Iraq. We need to support him with reinforcements.

In my six visits to Iraq, I have gone to encourage our troops, but each time it is as if they were discouraged me. They know firsthand that the enemy is fighting us today in Iraq want to fight in the streets of America tomorrow. We must face them today to protect American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

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

The question is, where are we today? We are looking at this conflict today and the consequences that it has upon tomorrow and tomorrow's military readiness.

I spoke about the lack of readiness last summer. Others did as well. We had a hearing on it a good number of months ago, our committee responded, and we thank the gentleman from California for helping in that massive effort to re-equip our Army as was necessary, and hopefully we will be able to do more in the future.

But where are we today? Yesterday regarding the issue of readiness of our Army, the Army Chief of Staff, General Schoomaker, said that the increase of 17,500 Army combat troops in Iraq represents only the tip of the iceberg and will potentially require thousands of additional support troops and trainers as well as equipment, further eroding the Army's readiness to respond to other world contingencies.

In the last 30 years, there have been 12 military engagements, some large, some small, that our country has engaged in. The Pentagon says they are burdensome by war, I leave you Bob- by's challenge:

"Diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped each time a man stands up for an ideal or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls."

Our vote for this resolution will not stop the war in Iraq. It will not restore the shattered and broken lives here in America and in Iraq. It will not bring peace and stability to Iraq. But it will send a tiny ripple of hope.

I still believe in that tiny ripple of hope.

I still believe in diverse acts of courage.

I still believe in the greatness of America.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) for 4 minutes.

Mr. KIRK. I thank the distinguished chairman.

Our uniformed men and women have given great service to the Nation by fighting tyranny's terrorizing elections in a region that only knew dictatorship. In my judgment now, the time for decisive military action led by American and British forces is ending and the Iraqi stage should be delivered to new political leaders to work out their own differences. I will support the House resolution that recommends against the troop surge because the United States should increase the responsibilities of the elected Iraqi government to solve its own problems while reducing the number of American combat troops sent overseas.

I did not come to this conclusion lightly. The long-term security of our country depends on the United States not being defeated in the Middle East. To prevent the collapse of democracy, tolerance and supporters in our region, we need a policy that relies on America's key strengths and builds additional support among our citizens and allies.

Looking back on the last years, our troops in Iraq achieved two major objectives: First, they ended the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, a leader that...
invaded two separate United Nations member countries and ordered the murder of several hundred thousand Iraqis. Second, they backed the United Nations’ sponsorship of Iraq’s three national elections that approved a new constitution and government.

Iraq is no longer a military threat to her neighbors or minorities, especially her Kurdish allies, who no longer fear that a third genocide campaign will be launched by their very own government. These are major achievements, worthy of the bravery and sacrifice of Americans in uniform.

But Iraq now faces new challenges that should be solved by Iraqis, not the U.S. military. Iraq’s government, led by a Kurdish president and a Shia prime minister, faces a daunting enemy composed of people that would restore the old dictatorship, or worse. But this struggle is primarily political, not military. Foreign troops, be they American or British or otherwise, are not well-suited to advance the elected government’s writ.

In the coming months we should build a longer term plan for the United States and our allies in the Middle East. Man for man, Iraqi combat troops operating under the authority of their own elected government are better suited for this mission than Americans on the other side of the Persian Gulf. The U.S. military can offer unique advantages to the Iraqi government in our ability to provide the Iraqi army and police with logistics, communications, training and intelligence, in a way that only Americans can provide. Over the coming months, Americans should be focused on these missions, making sure that our Iraqi allies are more effective in extending the authority of their government. By winding down the combat duties of Americans, we will dramatically lower the risk to our men and women stationed overseas while providing a decisive advantage to the elected government of Iraq. This is how to win the battle and secure a lasting government for the Iraqi people.

Our plan should be strengthened by a diplomatic initiative among Iraq’s neighbors and the World Bank to support the elected government in its plans for reconstruction. To date, the World Bank has been ‘absent without leave’ to help to the new, fragile, member of the International Bank For Reconstruction and Development.

Our efforts, based on the key American advantages, while reducing the number of American combat troops, will increase the prospects for peace and build support for our goals here and among our allies.

Mr. Speaker, I join with many Members today to say if it were up to us, we would recommend a different course of action that involves less risk to Americans. I am fully aware that the Constitution does not place 535 Members of Congress in the direct military chain of command, and Americans who wear the uniform are also not shy in debating various courses of action. They have as many opinions on various issues as any civilian community, and that is their birthright as Americans. But as volunteers who wear the uniform, they take on an additional responsibility to make a decision, to bring an end to the debate, and to confront the enemies of the United States as brothers and sisters united by a common bond.

In coming days, our troops will face danger as they make a decision, and to confront the enemies of the United States as brothers and sisters united by a common bond.

Mr. SPEAKERS: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to my distinguished colleague from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), the chairman of the Budget Committee and also a member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. SPRATT: Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and rise to support the resolution and to talk about something the President seldom mentions, the cost of the war in Iraq.

In deciding what we should do, cost is not the determining factor, but it is considerable, and with costs overall approaching $500 billion, it has to be a factor.

During the first Persian Gulf War we had real allies, Britain, France, the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia, and our gross cost was around $80 billion in current dollars. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States contributed in kind about $16 billion, and allies like Germany and Japan and Saudi Arabia contributed in cash around $50 billion, so the net cost to the United States was a mere $4 billion.

Because we had allies willing to share the burden, the cost of the first Gulf War was minimal. But in this war our President was able to enlist only one major ally, Great Britain, and he left us to go it alone with a motley coalition. That is why this war is proving more costly than the first, in lives and in dollars. So far, over 3,100 service men and women have been killed in action; so far, over 23,000 have been wounded in action, many of them grievously; and so far, Congress has appropriated $379 billion for the war in Iraq.

As we speak, two supplemental appropriations bills are on deck. One is to cover operations in Iraq for the rest of fiscal 08; the other is to cover operations in Iraq at the rate of $8.6 billion a month, and considering the supplemental for 07, with $170 billion, and the surge in Baghdad, the obligation rate will probably rise to $10 billion a month by the end of this year.

So far, over 3,100 service men and women have been killed in action; so far, over 23,000 have been wounded in action, many of them grievously; and so far, Congress has appropriated $379 billion for the war in Iraq.

The Pentagon says that in Baghdad, the obligation rate will probably rise to $10 billion a month. Surely, the cost will be declining from a little over 200,000 soldiers today to a steady state of 75,000 in 2013. If future costs are split 75-25, then over the next 10 years that is another $600 billion in store for us. Surely, we should ask whether we want to raise our commitment of troops and thrust them into a civil war with no clear exit, no time-table for completion, and, worse still, an urban war.

The Pentagon will say they can’t see past 2008 and they don’t know what the budget is for the outyears, and they will probably dispute this end state of 75,000 troops in the two theaters 10 years from now. And I hope they are right.

But there are other costs, the cost of ‘reset,’ of refurbishing or repairing our equipment, which our commanders have told us could easily be $60 billion, so we can say it to $70 billion. And I haven’t talked about the toll on our troops and their families, where some will soon be leaving for their third tour. The dwell time between tours is now 1 year instead of 2 years.

Whenever you go into the field to visit these troops, you have to be impressed with their attitude, with their readiness to serve and their willingness to sacrifice. I have always come away from these experiences saying thank God there are such Americans. They deserve our admiration and support, but they also deserve something else. They deserve not to be asked to do
what Iraqi troops and Iraqi police should do themselves.

For the past 2 years, the Bush administration has said to us just before, just wait, because we are training Iraqi forces, and as soon as these forces are stood up, ours can be stood down. But 118 Iraqi battalions have been stood up, and none of ours have been stood down.

In the Defense Authorization Act for 2006, Congress enacted this policy into law. We called for 2006 to be a year of transition. That transition has not occurred because they know the terrible price that will be paid if our adversaries prevail. They have seen, as I have seen when I traveled to Iraq, what a world our enemies would have us live in. It is a world filled by a grotesque and distorted vision of God. It is a world of slavery and submission, where the Almighty is not a benevolent and loving creator of his children, but rather is a pagan idol that demands blood sacrifice and glories in the innocent.

You need look no further than the carnage in Baghdad, or Kabul, or Mogadishu, or never let us forget the Twin Towers, to see the truth in that axiom. That is what our enemy, for all their talk, and we are all that stands between our adversary and the realization of this nihilistic vision.

Mr. Speaker, there are those in this House who are far better versed than I in the strategy and military calculations that are the essence of this conflict. There are those who say that we mistakenly entered the war in Iraq on the basis of flawed intelligence. This, I think, understimates the nature of our adversary.

Given the expansiveness of our enemy’s nightmare vision, I think it is safe to say there would have been a war in Iraq no matter what we did. That, of course, will be for historians to decide. But this much I do know: We stand for hope. We fight for peace in a world that is free. We sacrifice now so that the little children that I met when I was in Iraq might live in a better world to tomorrow. And when we have a better world, we Americans will live in a safer one. To quote DeGaulle, “Behind this terrible cloud of our blood and tears here is the sun of our grandeur shining out once again.”

Mr. Speaker, I do have one concern. I think that we in this Congress have allowed too wide a gap to develop between the society we help to govern and the war we have been compelled to wage. We have this, because we will not win this war in Iraq or beyond unless we as a Nation come to grips with what we face and begin to act accordingly.

We must never forget, the quote Lincoln gave a generation ago is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed.” Right now I look around me and I see a Congress and a country distracted, and nothing could be deadlier to our security and our hopes for a better future.

To some extent, this is understandable. America is and has every right to be tired of conflict. In 1917, for the first time we went “over there” to make the world safe for democracy. In 1941, in Churchill’s evocative phrase, the new world stepped forth, yet again, to the rescue and liberation of the old.

Then after 1945, we stayed on to wage the long twilight struggle that came to be called the Cold War. Then, in 1989, a miracle. We stopped holding our breaths. The Berlin Wall came down and the Soviet Union disappeared. The hair trigger nightmare of the nuclear world seemed to recede. We came off of the figurative tip-toes on which we had been standing for nearly 50 years. We had grown so accustomed to it that when the Cold War ended, we scarcely realized just how nerve wracking, and what a strain, it had all been.

And I am afraid the gentleman is correct, that they are the only ones that will do it if the case is just, and the cause is just.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the sad duty to attend the funerals of several of the servicemen killed in Iraq who come from my district. There are those who say that we should not withdraw from Iraq because we would mean that they died in vain. That is not correct. Nothing that we have done or will do will ever subtract one ounce from the valor and nobility of those who have died in the service of their country.

As Lincoln said in the Gettysburg Address, “We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our power to add or detract.”

However, we should pause to note that our service men and women are fighting and dying because they know the terrible price that will be paid if our adversaries prevail. They have seen, as I have seen when I traveled to Iraq, what a world our enemies would have us live in. It is a world filled by a grotesque and distorted vision of God. It is a world of slavery and submission, where the Almighty is not a benevolent and loving creator of his children, but rather is a pagan idol that demands blood sacrifice and glories in the innocent.

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Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding. I have great respect for him, and I know of his strong dedication to the troops and to the people serving.

I had in my office yesterday a constituent, a young man that played football for my brother at home. I introduced him to the chairman. He has spent the last 3 years at Walter Reed. He says he is like one of those dinosaurs that has a big mouth and two hands that he can’t use, and he does struggle a bad leg. He was a master sergeant and he protected his troops but he took rounds from mortar. In talking to him he said, this debate is very distracting and hard for the morale of the troops.

I pray that they will understand that all of us have different feelings, but we do understand their devotion and their commitment to duty, and they understand our commitment. We just see things differently, and at the end of the day, I hope what we end up doing is what will be best for our troops as well as for our country and for the world.

Mr. SKELTON. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman. He reiterates what I have been saying, that it seems like the members in uniform and their families are the ones truly involved in this war.

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 157, and as the designee of the majority leader, I request that this rule be adopted, and an hour, equally divided and controlled by the leaders or their designees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, that will be the order.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution.

I fundamentally disagree with the President’s plan to add thousands of troops to the Iraqi conflict. It is time for a new course in Iraq, a rational course, a more humane course of action. It is long past time to start a phased withdrawal of our troops from Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is about policy and direction. Surely, the facts on the ground cannot be used to support continued or increased combat involvement in Iraq. Iraq is in a civil war. That is the truth, and it is time we accept the facts of that truth. Our soldiers have no business acting as unwanted umpires or surrogate police officers.

The latest National Intelligence Estimate concludes the term “civil war” accurately describes key elements of the Iraqi conflict. If this is the state of the current conflict, what do we expect the U.S. military to do about it? Settle centuries of theological or religious disagreement? Become diplomats? Whose side do they choose and what would their policy be?

I do not believe combat forces permanently stop such conflicts. The troops themselves tell us they are untrained for this role, a role that puts them at extreme risk.

Yet, the President mistakenly continues to believe we are fighting illusory battles on phantom battlefields. So, in his mind, we need more troops. I disagree. Let us place our troops in an untenable, lethal and unwinnable situation.

Mr. Speaker, I did not come here to ignore my oath to the American people. I did not come here to watch our Constitution be rewritten by presidential arrogance and disregard. And I did not come here to relinquish my sworn duty to protect and defend this sacred document. I did not come here to ignore the American people who want this war stopped.

Mr. Speaker, support this resolution and begin a phased withdrawal.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARLETT), a member of the Armed Services Committee.

(Mr. BARLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, when the original resolution that brought our military to intervention in Iraq came to the Congress, I interpreted it as asking the Congress to turn over to the President our military to do anything he wished, anywhere he wished, against any country he wished, now and forever more.

Feeling that this was patently unconstitutional, I was very pleased when the International Relations Committee, chaired at that time by Henry Hyde, reviewed the resolution and narrowly focused it on Iraq. That resolution had strong encouragement for the President to obtain a U.N. resolution so that when we went into Iraq it would be a part of a U.N. coalition. The U.N. would own that war; we wouldn’t own it.

When the President did not get the U.N. resolution so strongly encouraged by that original resolution that we voted on, I then voted for the Spratt substitute because I felt that if we were going to send our young men and women into war, that it needed to be with the full support of the American people through their elected officials, and we needed to have that additional debate. That didn’t happen. I felt that we went in with unrealistic expectations.

There is no country around Iraq that has anything like the government that we would like for them to have. Several of the countries have dictatorships. We call them royal families. Saudi Arabia, the Arab Emirates, Kuwait, but they are dictatorships. Several countries, Jordan and Syria, have kings. Iran is essentially a theocracy run by a mufti. The only country that comes even close is the vestiges of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey, where they have a sort of democracy, but several times in the last few years the military has thrown out the civilian government, telling them they need to start over, hardly the kind of government that we have in this country and that we envision for Iraq.

So I thought that there were very unrealistic expectations. That was a very steep hill to climb; that success was unlikely, and therefore, I wanted to go in under a U.N. resolution.

What now? I hope I am wrong, but I believe that there will be one of two
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Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER).

Mr. SNYDER. Personally, Mr. Speaker, I wish this resolution of disapproval articulated our disapproval of the administration’s failure to accomplish certain chores in preparation for our fine troops undertaking this new mission under General Petraeus.

Everyone, including the President, now acknowledges mistakes over the past 4 years, but those well-documented errors are not the mistakes I am talking about. Now, today, mistakes are being made. Now, today, high-ranking officials in the administration fall short in their performance.

Why, after 4 years of the Iraq war, is the Secretary of State unable to get the appropriate reconstruction, economic development, and other necessary personnel to Iraq? Why did the State Department recently have to request that the Pentagon help fill in these necessary positions? Why have the efforts of political reconciliation been so ineffective? Why has the American diplomatic effort in the region been so ineffective? Where are the trained police and judges who will need to deal with all the detainees to be arrested in Baghdad? Why aren’t an adequate number of property detention facilities not available for these future detainees that are sure to come from an aggressive effort to decrease the violence in Baghdad?

General Petraeus, clearly one of America’s finest military leaders, during his recent opening statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, felt an obligation to plead for the help and commitment from other U.S. government agencies commensurate with what our troops give 24 hours a day, day after day, week after week, month after month.

I have had references being made to Winston Churchill, but I remind those speakers who make such comparisons that we are not a parliamentary system. If we were, the Secretary of State and other high-ranking officials would be gone because of their failures. We are a representative system; and in our responsibility to support our troops, we know we must not just equip and train them. We know that all agencies of American government, the nonmilitary agencies, must pull their load.

So we now have a situation where our new commander on the ground, General Petraeus, says he needs the additional troops. On the other hand, he says he needs all the other agencies of government to step forward with, in his words, “an enormous commitment.”

It is clear this commitment of other agencies is not yet being made. Regardless of the result of this vote today, our troops will still be in Iraq needing the commitment of all government agencies.

The House leadership has stated that this resolution today is the first step of other legislation to come. Other legislation must address the issues of the shortcomings of other agencies of U.S. government, the nonmilitary agencies of U.S. government. Our troops deserve the help.

Mr. DELEUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) 7 minutes.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, since learning we would consider a resolution regarding troop levels in Iraq, I have spent considerable time listening to veterans of this war and other wars questioning some of America’s top national security officials, reading every e-mail, literally every letter on this most serious issue of this day that has come into my office from my constituents. I have listened to voices of leaders of other nations who surround Iraq. I have read the National Intelligence Report. I have read the Iraq Study Committee Report. I have been given books such as “Fiasco” to read, and I have talked to the parents of brave Americans who are on their way into this conflict, and I have heard strong opinions on both sides of this issue, and I have reflected upon my own vote to authorize the war in the first place.

To say the least, it has been an agonizing experience. Agonizing, because I want to do what is right for America with minimal sacrifice to the brave Americans who wear our Nation’s uniform. I want to do what is right to protect our freedom and our security.

I will always remember the days and nights when the smoke from the burning oil wells would fill the apartment I lived in just blocks from that building. I remember the images of that day when rescue personnel were trying to save lives, only to lose their own. I remember the pledge I made to myself that I would never let that happen to America again if I had my way.

So I supported implementation of the 9/11 Commission Report. I supported efforts to improve our intelligence gathering and processing efforts so that America does not miss key indicators of danger or, worse, misinterpret the data that is gathered.

Policy makers must be given accurate, reliable intelligence if we are to make responsible decisions. Had Congress been given an accurate intelligence assessment. I doubt the vote to invade Iraq would ever have come to this floor in the first place, and I certainly would not have cast the vote I cast because the threat was not what we were told it was, despite the horrific bombings of Saddam Hussein and his henchmen sons.

Unfortunately, though, we cannot edit history; we cannot change the
past. Our responsibility is to the present and even more so to the future, America’s future.

In some areas of the world, America has made strong diplomatic progress on the most difficult issues facing our planet. I speak of the recent agreement with North Korea coming out of the Six Party talks. I am reminded of the willingness of Libya to give up its weapons of mass destruction and come into line with the world community.

And while much work remains regarding the development that America’s work with other countries and through the United Nations is having an effect on Iran.

Meanwhile, our troops and our work internationally in Afghanistan continues to show progress, even in light of the recent resurgence of the Taliban. Consider the historic role NATO is playing to bring peace and stability to that far-off land.

So if we are accomplishing good in Afghanistan and elsewhere, why is the situation in Iraq still such a mess? And what can or should America do there now that will hasten Iraq’s move towards stability and hasten the bringing home of our troops to America?

As someone from New Mexico, HEATHER WILSON, so eloquently and forcefully asked this week: What are America’s strategic interests in Iraq, and how can we best achieve them?

These are the serious questions of our day, and these are the issues tragically missing from this nonbinding resolution.

In this new world where war is not waged by armies in uniform with codes of honor but by terrorists who blow up food markets and behead journalists, how do we respond in an effective way to prevent the insanity from coming again to our shores? How best do we prevent a whole region from ripping itself to our shores? How best do we prevent the insanity from coming into line with the world community.

First, this resolution fails to even mention the Iraqi role. Where is the siren call for the Iraqi government to keep its word and perform as promised? We cannot expect for long to do for Iraq what it is unwilling to do for itself.

Second, this resolution fails to even mention the need for this administration to embrace the Iraq Study Group Report’s call for aggressive diplomatic initiatives with Syria, Iran, and other nations in Iraq’s neighborhood. Where is the call for diplomacy? Third, this resolution fails to even mention the need to replenish the equipment that our National Guard units have left behind while serving our country overseas. My State’s own National Guard’s ability to conduct training is deeply affected by lack of equipment.

Fourth, this resolution fails to call on Iran, Syria, and other nations to stop directly or indirectly supplying the weapons and explosives to those who detonate car bombs in Baghdad and elsewhere in Iraq, killing women and children as they try to buy food in local markets. Where is the condemnation of their actions?

Fifth, this resolution fails to define what our strategic national interests are in Iraq and how we can best achieve them.

I know that I stand alone in my State’s delegation by opposing this resolution because by some, I should just vote for it. It would be easier politically for me because then the problem is off my back. It is someone else’s. They will own it. I cannot do that and look at myself in the mirror.

I cannot ignore the counsel recently given to us by diplomats in the region whose advice we ignored when America took on this challenge in Iraq and who now counsel us with most seriousness in the strongest of terms against leaving Iraq. It is still not stabilized. They have made it clear to this Member of Congress that failure in Iraq will have grave and dangerous consequences to the entire region. In short, we broke it, we need to fix it before we leave it.

But fixing Iraq does not mean ending religious differences, differences that have ripped apart that region for 1,300 years or more. Fixing Iraq does not mean installing our form of democracy. Fixing Iraq means ensuring their government can stand on its own and not collapse into a sinkhole that drags other nations in the region into an abyss.

Given the glaring shortcomings of the non-binding resolution we have before us today, I must ask: "Who in Congress, who served in Vietnam have told me its message does undercut our troops. Moreover, it fails to call for the increased diplomatic initiatives in the region, it fails to call for Iraq to do its part, it fails to define our strategic national interests of stabilizing Iraq so as to prevent the creation of another terrorist state. It fails to address the very real needs of our National Guard.

It is unfortunate that the opportunity to actually affect these very serious policy choices was not allowed on the Floor of the House today. It is, indeed, a missed opportunity for America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members not to traffic the well while another Member is in control.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA). Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on January 23 of this year, the President in his State of the Union address said, “This is not the fight we entered in Iraq, but it is the fight we are in.”

Nearly 4 years after President Bush took us to war, 4 years, that is longer than our involvement in World War II, it is fair to say that this is not the debate we expected to have, but it is the debate we must have. We owe it to our troops who have fought honorably and valiantly, and we owe it to the American people.

More than 3,100 American soldiers dead, more than 23,000 American soldiers injured, $500 billion in costs, 14,000 weapons that our Nation bought for the Iraqi Army missing, $9 billion in reconstruction funds missing, Mr. Speaker, stay-the-course has failed, and sending 20,000 more troops is no more than stay-the-course on steroids.

The American people would know this had the previous Republican Congresses exercised their oversight responsibilities to tell the American people what was going on. They would have known, for example, that we have already tried three previous troop surges. In each case, between 17,000 to 21,000 troops. Have we seen the improvement? What does it even mean to have a surge? Where were the hearings to find out how those troop surges went?

Where are the reports? Mr. Speaker, this is a debate long overdue.

The truth is, Iraqis must take responsibility for their own future. When General John Abizaid met with commanders on the ground in Iraq, he was asked, “If we get more troops, will we succeed?” And here is what he told them: “They all said no. And the reason is because we want the Iraqis to do it. It is easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking means ensuring their government can stand on its own and not collapse into a sinkhole that drags other nations in the region into an abyss.
more responsibility for their own future." That. General Abizaid said on November 15, 2006.

U.S. troops are sitting today in the crossfire of a civil war. We have no guarantee that an Iraqi Shi'ite soldier will defend a Shi'ite civilian in Iraq and that an Iraqi Sunni soldier will defend an Iraqi Shi'ite civilian. Iraqis must decide what future they want. Only Iraqis can save Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we need to redeploy our troops responsibly, to continue training Iraqi soldiers, and to refocus our efforts on counterterrorism. And we need a surge in diplomacy, not troops.

The consequences of stay-the-course are real. Just yesterday, President Bush exhorted our allies to help us, not in Iraq, in Afghanistan. The U.S. is spending more troops and billions of dollars more. His words were telling yesterday. Quote, "The Taliban and al Qaeda are preparing to launch new attacks." New attacks. "Our strategy is not to go on the offensive but to go on the offensive." 1,985 days since the 9/11 attacks, and Usama bin Laden remains free, and we hope to go on the offensive in Afghanistan.

Americans deserve to hear the truth and the consequences, not slogans. "Mission accomplished" wasn't true. "Stay the course" didn't work. And this new Congress will not be paralyzed by those who argue that we must stay the course in Iraq to support the troops. The troops didn't chart this course, the troops didn't ask to be plunged into the middle of a civil war, and the troops didn't under-man and under-equip.

It is time that the buck for the debacle in Iraq stops where it belongs: Here in Washington, D.C. And if the President won't accept that reality, then guess what? This new Congress, this new Democratic leadership is prepared to stop the buck here.

This is a debate we must have. This is a debate about us. Us, those of us here in this Chamber. Will we lead? Will we be responsible overseers of this war? Will we heed the call of the American people?

Today, with this vote, Mr. Speaker, we will tell our troops, our generals, our beloved people: We hear you loud and clear. It is time for a new direction in Iraq.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FERGUSON).

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make an important statement about the sacrifices and the sacrifices they have made in Iraq, their dedication, their perseverance and the love and support of their families here at home. I am disappointed that the strategies employed thus far have not been more successful, that our presence in Iraq has been too slow, and I am saddened that those who have drafted this resolution are offering no alternatives of their own for our mission in Iraq. Indeed, they are prohibiting consideration in this Chamber of any alternative.

Therefore, I will vote against this resolution.

I believe most Americans share the same goal for Iraq, a stable government that can serve its people, a strong security force that can protect its people, and a growing economy that can encourage prosperity for its people. We want the Iraqis to succeed, and we want our troops to come home. There is no question and no denying that mistakes in the planning and execution of the war have led us to where we are today. Hindsight is 20/20, and we can offer suggestions for how things should have been done differently, done better, done more effectively during the past 4 years.

But that is not what is going on in this Chamber here today. Members are being asked to vote on a resolution that does not address victory or success. It does not offer a pathway toward the peace and the prosperity that are vital to the region. It simply plays politics with the war and, in so doing, does our troops and their families here at home an injustice.

While no one in this Chamber or any general in uniform can guarantee the success of this new initiative in Iraq, we can safely say that not pursuing it will lead to failure. We could fall into further chaos and transform itself, much as Afghanistan did a decade ago, into a breeding ground for terrorists, who plot attacks not on our troops in Iraq but upon our civilians here at home.

Make no mistake, failure of the U.S. mission in Iraq will not end the war. It will only shift the battlefield. The terrorists are at war with us, whether we fight back or not.

The consequences of failure in Iraq would be as dramatic as the fruits of victory. An Iraqi government stable enough to take the lead role in providing for its own internal security will allow us to achieve our collective goal, the return of U.S. troops. Rather than being allied with terrorists, Iraq would be an ally with America and the war on terror. In so doing, it would honor the more than 3,000 American men and women who have died fighting for its freedom. Those who have been wounded and will bear for their lifetimes the scars of battle.

The status quo in Iraq is unacceptable. We need a new strategy, new tactics, new commanders on the ground, and a new and sustained commitment from the Iraqi government that they will do more of their share.

We know that the road ahead will be difficult and that the prospects for success are dwindling. But I believe a renewed and amplified effort by U.S. forces and Iraqi troops to retain security in Baghdad may offer the best hope we have for the lasting success of the U.S. mission and for the future stability of Iraq's government. It may also be, I believe, our last chance for victory. The President knows this, and I believe the Iraqi government and its people know this, too.

It is in that spirit and with that understanding that I will vote against this resolution. Our collective prayer is for the safety of our troops, for their success, and that they will be reunited with their families here at home as soon as possible.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I love America. America means something to me. No one loves the Constitution more than I. No one believes in the Declaration of Independence more than I. No one respects the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance more than I. No one appreciates the American soldier more than I.

The consequence of stay-the-course today in the well of the United States House of Representatives as a proud American who understands that it is not the Constitution that gives us or protects government of the people, by the people, for the people, but the Declaration of Independence that preserves the concept of all persons being created equal. It is the soldier.

It is not the Pledge of Allegiance that preserves liberty and justice for all, and the soldier. It is the soldier, who shields those who would make real the great American ideals. Regardless as to how we feel about the war, we should all thank God for the American soldier.

Mr. Speaker, our soldiers have done their job. More than 84,000 National Guard and Reservists have been deployed more than once since 2001. More than 170,000 soldiers in the Army have served more than one tour of duty. More than 23,000 soldiers have been wounded, and more than 2,200 of these from Texas were from Texas alone. More than 3,100 soldiers have died, including more than 200 from Texas.

Our soldiers have liberated Iraq from a ruthless, brutal dictator. Our soldiers have answered the clarion call for help for which too many will never come home for the holidays and far too many will never see home again.

So for this I say, God bless the American soldiers, their families, their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, the American people have been that friend, indeed, in Iraq's time of need. In addition to blood, sweat and tears, the American people have spent more than $267 million, not per year, not per month not per week, but more than $267 million per day on this war.

Mr. Speaker, with this money, according to CNN and the National Priorities Project, we could have hired 6.4 million public school teachers. We could have built 3.3 million public housing units. We could have insured 220 million children for 1 year.
On a more lofty level, America has helped the Iraqi people develop a constitution. We have helped the Iraqi people establish democratic elections. We have helped the Iraqis reconstitute their military and overhaul their contingency plans.

Mr. Speaker, after all that we have done, more than 23,000 wounded. After all that we have done, more than 2,000 million dollars. After all that we have done, there are no dead. This is not the war for the Iraqis. We have helped the Iraqi people embrace freedom and democracy.

It is now time for the Iraqi people to seize upon this precious, priceless opportunity and have a free and independent Iraq, something that all the money in the world cannot buy and not even the most powerful military in the universe can impose.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot want liberty and justice for all Iraqis more than all Iraqis want liberty and justice for themselves.

If the Iraqis want government of the people, by the people, for the people, then they, not us, must provide it. We can stay in Iraq forever and never have a free and independent Iraq, not as long as the Iraqi people engage in an uncivil war with each other. You can debate whether it is a civil war or not, but there is no debating that it is an uncivil war that they are having with each other.

Mr. Speaker, because I support our soldiers and oppose the President's policy, I oppose this resolution. I oppose this resolution because I support the President's policy. I oppose this resolution because I want our troops to succeed.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. G. MILLER).

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this resolution condemning the President's proposal for achieving success in Iraq and overall victory in the global war on terror. We are not formulating a battle plan. We are not forming the President an alternative. All this resolution is saying is that we do not support our Commander in Chief, and all it is doing is emboldening the terrorist enemies we are facing today.

I am the first to welcome an open discussion about our involvement in Iraq. But, without the opportunity to consider an alternative, this is not open discussion. Why isn't this an open discussion? Because although the majority party still is not satisfied, they have no plan to lead.

For over a year, the majority party criticized the President for not making changes in his strategy in Iraq. Well, the President has made changes, and the majority party still is not satisfied.

We can all agree that our progress has not been as swift and decisive as we once hoped. We all recognize that the war in Iraq has carried on longer than we wanted and consumed more resources than we expected. However, we all knew from the beginning that it would not be easy, that the war against terror would not be a quick fight.

But when the going gets tough, it does not mean that we should give in and come home. As we cannot and must not turn back, we need a fresh approach to move forward. The President, along with his generals on the ground, have proposed a way forward. He must move forward with a surge to suppress the sectarian violence in Iraq and allow democratic reforms to take hold and economic institutions to flourish.

His plan is the only plan that provides for a way forward in Iraq. For us in Congress, it is not our job to become involved in tactical decisions that will lead to success in our mission. It is our responsibility to help shape the parameters of the mission and to conduct oversight on our progress in achieving the mission.

Republicans in Congress have proposed setting verifiable benchmarks with which we may measure our progress in Iraq. Such benchmarks will help hold the Iraqi regime responsible for advancing democracy, stability and peace in the country. We should be discussing our responsibility as oversight today, but we are not. We are left with debate on an empty and nonbinding resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of Congressman SAM JOHNSON's bill to ensure that funding is not cut off or restricted for members of the Armed Forces deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must support every effort in our fight against terrorists abroad. If the majority allows us an opportunity, I would have gladly supported a vote on that bill to reaffirm that the House will not abandon our Armed Forces under any circumstance.

Whether the majority would like to acknowledge it or not, the fight we are engaged in against terrorists in Iraq is not a new fight. It has been waged for a decade. We have faced terrorists in Beirut, we have faced terrorists in Saudi Arabia, and we have faced terrorists in our own soil on September 11, 2001.

We have learned it is absolutely essential to confront terrorists abroad before they attack us at home. Despite what some of you may say, our withdrawal will not end the terrorist threat. After all, it is they who have declared Iraq to be the central front in the struggle.

We cannot withdraw. We cannot send our troops and other allies the message that this war is quit, when the going gets tough. Instead, we must move forward with the operations in Iraq, with the Iraqi people, to ensure that peace and stability take hold. We must change our strategy as the situation in the field dictates. To do otherwise would be foolish.

But by maintaining our commitment in Iraq, we preserve the prospects of peace. By withdrawing, we surrender our chances of permanent stability in the Middle East.

This resolution in so many words says that we cannot be successful, and we are bound to fail. I refuse to agree.

I refuse to undercut the brave work of our troops by questioning their abilities and refuse to allow terrorists to flourish and our enemies be emboldened and thereby let you, the American people, down.

Our brave men and women risk their lives to provide peace and security here at home, and we are all proud to know such patriots. These young men and women, full of promise, voluntarily defend our Nation wherever they are called.

It reminds me of a young man in my district, and I presented him with his Eagle Scout awards when he was 17 years old. It was in 2003. A little less than 2 years later than that, in 2004, I attended the funeral for Lance Corporal Abraham Simpson, who made the ultimate sacrifice in Fallujah. He was just 19 years old.

When I went to the parents of Abraham and presented a flag that was flown over our great Nation after the funeral, it was honestly one of the most moving experiences I have had, not only in my congressional career but of my life. When I looked at Abraham's father in his car, I couldn't talk. All I could say to him was, "I voted to send him there." And Abraham's dad looked me square in the eye, with as serious a look as he could get, and he said, "Congressman, it was the right vote."

Like so many families across our country, the Simpson family has made a great sacrifice for our Nation. This resolution, however, says that the world, that the men and women like Lance Corporal Simpson, gave their lives for, was worthless, that America cannot be successful in the pursuit of which they nobly sacrificed themselves. I believe that we can, I know that if we stand firm in our principles and remain true to our convictions, we can succeed.

For that reason, I am going to vote "no" on this resolution.

I rise today in opposition to this resolution condemning the President's proposal for achieving success in Iraq and overall victory in the Global War on Terror.

I voted to support our troops and our President, to continue our fight in Iraq, and to honor the sacrifice of those who fought and died for this cause. I voted to put our soldiers and our women, full of promise, voluntarily defending our Nation wherever they are called. We must recommit ourselves to supporting our troops and our President. We must refuse to undermine our military effort abroad, and we must refusal to undermine our military effort at home.

I am a proud cosponsor of the resolution to prevent the funding of any of the President's proposals to withdraw from Iraq. This is not a resolution that puts the military in peril. This is a resolution that puts the military in danger. We must continue to support the troops and the President.

This vote is not about the strategy of the President. This vote is about whether we are committed to our allies and our mission. We must support our soldiers and our President. We must support our troops and our President. We must support our soldiers and our President.

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changes, and the majority party is still not satisfied. Today, the majority party still opposes the President’s strategy, but they have not offered any alternatives. They continue to criticize—destructively and not constructively.

**WINNING THE WAR IN IRAQ**

We can agree that our progress has not been as swift or as decisive as we once hoped. We all recognize that the war in Iraq has carried on longer than we wanted and consumed more resources than we first thought.

However, we all knew from the beginning that it would not be easy—that the war against terror is not something that would be a quick fight, but that it would take years. As history has taught us, war is not an easy prospect and sometimes does not go according to plan. But when the going gets tough, this does not mean that we should give in and come home. That is not the American way and sometimes does not go according to plan.

We must support every member of the Armed Forces deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan. We must support every military operation to Iraqi-led units, the development of democratic institutions and the rule of law in Iraq, and increased regional cooperation and stabilization, are important in moving forward. We must measure our progress in Iraq because the consequences of our withdrawal would be disastrous.

Whether the majority would like to acknowledge it or not, the fight we are engaged in against terrorists in Iraq is not a new fight—it has been waged for decades. We have faced terrorists in Beirut. We have faced terrorists in Saudi Arabia. And we have faced terrorists on our own soil—on September 11, 2001. We have learned that it is absolutely essential to confront terrorists abroad before they may attack us at home.

If we withdraw from Iraq, we give our terrorist enemies—and they are our enemies—a safe haven from which to plan their attacks against us and our allies. Despite what some of you may say, our withdrawal will end the war. By withdrawing now, the terrorist threats we thought we had declared Iraq to be the central front in this struggle. If we withdraw, it will only encourage the terrorists. They will not rest until their agenda of violence and hatred is advanced worldwide. We cannot withdraw. We cannot send our troops and our allies the message that we will quit when the going gets tough.

Instead, we must move forward with operations in Iraq—with the Iraqi people—to ensure that peace and stability take hold. We must change our strategy. The situation in the field dictates that otherwise would be foolish. But by maintaining our commitment to Iraq, we preserve the prospects of peace. By withdrawing, we surrender our chances for permanent stability in the Middle East.

**CONCLUSION**

The United States has a long and proud history of championing liberty. As a Civil War history enthusiast, I am reminded of the parallels between this generation’s fight against terrorism and the Civil War. Both wars brought new and grave challenges to our people and our way of life. Both struggles were fought with opposition in the press and in Congress. But imagine what would have happened to our nation if President Lincoln did not continue the fight to preserve our union.

Just as Lincoln fought against all odds and in the face of grave danger to ensure freedom for all people and to preserve democracy, our troops are doing the same today. Just as Lincoln was successful by standing firm in his commitment to liberty and democracy, I strongly believe that we can—and will—be successful in Iraq if we are to ensure our freedom for the future.

This resolution, in so many words, says that we cannot be successful—that we are bound to fail. I refuse to agree. I refuse to undercut the brave work of our troops by questioning their abilities. I refuse to abandon our Iraqi allies when they need us the most. And I refuse to allow terrorism to flourish and our enemies to be emboldened and thereby let you, the American people, down.

Instead, we must go forward. We must continue to support our troops and their important work in Iraq. We must tell them loudly and clearly that the American people stand with them as they fight to bring liberty and security to Iraq.
patriotism of someone on the other side of that issue. That tactic was tried by Senator Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s. It was wrong then, it is wrong now.

In our democracy, there is nothing patriotic about questioning the patriotism of someone on the other side of that issue. That tactic was tried again in the 1950s. It was wrong then, it is wrong now.

I believe it is necessary to send a blunt wake-up call to the Iraqi government. Passage of this resolution would deny our military leaders and our troops this one last opportunity. 

Like all Americans, I want to bring our troops home safely, successfully and soon, but now is not the time for an immediate withdrawal. Now is the time to support our troops, support the values they fight for, and do everything possible to give them the best chance to succeed in their mission.

This resolution does nothing to help in those efforts. In fact, it does the opposite. It is for this reason that I must oppose this resolution.

The American people are well aware of al Qaeda’s plans to turn Iraq into a terrorist base, do not trust the President’s judgment in the war, and make America less safe.

The simple reality is that two-thirds of the American public, including myself, do not trust the President’s judgment when it comes to the war. It is a conflict that has been defined by mismanagement and misinformation since it began, and the results have been devastating for the Iraqi people and for our men and women in uniform.

We know that top administration officials, men like Douglas Feith, abused the public trust and misled the work of the intelligence community when making the case for the war. It is a conflict that has been defined by mismanagement and misinformation since it began, and the results have been devastating for the Iraqi people and for our men and women in uniform.

The American people are well aware of al Qaeda’s plans to turn Iraq into a staging area for global terrorism. Failure would destabilize the country, destabilize the Middle East, and make America less safe.

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another nation’s civil war. 84 troops were killed last month, 48 more have been killed already this month.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, corruption, fraud and lack of oversight have haunted every aspect of our involvement. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, has uncovered $10 billion in reconstruction funding that simply disappeared once it was sent overseas. Projects critical to the rebuilding and stabilization of Iraq society have been bolted together firms, firms that failed to live up to their responsibilities.

To cite one example, the construction of a new Baghdad police college to train Iraqi security officers, a $75 million project of vital importance to stability, was completely undermined by a private construction company. The work was so shoddy that the classrooms it built posed a health risk to the students and had to be abandoned. That sad lack of oversight for years have posed mortal risk to our soldiers.

In January of 2006, we learned that 80 percent of the U.S. Marines who had died of upper body wounds in Iraq would have lived if they had had the proper armor. A Pentagon report released last month stated once again that our troops have been sent into battle time and time again without proper armor equipment, a reality which still exists today.

This simply hasn’t been a case of going to war with the army you have, as Mr. Rumsfeld said. We have faced these shortages in part because the Pentagon contracts were given to companies who weren’t up to the job and couldn’t meet the demands of the conflict.

A legitimate question might be, are we funding the troops or are we funding crooked contractors and Iraq government officials? Hundreds of dollars have simply disappeared. These are borrowed dollars, ladies and gentlemen, mainly from China.

My friends on the other side of the aisle made two arguments against the resolution. They have told us that to condemn the President’s surge means that this Congress is giving up in Iraq, and they told us that we cannot support the troops without supporting their mission.

Quite frankly they have done their job in Iraq and they have risked their lives countless times, but now they are being asked to do something that no army can do, find a military solution to a political problem. If the mission we have given our brave soldiers is the wrong one, and the past 4 years prove that it is, why would we help our enemies by refusing to change course? If that mission is the wrong one, how is supporting the mission that is wrong supporting the troops? If the mission is the wrong one, why is demanding a change giving up? Giving up means just the opposite, it means insisting on a continuing failing strategy.

This escalation of the war is the same failed strategy, all it will do is put more and more of our young men and women in harm’s way. That reality has led it to be opposed by a bipartisan majority in this House. A Republican Representative recently said, ‘This is not a fresh approach, it is just more of the same.’

The plan has been publicly opposed by numerous high-ranking generals, such as General John Abizaid, General Colin Powell and General James T. Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps. He recently said that the Joint Chiefs “do not believe that just adding numbers for the sake of adding numbers, just thickening the mix, is the necessary way to go.”

We need to stop this escalation and change what we are doing in Iraq. We need to promote a political solution and a diplomatic solution to the problems.

I urge the passage of this resolution.

Mr. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to Mr. FOSSIELLA, who represents the families of multiple victims of the 9/11 attacks on our Nation.

(Mr. FOSSIELLA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOSSIELLA. I thank the lady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the question before us is whether the front line in the war on terrorism moves from Baghdad back to America.

Although this resolution is non-binding, the message it sends to our troops on the battlefield and to our enemies is crystal clear. Our words have consequences, as powerful as our actions. We must choose them carefully, for they are being listened to all over the world. And the words this Congress speaks today will send a message to both our allies and enemies about our resolve.

It is not a contradiction to support our warriors in battle and also to seek a lasting peace. That principle has guided us through tougher times than this. Indeed, it is America’s gift from one generation to the next that we create a Nation that is stronger, freer, more prosperous, and more likely to enjoy God’s world in peace.

To abdicate this responsibility for political expediency is a dereliction of duty and a sign of lost faith in the promise of America.

Throughout history, it has been proven that you cannot surrender the battlefield and still win the war. This war on terrorism was thrust upon us. America and other free nations were attacked by evil forces. To leave these forces unchecked would stoke the insatiable appetite of the beast. We know this because we have seen it before.

Regarding the fall of Cambodia, Henry Kissinger wrote in his book, Mekong, Sirik Matak, who was the prime minister, was asked by then Ambassador John Dean if he would like to be evacuated, as the United States had just announced it was leaving. The prime minister responded, in part: Thank you for your offer to transport me towards freedom. I cannot, alas, leave in such a cowardly fashion.

As for your great country, I never believed for a moment that you have the sentiment of abandoning people which have chosen liberty. You have refused us your protection and we can do nothing about it. You leave, and my wish is that you and your country will find happiness under the sky. But mark it well, that if I shall die here on this spot and in my country that I love, it is no matter because we are all born and we must die. I have only committed this mistake in believing in you, the Americans.

The very next day the New York Times reported the evacuation with the following headline, "Indochina Without Americans: For Most, a Better Life."

As for the Prime Minister, he was shot; and it took him 3 days to die without medical help. Every other government official and their families were executed, and two million Cambodians were roused from their homes and led to the slaughter like cattle.

Is this the fate we wish to leave millions of Iraqis who have tasted freedom and decades of oppression? Is this the fate we wish for our allies and the leaders who are nurturing an infant democracy?

Is this the legacy we choose for our airmen and our soldiers and for those heroes who have fallen?

With an open mind I have spent hours this week listening to the debate. Like many Americans, I was willing to listen to new ideas and explore a new course in Iraq. But an opportunity wasted, because all I have heard is no from the other side. I have not heard a plan, nor have I heard a strategy.

And let me be clear. It is not my place to question one’s motivation or patriotism. But I can question judgment. This resolution is either an endorsement of the status quo or a clarion call of retreat, and neither is acceptable to me or to many in this Chamber.

Some now talk about a slow bleed strategy to cut off funding for our troops. I ask, if we surrender this battlefield, which battlefield will our enemy choose next? Will it be New York? Will it be Los Angeles? Will it be Washington, D.C.?\r\n\n**Appeasement does not work. Just look back. The World Trade Center in 1993, Somalia, the Khobar Towers, Kenya and Tanzania, the USS Cole and, of course, September 11, 2001.**

This copy of the Staten Island Advance, my local paper, shows the faces of some of the victims, 240 on this sheet alone. These are the people I know, and they were the people who we promised, these 240 people who left 450...
children without parents because they perished because evil people attacked this country. We made a promise to them that we will never let this happen again. I ask you, do we break that covanent? Do we surrender to the beast? To that, I simply respond, no.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. Wu).

Mr. WU. Fanaticism. George Santayana famously said, "redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim."

Let us measure our efforts against our aims in Iraq. After great effort, Saddam was defeated. As I lead every one of us have established there are no WMD. We have eliminated Iraq as a threat to its neighbors. We have achieved the President's war aims.

What we are spending 21,000 more troops there, rather than redeploying all our troops out of Iraq? Because we have forgotten our aims. Now we revere a civil war between the peoples of Iraq. The President admitted as much in his State of the Union, saying "This is not the war we entered but the war that we are in."

The use of force resolution we passed in 2002 nowhere authorizes our participation in an Iraqi civil war. It has, therefore, expired. The President must come back to Congress for reauthorization if he wishes to wage further in Iraq or to extend the war to Iran.

The fact that we are in a civil war is backed up by our own national intelligence agencies as well as my conversations with soldiers who served, serve or who will serve in Iraq.

I share with you a typical comment: "I joined the Army, and I will go as long as they send me. But I will tell you what. These folks have been killing each other for 1,000 years. They are killing each other today and may kill each other for another thousand years. I just don't see what good we are doing there.

This loyal soldier deserves our support and our protection.

JOHN MURTHA. His efforts to craft an emergency supplemental appropriations bill to protect our troops is commendable. No soldier should be repeatedly deployed to Iraq without being rested, retrained and ready. To do so is an abuse of our citizen soldiers. It is a criminal dereliction of duty that any government.

The Constitution gives Congress the express power to regulate the military. We must exercise this responsibility and stop the abuse of our troops by building thoughtful guidelines into our defense appropriations bills.

Some want us to believe that we must either stand aside and let the President have his way or use the blunt axe of cutting off all funding for the Iraq war. Not true. Not true. The Constitution give Congress, not the President, the responsibility to regulate the military, there is ample precedent to support Congress's authority in wartime.

In the 19th century, Congress went so far as to require President Andrew Johnson to obtain the signature of General Ulysses S. Grant to any of the President's military orders before it could become valid. The President obeyed.

President Truman was forced in the Youngstown Steel case to recognize that his powers as Commander in Chief were severely limited when they undermined congressional decisions. Even though a steel strike seriously affected our ability to fight the Korean war, the Commander in Chief could not act independently of Nation's laws.

President Bush needs to learn that we are a Nation of laws and that no one in America is above the law. He needs to listen to the American people. He should heed our professional military, rather than shop for a convenient opinion.

The American people understand the challenges in Iraq are political andnone of our military force can retrieve the situation. Only the Iraqis can solve the problems of Iraq. Our staying merely delays their day of full responsibility, and that is why this Iraqi government asked us not to escalate our own efforts. In the great Middle East and the rest of the world.

Failing to achieve victory in Iraq will roll back the clock in the war on terror, giving al Qaeda the opportunity to establish a base in the heart of the Arab world, a place to train, rebuild resources, and plot the demise of American citizens across the globe.

A rapid U.S. withdrawal would lead to chaos, sectarian genocide, and military intervention by Iraq's neighbors.

We can, as the President has proposed, pass the test of wills and implement our plan for victory. The alternative to the President's plan is to retreat from our objectives, setting the stage for regional conflict in which terrorists will roll back the clock in the war on terror, and into the greater Middle East and the rest of the world.

Radical Islamists have declared war on the United States. This is a harsh and striking reality. We did not choose to be put in the cross-hairs of terrorists, and yet we have been for decades.

We do have a choice, however, in whether or not we have the will to win this war. My choice is to provide for the safety of our citizens and the security of future generations. My choice is to oppose today's dangerous resolution. My choice is to vote "no." And I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am happy to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Ms. Clarke).

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in unwavering support of our troops. I support our troops who are stationed around the globe and particularly those stationed in harm's way in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. That is why I wholeheartedly support H. Con. Res. 63 which disapproves
of the President’s decision to deploy more than 20,000 additional combat troops to Iraq, because support of our troops means I must vote to move them out of harm’s way.

This 110th Congress debate marks the beginning of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq and a re-alignment of our strategy utilizing America’s might against the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, we now know that nothing said in justification of this war was fact. It was all fiction created by this administration to justify the unjustifiable.

Our military service men and women are doing their duty. They have accomplished their mission. They have brought Saddam Hussein to justice. Remember, “Mission Accomplished.”

This administration has distracted us from the real war on terror, the war with al Qaeda. When are we going to bring Osama bin Laden to justice?

In Afghanistan, U.S. Central Command General Tommy Franks, the war’s operational commander, misjudged the interest of our Afghan allies. He fired the war from Tampa, with no commander on the ground above the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. The first Americans did not arrive until 3 days into the fighting.

It is noted that Osama bin Laden slipped through the cordon ostensibly placed around Tora Bora as U.S. aircraft began bombing on November 30, 2002. More precisely, bin Laden was in Tora Bora on November 26, 2002, spoke to his fighters about the fight being a holy war, then, as quickly as he had come, bin Laden vanished in the pine forest with four of his loyalists walking in the direction of Pakistan.

Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago, Department of Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said, “He,” meaning Osama bin Laden, “doesn’t have a lot of good options.” Obviously, that was false.

Further, it was reported that the administration pays bin Laden no attention, and that is evidenced by the fact that official reports no longer identify Osama bin Laden as a threat. The administration anticipated that they would have bin Laden erased by September 11, 2002. They failed at that mission.

Again, the failure of this administration to get the job done, to secure our homeland, and to get the man who masterminded the attacks upon us and continues to recruit and train al Qaeda agents is parallel to the failures of our military to accomplish the mission in Iraq. The administration did not plan to fail; they failed to plan.

I support the men and women who put their lives on the line for our liberty. I am indebted to them, the sacrifices they have made, and that is why I support this resolution. We must redeploy and make preparations to leave Iraq today.

As the representative of the 11th District from New York, I and my constituents deeply resent the lies and deceptions thrust upon us to justify this war by creating a distraction away from homeland security we all require as an inalienable right. The fire that I witnessed was not stamped out by the resilience of New Yorkers, Americans who believe in our democracy and the ultimate victory of good over evil.

The question I have and the question of the people from New York and the rest of America wants answered is: When will Osama bin Laden be brought to justice?

Thanks to the failed policies of this administration, Iraq is now in the midst of a civil war. Due to the lies and deceptions, the civil war in Iraq is now raging. We must redeploy our troops now. Thus far, there are 135,544 troops deployed in Iraq today.

Mr. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEERLACH), with whom I had the opportunity to visit his Pennsylvania troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. GEERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the status quo in Iraq is unacceptable, and allowing our enemies to win is unacceptable, too. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this House Democrat leadership resolution, H. Con. Res. 63, for three specific reasons:

First, the language of the resolution is essentially meaningless. Its passage will place the Congress on the side of the status quo.

Second, I heard the Speaker say a few days ago that it is time for a “new direction” in Iraq. But where is this “new direction” in this resolution? It doesn’t demand that all the troops return home. It doesn’t advise the President to send more or even to reassess or relocate one soldier who is in the field today. It simply states, in essence, the current plan is bad. That may be good politics for some in this Chamber, but it is highly irresponsible and is certainly no way to fight a war. If Congress wants to be a true partner in this fight, we must offer clear guidance, not mere criticism of the Commander in Chief. Unfortunately, this resolution is irresponsibly silent on what the “new direction” ought to be.

The second reason to oppose this resolution is that it is fundamentally vague and ambiguous. By only saying that Congress opposes the President’s troop surge proposal of January 10, the resolution does not differentiate between the positive aspects of what the President called for on that date and the more controversial elements as well.

For example, I continue to have a tremendous concern over the President’s plan for increasing our military force level in Baghdad to fight the sectarian violence between the Sunni and Shi’a factions of the Iraqi population. With the current lack of commitment of some Iraqi security forces and police forces to deal effectively with this violence, I am not confident of success of this surge into Baghdad. Nonetheless, I do think the strategy is correct in calling for additional troops to go to Anbar Province to fight al Qaeda terrorists in that part of Iraq and to add more troops along the Iraq-Iranian border to interdict the flow of arms and more terrorists. Unfortunately, again, this resolution does not differentiate between these critical elements of the President’s strategy and, therefore, on its face is weak and flawed.

The third reason to oppose this resolution is that it serves to undercut the morale and the support of our fighting men and women at the very time they are carrying out their orders. The President’s decision of January 10 is now being implemented. Our troops are already carrying out this mission in the field.

I know of no instance in our Nation’s history when Congress has passed a resolution disapproving a mission while that mission is in progress in the field. If any proposed resolution come to the floor and cite a case where Congress has undertaken this type of action while a mission is already under way?

Any politician, it seems to me, who openly disapproves of an ongoing mission in the field only undercuts troop spirit and morale as they move forward, and that clearly lends support to the aims and the goals of our enemies. But don’t accept my view on this. Listen to Gary Kurpius, the National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, who states that this resolution debate is “a major distraction to U.S. forces because it does nothing to improve the morale or strength of their resolve.”

So while I cannot support this resolution for these reasons, I do believe there is a “new direction” for us, as Republicans and Democrats, to unite behind and support. H. Con. Res. 45, introduced by Congressman FRANK WOLF, would declare Congress’s support for the numerous recommendations of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, a distinguished group of Republicans and Democrats that have set forth a plan of action deserving of administration, congressional, and public support.

Included in the group’s recommendations is the call to establish milestones of success for military training, government stability, national reconciliation, which would result in Iraqis taking control of their country and allowing our troops to withdraw; number two, to create an Iraq International Support Group to work with the Iraqi government to achieve these milestones; and, three, for U.S. assistance on training of Iraqi police forces and military personnel with the goal of completing the training by early 2008 so American troops can return home.
Contrary to the flawed, simplistic, and purely political resolution before us, the Wolf resolution offers clear, bipartisan, and nonpolitical direction for Congress to support and to promote in this very difficult time in our involvement in Iraq. Therefore, I urge my colleagues and the Democratic leadership in the House to immediately allow H. Con. Res. 45 to be voted in the full House. Because the status quo in Iraq is unacceptable and victory for our enemies is also unacceptable.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

My colleague from Pennsylvania is concerned about victory for our enemies. Well, the victory for our enemies is made possible by our pursuing a failed policy.

We are creating an inevitable situation in which our country continues to lose prestige and support around the world. But, much more importantly, we are losing the precious lives of our young people; and tens of thousands have been injured.

I was over at Walter Reed. I met and visited with some of the wounded soldiers. And I will never forget the day I met Cassandra Bryant, 20 years old, who lost both legs to an improvised explosive device in Iraq. She was in a mechanical unit that was supposedly nowhere near the front line, but, nevertheless, for the rest of her life, she will have to go without her legs. Her sacrifice on behalf of our country, if in the face of a national security threat, would be understandable, and she was prepared to even give more. But to sacrifice so much. Our young people have done it in a place in a war that we should have never fought, we should have never been in.

There was ample information and evidence that Saddam possessed no weapons of mass destruction. The international inspectors were forced out of the country when, first of all, they found none and they wanted to continue their work.

This administration rushed to judgment into a war in which we have spent hundreds of billions of dollars and in which 3,990 young people have lost their lives. And in Philadelphia, for Mrs. Zappala and for Mrs. Jeff Coat and for other mothers and fathers who have lost their sons and daughters in Iraq, this war and this effort in Iraq, which one suggests if we would just prosecute it more vigorously would somehow overnight become a success, we need to look at the conduct of this war on behalf of our Armed Forces.

This administration has failed our troops on the ground on so many occasions, there is a shortage of bullets. On others, we have seen reports that they were not having access to enough long rifles. We know that they have never had, in the 4 years now, enough up-armored vehicles to be able to do their patrols. We have failed to provide the body armor and Kevlar vests that are necessary and in the quantities that are needed.

The embargo is still in place, and for the Democrat leadership in the House to immediately allow H. Con. Res. 45 to be voted in the full House. Because the status quo in Iraq is unacceptable and victory for our enemies is also unacceptable.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

I was happy at this time to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH).

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

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The embargo is still in place, and for the Democrat leadership in the House to immediately allow H. Con. Res. 45 to be voted in the full House. Because the status quo in Iraq is unacceptable and victory for our enemies is also unacceptable.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Houston’s District Seven, I will vote no, to tell our enemies and our friends that Americans will never quit and Americans will never surrender in the fight to preserve, protect, and defend American freedom.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has mishandled the situation in Iraq from the very beginning.

It misled the country into a war based on false and misleading statements about the threat from Iraq.

It refused to plan for the aftermath of the military victory.

It assumed that we would be greeted as liberators, the occupation would be brief, and that Iraq would pay for its own reconstruction.

It sent our troops to battle with dangerous shortages in body armor and devices needed to defuse remote-controlled bombs.

It sent in too few troops to Iraq to provide security, leaving the Iraqi people to rely on their sectarian militias to give them some protection from the chaos.

It disbanded the Iraqi army and, through an anti-Baathist campaign, gave the Sunnis a sense that the U.S. was aiding the Shites against them.

It refused to take on war profiteering, even as auditors, investigators and inspector generals unearthed massive graft, fraud and abuse by reconstruction contractors.

It alienated the Iraqi people with the shameful and criminal acts of Abu Ghraib prison.

What we now have in Iraq is a defeat.

We cannot achieve the illusions of the Bush administration that we will be able to create a stable, unified, liberal democracy in Iraq that is pro-American.

Instead, we have sectarian fighting, death squads and a destabilized Middle East that threatens to be engulfed by the nightmare that we have unleashed.

If this administration’s mistakes have weakened our war against al Qaeda. In fact, the war has enhanced the group’s terrorist recruitment. The planned escalation in Iraq will divert more troops, resources and attention from the pursuit of Osama bin Laden’s operation in Afghanistan; and we have enhanced the influence of Iran, not just in Iraq but throughout the region.

The President proposes an escalation of a failed policy. The fighting now only prolongs our losses and blocks the way to a new strategy. We are trying now to mediate a civil war, which is impossible. Instead, we are being drawn into that civil war by trying to prop up...
a government that, in the final analysis, cannot unite the country.

Politically, this administration has tied the faith of American soldiers to a Shi’i-dominated government that lacks the authority, the will and the manpower to stop the roving gangs and insurgent militias that have shattered Iraqi society. Instead of acknowledging these failures and embarking on a new course of action, the President gives us more of the same: Send more troops to Iraq.

We need to redefine our mission and our hopes for “success.” Our goal should be to try to stabilize the situation, stop the killing, contain the violence.

We cannot do it alone, and we cannot do it militarily. We must seek a diplomatic strategy with Iraq’s neighbors and the international community.

Certainly, it will take more action than just the resolution before us to bring about the policy changes that we need. The Congress must stand ready to use the checks and balances necessary to extract ourselves from the morass we face in Iraq. We can do that through more oversight, but it is also time for Congress to use the appropriation process to end this war.

We should pass this resolution and make it clear to the President that we will not stand for more of the same.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the ranking member of a subcommittee.

Mr. GALLEGLY. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, my concern about the Iraq resolution offered by my friends on the other side of the aisle is what impact it will have on our troops and our mission and its consequences on our mission. How can you say support our troops when you don’t support sending in the people necessary to back them up? This is the job that we sent them there to do to start with?

Let’s be clear, Mr. Speaker, about who the real enemy is. We are at war with the Islamic jihadists. Jihadists have vowed to destroy America, the West and all sympathizers with democracy. We are at war for our very existence against jihadists who have vowed to enslave us with a fundamentalist philosophy that rejects all human rights.

The consequences of failure in Iraq are not just failure in Iraq. Iraq’s stability has direct repercussions on Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel and all of the Middle East. If our efforts to bring peace and stability there are not successful, we will accomplish a great deal. If not, if Iraq fails, it will provide Islamic extremists with a sanctuary similar to the one we removed from Afghanistan, only the sanctuary in Iraq would be many times worse, as the terrorists would have the access to wealth and oil resources to carry out their evil plans. Such a sanctuary would threaten Europe and the United States.

If we are in support of our military men and women, we must support their mission against Islamic jihadists. The alternative is defeat in Iraq and a greater threat of attack here at home.

A defeat in Iraq would not just be a defeat for the United States. It would also set back any chance for peace and stability in the Middle East. It would empower terrorists to unleash greater sectarian violence, which would draw all of Iraq’s neighbors into a Sunni versus Shi’a conflict for control of Iraq.

I am also concerned about the resolution because it does not offer any alternative whatsoever that could lead to a successful outcome for the United States in Iraq. All the resolution does is to criticize the President’s plan to augment our existing force in Iraq by 21,000-plus troops.

The Democratic resolution offers no other plan. It does not address what should be the right strategy or the right tactics. I think this is the real issue, it endorses the status quo in Iraq, a position that I certainly can’t support, and I hear lots of those that are supporting this say they can’t support either, but they are de facto supporting the status quo by supporting this resolution.

I look forward to the majority offering a comprehensive proposal that would set forth a specific course of action. Then we could have a real debate on the pros and cons of the Democratic plan versus the President’s plan to secure Iraq and defeat the terrorists in that country. Unfortunately, the resolution before us fails to do this, and therefore I can’t support it. It should be rejected.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, as this debate reaches its end, one thing has not been said. Certainly not everything. The House is considering a resolution concerning the Iraq war. It expresses the unequivocal support of this body for the American troops serving in Iraq and for their families. This resolution expresses opposition to the President’s planned surge, escalation, augmentation. Call it what you will. But, more than anything else, this resolution opposes the administration’s deeper commitment to a fundamentally and deeply flawed strategy.

The fact is that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki lacks the authority or the will to confront Shi’a militias. To do so would result in a major confrontation with the militia leader Moqtada al-Sadr, with whom the Shi’a allies of the British and peace-fully created and coexisted in a new, ethnically diverse Iraq.

When is the outrage? Where is the condemnation for these atrocities in the Arab Muslim community? Nowhere does the Koran talk about revenge killings, violence, hate or intolerance. The Koran describes the Prophet Muhammad as the Prophet of Mercy. At the core of Islamic belief is compassion, forgiveness and tolerance: To you your faith and to me mine.

The real possibility of a functioning government, a functioning society, a functioning economy, the National Unity Government of Iraq cannot succeed because it lacks legitimacy in the very eyes of those it seeks to govern. Elections and forming governments are the symbols of democracy. Legitimacy in the eyes of the governed is the substance of democracy and that of free and open societies throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, I don’t stand here as a partisan. I am an American, and I want my country to succeed. I want my President to succeed, regardless of party affiliation, regardless of who he or she may be.

The fact of the matter is, we have an obligation to tell the truth to the American people at every level, militarily and politically. This strategy, advanced and sustained by this administration, has been an abject failure.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), a member of our Foreign Affairs Committee.
Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Speaker, I first want to express our appreciation to the brave men and women of our Armed Forces. I have met with our troops in Iraq and in Afghanistan. I speak with soldiers in Walter Reed and Bethesda Naval Hospitals and the families of those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice defending our freedoms. We thank them for their unwavering commitment to our country. We believe that open debate is the best way for the American people to understand our choices and, most importantly, to give American troops a chance to return home. We have asked our troops to stay and fight for our country, and we must think carefully about our next steps.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the war in Iraq has been challenging. We are fighting a war against terrorists and radical Islamic militants who are determined to kill as many Americans as possible. They believe that killing American soldiers will drive us out of Iraq and out of the Middle East, allowing radical terrorists free reign to expand their influence around the world. These are the same radical Islamic militants who bombed the World Trade Center in 1993, the Khobar Towers in 1996, the embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the USS Cole in 2000. We surely can’t forget the slaughter of 3,000 innocent American citizens on our soil. And just last year a couple arrested in Britain planned to use their 6-month-old baby as a human bomb to destroy a civilian airliner over the Atlantic Ocean.

We must recognize that we are dealing with irrational, radical, maniacal monsters who will not respond to diplomatic niceties. Mr. Speaker, we all know that the vast majority of Americans do not support an immediate withdrawal from Iraq, just as they do not support a never-ending deployment of U.S. forces there. They want us, they expect us, to work together and with the President to find a solution that leaves our troops fighting terrorists abroad. We also must be very careful about the message we send to our allies and our enemies and, most importantly, to our troops in the field who have performed with such courage and valor.

The bipartisan Iraq Study Group has stated that it could support a shorter redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or to speed up the training and equipping mission. If the Iraqi government in Baghdad determines that such steps would be effective, and that is a quote from the Iraq Study Group report. Well, General Petraeus says that it can be effective. Clearly, the path forward must include military and political strategic benchmarks so that we are in a position to measure the progress and commitment of the Iraqi government, but we must also be willing to give our troops, who have sacrificed so much for our Nation, the opportunity and the resources to be successful and provide the short-term support needed to achieve increased stability in Iraq.

There are serious consequences to our national security if we fail in Iraq. Cutting off funding, limiting military options, an immediate withdrawal will only make our future more dangerous. It is time to stop the politics, stop the games, stop the finger pointing, and do what is best for America. Let us put partisanship aside and discuss concrete plans on how we can defeat radical threats and protect our Nation from those who mean us great harm.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROSS). The Democratic side has 9 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) has 13 minutes remaining.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 157 and as the designee of the majority leader, I demand that the time for debate be enlarged by 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the leaders or their designees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, that will be the order.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN), a member of the Defense appropriations subcommittee.

Mr. ROTHMAN. I thank the gentlelady.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in expressing my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the men and women of our Armed Forces, the families of those who have died, who have been wounded or are presently in harm's way.

My prayers and all of my efforts as a United States Congressman are devoted to ensuring the well-being and support of our military, as they fight to protect our Nation, to honor their memories, and to helping them when they return to our country.

Mr. Speaker, after we deposed Saddam Hussein and removed him from power, it became clear to most Americans and most people around the world that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Saddam had no intention of sending Iraqi agents to slaughter Americans on our shores, and Saddam had paid very little attention to foreign terrorists or anyone else who wanted to do harm to America.

Mr. Speaker, now after nearly 4 years and the death of more than 3,300 American servicemen and women, after more than 23,000 American men and women have been wounded, and after the United States has spent almost one-half a trillion U.S. taxpayer dollars in Iraq, I believe we have met our moral obligation to the people of Iraq.

We have given the Iraqi people an opportunity over nearly 4 years to decide whether they will live together with themselves in peace, neighbor to neighbor, Iraqi, Sunni, Shia and Kurd.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the Iraqi people have not yet decided they want to live together with one another in Iraq in peace.

Our having our United States brave men and women standing there, being shot at, being blown up is not encouraging the Iraqis to live together in peace. Not only are our troops dying and being wounded, but 80 percent of the Iraqi people say they want us to leave their country immediately.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush implies that al Qaeda will take over Iraq if we leave. In my opinion that is nonsense. Today, you have less than 1,500 al Qaeda fighters in Iraq, a population of 25 million people. Today, you have not only Iraqi Shiites killing al Qaeda Sunnis, you have Iraqi Sunnis killing al Qaeda Sunnis. They don’t like foreigners in Iraq, whether they be Sunnis, and especially if they are al Qaeda or Americans.

Mr. Speaker, the only hope that our enemies have to destroy the United States is to have us remain bogged down in the swamp of the Iraqi civil war. Are we smart enough to pull ourselves out of that swamp, and get on with the Iraq civil war? Or are we going to continue to allow our Nation to have our soldiers bled, our resources taken away,
Mr. Speaker, leaving Iraq's civil war will serve America's vital national interests by allowing us to rebuild what is now a depleted U.S. Army and U.S. Marines, a military that is not fully up to its strategic requirements to deal with all the possible threats in the world.

We need to refocus on Afghanistan and the resurgence of the Taliban. We need a new strategy. It involves new tactics again on this floor, Mr. Speaker, this is despite what has been said again and again on this floor, Mr. Speaker, this is a new strategy. It involves new tactics and new rules of engagement on the ground. This surge of forces in Baghdad, designed to quell violence in that capital city and enable a political solution to take hold, was part and parcel of the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, which said, as Americans could see for themselves on page 74 of the Iraq Study Group, and as Chairman Lee Hamilton of Indiana said before the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Study Group concluded that a temporary surge, and they used the word “surge,” a temporary surge of forces in Baghdad would be acceptable to them to quell violence.

But while I tell you that many of my colleagues have no confidence in the President’s new way forward in Iraq, I say with respect, I have no confidence in the ability of Congress to conduct war. It was Napoleon Bonaparte who said hundreds of years ago, “I would rather face 20 brilliant generals than one mediocre one.” I would assure you today, Mr. Speaker, that our enemies would rather face 435 commanders in chief rather than one.

Our forefathers rejected war by committee when they enshrined the power to conduct war exclusively in Article II of the Constitution of the United States. In Article I, where this House finds its home, is the power to declare war. It is the power to appropriate funding and to set essentially military rules of conduct by statute. But the ability and the conduct of the war of the Commander in Chief is exclusively vested in the President of the United States, in that document upon which we all swear our oath of allegiance.

So I stand with our Commander in Chief, but also in a very profound sense, Mr. Speaker, I stand with the Constitution.

Vote “no” on this resolution and embrace our Constitution as written.

Mr. Speaker, I am so honored to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia.

Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened to this debate all week, and I must say I admire the seriousness and the civility of most, if not all, of those who have come to this floor in this historic week to address the issue and express themselves on this resolution. But I rise respectfully to urge my colleagues in both parties to vote “no” on this no-confidence resolution.

I support the President’s call for a surge of 21,500 forces in Baghdad because the President has not just asked for more troops for more troops’ sake. Despite what has been said again and again on this floor, Mr. Speaker, this is a new strategy. It involves new tactics and new rules of engagement on the ground.

For too long, Congress has taken a backseat on the President’s handling of this war, but this majority has held more hearings on Iraq than the Republican-controlled Congress did since this war began.

This debate is about not trying to embarrass our President for political purposes. We are debating the essential question because the American people have demanded a change in direction. The President has failed to recognize the will of the people and many of the top military and foreign policy thinkers around the country who view this escalation with little hope of success.

Our constituents spoke with their voices loudly on Election Day, and they have been even more vocal since about the dissatisfaction with the way this war has been managed. Many in this country want to see a deescalation of America’s forces, not the increase the President has proposed.

The President and his advisors created this problem, and it is now on the Congress to find his way to disengage Iraq without causing the country and the region to be engulfed in a further outbreak of violence.

In the last week, we have seen some of the most horrific bombings that cost the lives of hundreds of Iraqis and the downing of several U.S. helicopters. Over 3,000 of our young American men and women have lost their lives; tens and thousands have been physically and emotionally maimed of Iraqi citizens, the vast majority of them trying to live normal lives, have been killed or injured.

This was not how this war was to be conducted.

Four years ago, when this President came to the Congress for authorization to invade Iraq, he stated that Iraq posed a clear and present danger. He talked about how invading Iraq was part of the greater war on terror and how if Saddam Hussein was not toppled, he would attack our allies and maybe even on our own soil.

After seeing the death and destruction at Qaeda did to my city on 9/11 and to our Nation, I wanted to trust our President and all the President’s men and women. When I sat across the table in the Roosevelt Room in the White House from Condoleezza Rice and then-CIA-Director George Tenet, I thought I could trust them. Because of them and their false intelligence briefings, I voted for authorization of this war.

As the only Member of this Congress to lose a relative on 9/11 and as someone who has lost 125 constituents to the attacks of the Twin Towers, I do believe that America must always act to defeat threats before those threats act against us.

As they say, in life, there are no do-overs; and if I could turn back time, I am sure that most of the Members of this Chamber and my colleagues in this House would never have given this President this authority to wage this war in Iraq.
This war has cost us a fortune from our national treasury, a fortune in American lives lost and ruined, and a fortune in our ability as a Congress to trust our Commander in Chief and our President.

Today, we have an opportunity to stand as a group and to say what our constituents want us to say, to say what the Army generals want us to say, to say what many of them, those men and women in our Armed Services in uniform on the front line want us to say: Mr. President, adding more troops is not the answer. Adding more troops to fight what has become a civil war is not the answer.

The answer is we need to start to begin to bring our troops home, reducing our presence in Iraq, and create the conditions for the Iraqi people themselves to stand up and secure their own country.

The Iraq Study Group set out a plan that many of us support, but the President continues to believe that history will judge him favorably. As the Iraqi government attempts to clamp down on the Shi’a and Sunni militias, it has become abundantly clear these forces are not as strong as we have been led to believe, those being the Iraqi government’s forces. I believe we need to look strongly on redeploying our troops in Iraq along the border and in the Kurdish north, removing American citizens from harm’s way in Baghdad and Anbar Province, and pushing the Iraqis, both politically and militarily, to secure these areas. U.S. troops should only be used in an advisory role, not in direct combat.

Mr. Speaker, I have more to submit for the Record, but I want to send our young men and women home as soon as possible and an end to putting them in harm’s way.

Only when the violence stops should the U.S. in small numbers work with Iraqi and multinational forces in keeping the peace, building the military infrastructure and securing long term stability.

Right now, with the exception of Great Britain and a few other countries we are doing all the work, taking all the risk, and losing our best and our brightest while the Iraqis lay waste to their country.

It is time for us to get back to our roots and be the beacon of freedom and democracy that we are.

We need to increase our conversations with the moderate Arab states and get them involved before Iraq, and possibly the whole region, is at war.

The focus should be making sure that countries like Iran and Saudi Arabia are not funding Sunni and Shia extremists, respectively.

Diplomacy is not the end all fix, but it is a start.

Whether or not my colleagues want to refer to the President’s plan as a surge or escalation, I see it as a target on the backs of our armed forces.

This resolution clearly states that the House does not support the escalation, but we will not abandon the safety of our troops by cutting off the supplies they need for force protection.

I do not support this escalation. Instead of bringing our troops home President Bush has decided to put even more of our overburdened arm forces in an increasingly sectarian bloodbath.

Our country has been asking for answers to why we sent both men of the armed forces continue to die in Iraq and we have not received any answers.

Until these answers are forthcoming, I will not support the President’s escalation and I wholeheartedly support this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield 3 minutes to my Florida colleague, Mr. STEARNS, a senior member of the Veterans’ Affairs Committee.

Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. STEARNS. I thank my distinguished colleague, the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

And I want to have the opportunity to speak. I agree earlier on this debate, but I thought I would bring some simple common sense to my colleagues that perhaps was best brought forward by David Broder in the Washington Post. Now, David Broder obviously is more sympathetic to the Democrats, but they are talk to the Republicans, but I think he makes three points which I will also echo in my conversation today.

Basically, we are at the end of the debate, but we are all moving towards a decision. I think the President has decided, but I have some simple common sense that I would bring to the attention of my colleagues.

When General Petraeus was unani mously supported by the Senate, it was with the idea that he would bring his new thoughts, his new strategy to this plan in Iraq. So don’t you think, as members of this body, we should give General Petraeus an opportunity to implement his plan and not immediately move with a resolution that says that is a disapproving of the decision to deploy more troops to Iraq?

When we deployed more troops for the Iraq elections, why didn’t you complain then? That happened twice before. We went up to almost 160,000. When we deployed more troops to ratify the Iraqi constitution, why didn’t you complain back then? That went up to almost 160,000.

So now you are coming against a simple new strategy with the best we have in America who actually has written the manual on how to do it. You are not even willing to give him a chance. No breathing space. This non-binding resolution shows your motives, which are to eventually reduce all funding for Iraq.

My third point is, you are so willing to do this, you are not even willing to look at what could happen with this new strategy. Let’s say it works. Are you still going to offer these resolutions to cut off funds even though this strategy works and General Petraeus is successful? No matter what, you seem hell bent on reducing funds for Iraq. Yet we didn’t hear any time before when we increased the surge for the Iraqi elections or for the ratification of the Iraqi constitution.

You know, in a way, Bush went to your retreat with a willingness to listen to your ideas. He is showing bipartisanship. In fact, he has a quote here which I think illustrates what the American people are saying, “What really matters,” quote, “is what happens on the ground. I can talk all day about what really matters to the American people is to see progress.”

So he realizes also that he must move and we are asking for this new strategy to have a chance, and we owe it to them.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend, the gentlewoman from New York, the chairwoman of the Small Business Committee, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, first and foremost, to praise the courage, performance, and commitment of our troops stationed in Iraq and elsewhere. We are immensely grateful for their sacrifices.

Because of this war in Iraq, today the lives of the 135,000 military families are drastically changed and 125,000 contractor families are divided. Nearly 4,000 U.S. soldiers and civilian contractors have already given their lives. We have lost over 140 young New York military men and women in Iraq.

I voted against this war from day one. It was a mistake then, and it is a mistake today. This week, we have a chance to act. Escalation is wrong, and we must take it upon ourselves to make things right by seeking a political solution to this war.

This administration’s flawed foreign policy has damaged our relationship with our allies. The public opposes this war, Iraqis oppose this war, and this Congress should speak loudly against this war, too.

Our military has been stretched to the brink of breakdown. Our actions in Iraq have set back the war on terror and made problems in the Middle East much worse.

This war has distracted us from our responsibilities at home, too. Poverty is raging. Millions have lost their jobs and health insurance. Families struggle to pay for the cost of transportation, energy, and housing. Yet we have decided to spend $8 billion of hard-earned money every month in Iraq, not at home.

While the cost of the war escalates, our most important social programs for our kids, the elderly, and the poor get slashed to pay for it. We have dug a deep hole of debt to finance this war in Iraq, and we will ask the children of working families to pay off that debt.
These priorities are misplaced. We should be investing in our children, not borrowing against their future.

Our young men and women return from Iraq with all sorts of health problems, both physical and psychological. The trauma of this war will affect the lives of our soldiers forever. This resolution expresses our commitment to supporting our veterans’ needs. We must honor the sacrifices that our veterans have made for this Nation. We must provide for them from the moment they leave to return to their families.

I believe this war is more wrong today than ever before. We must stand forcefully for what is right, for our troops, for the victims of this war, and for the priorities we are neglecting at home.

Let this body send the world a powerful message that the United States is changing course in Iraq. We must end this war.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise for the second time during this 36-hour marathon to strongly oppose this, as I have had to say, meaningless resolution. Mr. Speaker. But make no mistake about it, this is not a meaningless resolution. The consequences of failure in Iraq are drastic, and let me just read to you what some of those are.

Number one, collapse of a democratic Iraqi government, likely, very likely leading to mass killings and genocide in the nation.

Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups would use this defeat to boost recruitment. They would use Iraq as a staging ground for deadly attacks paid for with Iraqi oil revenue.

Iran and Syria would exert tremendous influence over the region. You think they are bad actors now, you just wait until this scenario plays out. And, indeed, and they have said that Israel would be pushed into the sea.

Mr. Speaker, the real Democratic plan is coming later. And if you don’t believe me, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle just read a recent article this week in Roll Call. I am not going to stand up here and read it to the Members. You can read it.

But the Progressive Caucus of the House Democratic Conference, the Out of Iraq Caucus of the House Democratic Conference, led by Ms. WOOLSEY and Ms. WATERS, basically say that this is just the first step. They say that in this op ed article. This resolution is not meaningless. It is the first step, my colleagues, toward cutting off funding for the troops and pulling the rug out from under them.

What does this say then to our brave fighting men and women who are trying to defend this country? We have heard the opposite again from the other side that, “Look, we can’t afford this war anymore. It is costing too much in lives and money. We are mak-

ing too big a commitment there, and we need to bring our troops home because some other conflict may break out in this world.”

Well, I say, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues. What is more important than the current war? What are we going to say to our troops for? Working the rope lines at 4th of July parades, helping senior citizens cross the street? We have got to stop this and stop it now.

And listen to what the terrorists themselves say about the message that that would send. And this is a quote, Mr. Speaker, from bin Laden himself: “Hostility toward America is a religious duty, and I am confident that Muslims will be able to end the legend of the so-called superpower that is America.”

His top deputy, bin Laden’s deputy Zawahiri, says, “The Jihad in Iraq requires several incremental goals. The first stage: Expel the Americans from Iraq.”

Make no mistake about this. What we are doing with this resolution is not a saluteto GI Joe, it is a capitulation to Jihadist Joe.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to yield 5 minutes to my friend from California, the gentleman who is also the chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, Mr. MILLER.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for all of his hard work in struggling on this issue and our troops and force strength, Mr. Speaker.

But I rise in strong support of this bipartisan resolution regarding the Iraq war. I rise in support to this resolution to say to the President, no more. I rise in strong support of this resolution to say to the President, your policy is wrong. Yes, you have tried the surge before, and the surge has not brought peace to Iraq. It has not brought an end to the insurgency. It has not brought an end to the sectarian war that is going on in that country every day.

Yes, this is the fourth time that the President tried this policy, and it has not worked in any of those times. When we pass this bipartisan resolution, the President should pause. Because, at that moment, the President will not have the support of the United States House of Representatives; and, at that moment, the President will not have the superintendent of the people of the United States.

The President better think long and hard about he really believes that he should commit these troops, and continue to commit these troops, without the authority of the people, without the authority of this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, American men and women have been fighting in Iraq, and they will soon begin their fifth year. In 5 years, they have done all that we have asked them. But what we have asked them to do cannot be accomplished by the military.

We have known for some time that Iraq now requires a political solution, and it requires the Iraqi government, the Iraqi people, the Iraqi society and the communities to take hold of their country and to decide whether they want a future of continued sectarian violence or whether they want an orderly society. They must make that decision.

The President has had it wrong for many, many months against Iraq, Senator. He has continued to say that, as the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. Mr. President, you have it wrong. As we begin to stand down, they will begin to stand up.

The fact that our military troops are on the streets of Baghdad and Anwar Province and elsewhere enables people to continue a level of violence that randomly and wantonly takes the lives of men, women and children, innocent bystanders, for almost no good reason at all, no good reason at all. It allows that to continue because each knows, if it gets out of control, the American troops will ride to the rescue, the helicopters will come, and the missiles will fly. We are the enablers of the continuation of this violence.

Once they have to take responsibility for their actions, once we leave, this is no longer an insurgency. This is crime on a grand scale. Iraqi home has got to take the responsibility for that, and that will not be us. We will not be able to bring it to an end. The Iraqi government will be.

The time has come for our troops to leave. The time has come for us to understand that we cannot cure what is wrong in Iraq.

But for these troops that are there and for the troops that are being sent in spite of the will of the American people and the will of this Congress, we ought to understand that they should be fully equipped. We should not repeat the history of this administration in this deployment where men and women were sent into the theater without proper vehicle armor, without proper body armor, without proper interpreters and without proper training.

Many Members have come to this floor for many hours now and said, what is the message you are sending to your troops? What was the message the Congress is sending?

What was the message this Congress sent to the troops when the President allowed them to go to war without enough troops to secure the peace?

What was the message this Congress sent when it allowed the troops to go to combat without proper vehicle armor?

What was the message that the Congress sent when it allowed our troops to go into combat without proper protective armor?
What was the message this Congress sent to the troops when it allowed this President to effectively draft American volunteers by continuing their tours, shortening their time at home, shortening their time with their families and sending them back without proper training, shortened training and without proper equipping them?

We cannot do that to the troops. The message of this resolution is we are not going to do that. We are not going to do that. We will make a pledge to you that we will not let you fight and die forever with no plan to get you out, with no exit plan for you, with no change in the policy that has led tragically to so many deaths and so many wounded.

That is what this resolution is about. That is the message we must send to the troops, and that is the message we must send to the Iraqi people, that they must take responsibility.

This surge is not an election-day surge. This isn’t a constitutional-surge, for the purpose of this, this is an escalation for the purposes of door-to-door combat, street by street, block by block, house by house.

Yet today we see General Schoomaker saying in the paper that these troops that are getting engaged in this up-close battle in the midst of the Iraqi people will not have enough interpreters. They will not have civil affairs soldiers. They will not have enough translators. So now we are putting them again where they are at greatest risk, and this Congress is agreeing to go forward and repeat history and put them at risk when it is not necessary.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious matter. We have been discussing this now for days here in the House, but I want to tell you that I am opposed to this resolution, because it doesn’t do anything.

I want to see our troops home, and I want to see our troops safe. I would venture to say that, with the exception of, maybe, 10 percent, I have seen the wounded and visited the wounded troops, soldiers and Marines at our military hospitals than anybody in this Chamber; and I don’t want them to be, in harm’s way any longer.

The problem is, I have strong recollections of September 11; and even before September 11, I remember the bombing of the USS Cole where our military, our sailors were killed and wounded. I remember the bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. I remember the bombings of the Khobar Towers, where American airmen were housed in Saudi Arabia. I remember the bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon. I remember the hostages taken by terrorists and held for 441 days in Iran.

I remember all of that, but what I remember, that I will never, ever get out of my mind, is September 11, being on the highway immediately next to the Pentagon when the plane hit the Pentagon and killed many of our friends and colleagues.

I remember going to Ground Zero just a few days after September 11 to deliver satellite telephones to the police and the firefighters because their existing communications didn’t work due to all of the confusion, because of the disruption to the communications lines.

I remember the smoke was still rising, the dust was still flying.

I remember the American people demanded that something be done. They were tired of us being subjected to terrorist attacks, Americans being killed, and nothing being done about it.

The American people demanded that something be done, and they demanded through our Congress that something be done. The President was under this pressure and demanded that something be done. Congress debated then and now, and it was two-thirds of the Members who were here at the time voted to give the President legal, lawful authority to do whatever had to be done.

This Congress should be prepared to do whatever has to be done to eliminate the terrorist threat. I don’t care whether it is in Iraq, whether it is in Afghanistan, whether it is in Somalia, whether it is in Mogadishu, wherever it is, we have got to protect Americans from the threat of terrorism and from terrorist attacks; and we need to support our troops who are out there on the front line making sure that we at home are being protected.

Now these soldiers have been promised by the Commander in Chief that they are going to have some reinforcements, that they are going to have some help to fight this fight, the aggressive fight that is now finally taking place. The Maliki government was finally pressured to allow us to attack the targets that were real targets, to allow us to attack whether they were politically harmful to the Maliki government or not.

What about the soldiers in the field who were expecting that they would get home, that they might get home, that maybe, with those reinforcements, they might get an extra night’s sleep?

What about the soldier who had hoped that reinforcements would allow him or her to sit down to a hot lunch, rather than having to grab an MRE and eat that MRE, hot right out of the can?

What about the soldiers in the field who hoped that reinforcements would allow them to find time to read their mail or send a letter to their loved ones back home?

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious issue. If this House is serious about Congress bringing home our troops, then do it right. This resolution doesn’t bring any troops home. It doesn’t provide any safety or security for our troops. It doesn’t provide anything to help with the mission in the global war on terror.

If you want to do it right, bring a resolution out here to the floor that does it right, that brings them home, that stops whatever it is that we are doing there in Iraq.

But, if you know anything about what our military troops are doing, you know that once you get into a battle, once you get into a fight, it is easy to get into a war. You can almost slip into it without recognizing you are getting into it. But once you are in the fight, getting out is not easy.

Once you are in the battle, you have several options. You win or you lose or you surrender or you retreat or you negotiate. Who do we negotiate with? Negotiating would be nice if we could end this by negotiations. Who do you negotiate with? You can’t even find Bin Laden, if, in fact, he is alive.

The problem here is, once you get into the fight, which we did with the support of the American people and with the support of this Congress, once you get into that fight, it is not that easy to get out of it unless you win or you lose. Winning is better than losing.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON).

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today is, indeed, a day for thoughtfulness and courage in this House. As we debate the future of our involvement in Iraq, we must not forget that our troops are engaged in armed conflict a half a world away. It is their future and their sacrifice which necessitated this debate today.

Now is the time when this hallowed institution must dig deeply within its own conscience and rise above the politics and the platitudes which have plagued us for far too long. The American people and our troops demand and expect no less of us. Yet no simple solutions face us.

Let’s look first at the decisions we have made.

We were advised that the conflict in Iraq would require more troops, a longer engagement, and an exit strategy. We did not heed that advice, and now we face an escalating insurgency and civil war.

We were told the cost was $50 billion. We were wrong. It cost more than $580 billion and climbing fast, and we have not been good stewards of the taxpayer money, as there has been much corruption and waste in our spending.

We were told of eminent success in Afghanistan, but instead it just put our troops in order to provide an earlier surge in Iraq. We were wrong, and we have seen a rise in violence in both countries.

We must break this pattern. We can ill afford any further misjudgments, because it is our obligation in this deliberative body to consider every option available.
We stand here today to engage in the first substantive discussion of the policies we need to implement in order to succeed in Iraq and bring our troops home. It is abundantly clear that Iraq has been and remains deeply embedded in the conscience of the American people. As the world watches, we must demonstrate from the well of this House that democracy flourishes only when honest and open debate occurs.

In this difficult decision, I believe this body has two primary obligations to the troops who served in a war that support our troops with resources they need in order to accomplish the missions they are assigned; and, two, to ensure full accountability for the vital resources that we have sent to Iraq.

As this Congress and this Nation face the current struggle continues to frustrate, this House has neglected both of these obligations for too long, and it is time for us to exercise our responsibilities on behalf of our troops, the American people, and the world.

I stand here today in opposition to the proposed troop surge. We all agree that cutting off funding for our troops currently serving in Iraq is an untenable option that will send the wrong message to our partners and our enemies alike.

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I support the troops wholeheartedly and without reservation. I cannot support a resolution that simply opposes a new strategy without offering an alternative plan to win. There is too much at stake.

Many of you know that I was a cop in the Seattle area for 32 years. I was the sheriff for 8 years. And as the sheriff I had an opportunity to attend a remarkable ceremony. Every year a group of naturalized American citizens gathered to remember the circumstances of their arrival in the United States. The group is comprised of police officers from Vietnam, men that fought side by side with our American soldiers. These Vietnamese officers assumed the greatest risks, risking their lives and the lives of their families, to join the United States in their fight for freedom.

When the United States pulled out of Vietnam, there were dire consequences for these brave men who risked everything to fight for the United States. The officers were rounded up. Some were imprisoned for 15 years or more and some were executed.

Those who managed to flee and escape were sent to the United States. They left everything in Vietnam, and made new lives in the United States. And they were able to enjoy the freedoms that they had fought for, but not in the country that they had hoped for.

Let me just take a moment to set the stage for this ceremony. As the sheriff, I sat down at a round table with many of these Vietnamese soldiers and police officers. They came in their uniforms that they brought along with them, those that were able to escape, those that spent 15 to 17 years in a prison camp where they were beaten, where they were tortured, where they lost their freedom. They lost their dignity, but they never gave up hope.

When they came here to the United States of America and they came together on this evening to celebrate their freedom, and the American flag is brought into that room, those men stand at attention and they salute. But you know what else they do? They cry. When the American flag is brought in, they cry because they lost their freedom. But now they know what it is like to have it back. It is a dramatic scene.

If we leave too soon in Iraq, what happens to those Vietnamese soldiers who bravely fought side by side with our troops today? I don’t use this example as a way of comparing this conflict with Vietnam, as some have done. I believe that the wars we are currently fighting are very different. I use it because it could happen again.

I never want to attend an event where former Iraqi soldiers are attending a similar ceremony. The fact is that we are engaged in a global war with people intent on killing us, killing Americans. And regardless of how we got into Iraq, Iraq is now the central front of this war.

The consequences of declaring an end to the war in Iraq without victory would be felt for decades. Our enemies around the world would be emboldened. Iran and al Qaeda would declare victory. Our allies in Iraq would certainly face bloodshed and our allies around the world would question our resolve to help protect them.

Our troops are clear about their dedication to their mission; they want to succeed. American soldiers dutifully followed the orders they were given. They were asked, yet have ignored: our military needs in order to accomplish the mission. And our allies would certainly declare victory without an American troops now.

I know the pain that causes. I understand the dissension, the questions, and the uncertainty. I understand the cost is high and the way is unclear. As a cop, I have lost partners, I have lost friends in the line of duty. I know the pain that causes. I understand the loss. It is sad. It is tragic, and you never forget. But we must remain focused, ladies and gentlemen.

Please don’t let those sacrifices be in vain.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this resolution and let us send a clear message that our troops alike, we will always support our young men and women who put their lives on the line for freedom and democracy.
that we will give them what it takes to succeed in the missions that we have given them.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL).

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, our brave men and women in Iraq have answered every call, accomplished every task, won every battle. Our brave men and women in Iraq have fought valiantly. They have executed their mission with quiet dignity and with honor that is worthy of our praise.

In looking back at all that our military has done, there has been no task that these brave men and women have not accomplished. They have risen to every occasion. However, we are not here today just to applaud our troops' performance. We are here today to ask if the surge direction that the President is taking us is the right direction for these brave troops. Is it the right direction for our country, and is it the right direction for people of Iraq? The answer is unequivocally "no."

For the last 4 years of this conflict, the President has relied on the judgment of his military to execute this war and to follow their advice. Now at this critical hour, he has chosen to ignore their expertise and advice. The Joint Chiefs have unanimously disagreed with the surge.

General James Conway, commander of the Marine Corps, is quoted as saying, "We do not believe that just adding numbers for the sake of adding numbers, just thickening the mix, is necessarily the way to go."

General John Abizaid has met with every divisional commander and asked, "If we were to bring more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success?" They all said "no."

General Colin Powell has said the surge will not work. General Wesley Clark, Ambassador Holbrooke, Oliver North, Michael Vicker, Lawrence Corb, Richard Haas, have all said the surge will not work. And the list goes on and on and on.

Why does the President, Mr. Speaker, choose to ignore expert after expert, soldier after soldier, who say the surge will not work? Even General Petraeus has said, and I quote, "The way ahead will be longer, quick nor easy, and undoubtedly there will be tough days. We have a determined, adaptive barbaric enemy. He will try to wait us out. Any such endeavor is a test of wills and there are no guarantees."

Mr. Speaker, Secretary of State James Baker has said, "There is no magic bullet to solve the problem of Iraq. No single answer. No quick fix."

From this microphone over the last 2 days, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle tried to frame this debate about success and failure in Iraq. That debate is for another day. Today and tomorrow, the debate is about the wisdom or the lack of wisdom for the surge. The President and the members of his party today need to listen to the experts who they have relied upon in the past. To do otherwise, casts doubts about who the President is listening to.

Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe that this surge in the troops is the wrong policy at the wrong time, in the wrong war. The actions that need to be taken to help the Iraqi people and ultimately bring our brave men and women home safely is not rushing more troops to the front lines.

Mr. Speaker, a while ago I heard my good friend and colleague from Indiana speak about how the Iraq Study Group actually said that a surge is something that probably is necessary.

But there is more to the story than just a military surge. They also recommended that there has to be economic surge, and diplomatic surges, not just military. I talked to one of the Iraq study group members just yesterday, who told me that a military surge by itself will not work.

The military has done all it can do, and they have done it very well. Now is the time to move in a different direction, Mr. Speaker. Vote for this resolution. Vote "no" to the surge.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this pretense, fake, pretend resolution. Democrats maintain they support the troops and not support the increase in troops necessary to win the war.

With this nonbinding, fake, pretend resolution. Democrats maintain they support the troops but at the same time disapprove of their mission. This confusing message simply lends encouragement to the Iraqi insurgents and terrorists that every roadside bomb brings them closer to their goal of a terrorist state in the heart of the Mideast.

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The simple fact is the deployment of troops to secure Baghdad has already begun. In fact, soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division, who were deployed after President Bush's call for a temporary increase in troops, are already in Iraq doing critical work with the Iraqi Security Forces.

The passage of this misguided, pretense resolution does nothing except de-moralize these brave men and women in uniform and intimidate those who wish America great harm.

The consequences of failure in Iraq could not be greater. The outcome in Iraq will directly affect America's efforts in the global war on terrorism for many generations. A victory for the Islamic militants, such as the al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Iraq and the Iranians in Iraq who are provoking sectarian violence, would embolden the enemy to expand the reach of their efforts. Retreat would result in instability in the region, encourage radical Islamic terrorists and rogue regimes to expand into the region, and give terrorists a breathing room to launch attacks against the U.S. and the West.

The bipartisan Iraqi Study Group, a bipartisan group, recognized the need of a troop surge to secure Iraq. To this end, I submit page 27 through 29 and page 102 of the Iraq report for the RECORD on this issue to highlight the grave humanitarian consequences of a withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Iraq.

I am tired of hearing Democrats constantly criticize our plans for Iraq, yet they do not have a plan of their own. It is a shame that they have chosen to play politics with the men and women in uniform in Iraq. Democrats now have the responsibility to govern, but they lack both a plan for success in Iraq and the political will to advance a bill that cuts off funds for our troops.

They say that the problems in Iraq can only be solved by a political solution. While this is true to some extent, you cannot solve the problems in Iraq diplomatically and politically without first providing security to the Iraqi people. Security must go hand in hand with the political solution.

Democrats need to understand that their political choices and rhetoric hurt our troops and morale and give comfort, great comfort, to our enemy. We also agree that this is a time for Iraqis, not the U.S., to step forward and end sectarian violence and build a responsible government. Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki has promised the American people that in this new campaign Iraqi troops will be the ones knocking down doors, arresting insurgents and patrolling streets, with U.S. troops in a supporting role. We cannot give up at a critical point in Iraq's fledgling democracy.

Failure in Iraq is not an option. If we do not win in Iraq, we leave it up to our future generations to tackle the problems of Islamic terrorism in an unstable region. There is no short-term solution in Iraq because there is not a short-term problem.

Today, our brave men and women in Iraq are rising to the challenge to secure Baghdad. I encourage my colleagues to vote "no" on this ill-timed resolution.

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The United Kingdom has dedicated an extraordinary amount of resources to Iraq and has made great sacrifices. In addition to 7,200 troops, the United Kingdom has a substantial diplomatic presence, particularly in Basra and the Iraqi southeast. The United Kingdom has been an active and key player at every stage of Iraq's political development. U.K. officials told me that they remain committed to working for stability in Iraq, and will reduce their commitment of troops and resources in response to the situation on the ground.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The United States has made a massive commitment to the future of Iraq in both
blood and treasure. As of December 2006, nearly 2,900 Americans have lost their lives serving in Iraq. Another 21,000 Americans have been wounded, many severely.

To date, the United States has spent roughly $400 billion on the Iraq War, and costs are running about $3 billion per month. In addition, the United States must expect significant budgetary costs to come, including veteran care and replacing lost equipment, which will run into the hundreds of billions of dollars. Estimates run as high as $2 trillion for the final cost of the U.S. involvement in Iraq.

Despite a massive effort, stability in Iraq remains elusive and the situation is deteriorating. The Iraqi government cannot govern, sustain, and defend itself without the support of the United States. Iraqis have not been convinced that they must take responsibility for their own neighborhood and much of the international community have not been persuaded to play an active and constructive role in supporting Iraq. The ability of the United States to shape outcomes is diminishing. Time is running out.

B. Consequences of Continued Decline in Iraq

If the situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate, the consequences could be severe for Iraq, the United States, the region, and the world.

Continuing violence could lead toward greater sectarian violence, with Sunni-ruled states, including the radicalization of populations, mass movements of populations, and ethnic cleansing could escalate. The longer that U.S. political and military resources are tied up in Iraq, the less they’ll be available to address the broader regional security goals and to our ongoing war on al Qaeda. We recognize that there is no perfect solution and that all that we have means a certainty. Iraq has taken several steps since Saddam Hussein was overthrown: Iraqis restored full sovereignty, held elections, drafted a permanent constitution, ratified that constitution, and elected a new government pursuant to that constitution. Iraqis may be more committed to upholding civil law and intervention by their regional neighbors that they take the steps necessary to avert catastrophe. But at this moment, such a scenario seems implausible because the Iraqi people and their leaders have been slow to demonstrate the capacity or will to act.

C. Some Alternative Courses in Iraq

Because of the gravity of the situation in Iraq and of its consequences for the United States, the region, and the world, the Iraq Study Group has carefully considered the full range of alternative approaches for moving forward. We recognize that there is no perfect solution and that all that have been suggested have flaws. The following are some of the most notable possibilities that we have considered.

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THE WAY FORWARD--A NEW APPROACH

Deter even more destructive interference in Iraq by Syria and Iran.

Because of the importance of Iraq to our regional security goals and to our ongoing fight against al Qaeda, we considered proposals to make a substantial increase (100,000 to 200,000) in the number of U.S. troops in Iraq. We rejected this course because we do not believe that the needed levels are available, and further, adding more American troops could conceivably worsen those aspects of the security problem that are led by the view that the United States has a "permanent" or "occupation." We could, however, support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad, or to support the training and equipping mission, if the U.S. commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective.

We rejected the immediate withdrawal of our troops, because we believe that so much is at stake.

We believe that our recommended actions will provide the Iraqis and the Iraqi Army the support it needs to have a reasonable chance to take responsibility for Iraq’s security. Given the ongoing determination in the security situation, it is urgent to move as quickly as possible to have that security role taken over by Iraqi security forces.

The United States should not make an open-ended commitment to keep large numbers of American troops deployed in Iraq for three compelling reasons.

First, and most importantly, the United States faces other security dangers in the world, and a continuing Iraqi commitment of American ground forces at present levels will leave us unable to respond to other contingencies. On September . . .

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to now yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, like most Members of Congress, I have visited our men and women in uniform in Iraq. I have visited our wounded in the hospital at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany and at the hospital in Balad Air Base in Iraq; and I have offered my condolences to grieving families who have lost loved ones in Iraq. I respect and appreciate the men and women in uniform in Iraq. They have served nobly, and they deserve our prayers.

Mr. Speaker, they have done their duty, and now we must do our duty. We must live up to the obligations we owe to our country, our duty to our men and women in uniform is to look with clear eyes at the facts and to exercise independent judgment.

For 4 years, this Congress has failed in that duty. For 4 years, this Congress has passed one resolution after another, offering uncritical support for the President’s policies in Iraq.

In June, Congress passed a resolution that claimed that the path to a sovereign, free, secure and united Iraq and the Iraqi Security Forces were operating independently of our forces and were increasingly leading the fight to secure Iraq. U.S. officials described the situation in Iraq as grave and deteriorating. The most recent National Intelligence Estimate, just a week ago, described the
situation in even starker terms. “The violence is now feeding on itself, and it is too complex to be called simply a civil war.” The estimate concluded that all of the likely outcomes are grim.

For 4 years, patriotic Americans, Democrats and Republicans alike, have anguished over events in Iraq and have given deep and prayerful thought to alternatives, but the Bush administration has treated criticism by Members of Congress as meddling, as sticking our nose in their war.

House Democrats have offered plan after plan to alter our course in Iraq, and House Republicans have greeted every plan with strident attack.

Let’s consider the new plan that President Bush has proposed.

The force initially committed to Iraq was not of what General Eric Shinseki said would be required to secure the country. When I visited Iraq 3 years ago, the presence of our forces in Baghdad may not have been enough to secure order, but it was more than enough to remind every Iraqi every day that there was a foreign army on their soil.

Let’s consider what Mr. POE described here the really are.

And after 4 years of failed policy, all of the Iraq Study Group.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, you advise us as to how much time is remaining on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROSS). The gentleman from New York has 16½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Florida has 6 minutes remaining.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE.

Mr. POE. I want to thank the gentleman from New York for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, the narrow issue is: More troops to the front, or not? Many here say “no more troops,” but what are the consequences of the troops on the ground without more aid? What will happen in and around Baghdad where those troops are supposed to be sent? Their mission there will be more difficult without more troops.

Does this Congress want to tell our troops on the ground, do your job with less, even though we have it in our power to send you aid?

Mr. Speaker, 171 years ago this month, a somewhat similar call for aid was made; and it, too, was refused.

In an old, beat-up Spanish mission in central Texas, Bexar, Texas, to be exact, 187 men from every State in the United States, 13 foreign countries, including Mexico, found themselves in a precarious situation. They were behind the walls facing an enemy. They needed help.

Texas politicians, even so-called military experts, had it within their power to send more troops. And for all the similar reasons that are mentioned here, including the troops shouldn’t even be in the mission and the plan was a bad idea from its inception, this plan is not working, your troops there should even leave, similar reasons we hear today, no help was sent.

The place, Mr. Speaker, was the Alamo, and the time was February 24, 1836. And behind the cold, damp walls to the north wall, a 27-year-old lawyer, commander by the name of William Barrett Travis, wrote this letter, I read it today:

“To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world, fellow citizens and compatriots, I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannon fire for over 24 hours, but I have not lost a man.

“The flag still waves proudly over the north wall. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion. Otherwise, this fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot. I shall never surrender or retreat.

“I call upon you, in the name of liberty and patriotism and everything dear to the American character, to come to my aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible, die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his honor and that of his country. Victory or death.”
accomplish that goal. The fact is that the administration has already increased troop levels on several occasions during this war. None of the previous surges in troop levels have had any lasting effect on the war, and there is no credible evidence to believe that this surge will be any different.

And how can we have confidence in predictions of success? Before our invasion in Iraq, Secretary Rumsfeld predicted that the war in Iraq would last “6 days, 6 weeks. I doubt 6 months.” Vice President Cheney was more optimistic, predicting we would be greeted as liberators. Almost 4 years ago, the President stood before a sign that said “Mission Accomplished” and proclaimed major combat operations in Iraq have ended.

Mr. Speaker, although the resolution before us is technically nonbinding, it gives the House an opportunity to call upon the President to work cooperatively with Congress to develop an effective strategy to bring our troops home. The American people and our courageous men and women on the front lines deserve a clearly articulated and sensible approach to ending the war. This resolution puts the House on record as saying that an escalation of military forces is a step in the wrong direction.

I therefore urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to yield 5 minutes to the good gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I very much thank the senior and esteemed leader, Mr. King from New York, for his thoughtful comments.

I want to start a point here, Mr. Speaker, that I would ask all Members to focus on to understand where we really sit in history, in this course of history. If you would go back to the most successful military known in history for the longest period of time, spanning centuries, it was the Roman legions. And the Romans had a statement called “nosce hostem,” which, of course, is Latin for “know thine enemy.” We need to do that here in this Congress. We need the necessary effort, of course. Know thine enemy. Von Clausewitz wrote the book on war, his treatise on war, that everyone goes to Clausewitz when he said on June 11, 2004, and I saw it on al-Jazeera TV when I was in Kuwait, “If we continue attacking Americans, they will leave Iraq the same way that they left Vietnam, the same way that they left Lebanon, the same way that they left Mogadishu.”

Mr. Speaker, that is the message that his people heard. That is the message we should hear. I have heard it. I have put it on this floor many times. A couple nights ago I put Moqtada al-Sadr down here on the floor. In the night he went off to Iran to join up with the people who have been supporting him. He understands this. I will tell you this. If this resolution passes and if Mr. Murtha and the people who are working with him are successful in a slow bleed of our resources, then what you will see, Mr. Speaker, is you will see Obama bin Laden say, “If we keep attacking America they will leave Afghanistan the same way they left Vietnam, Lebanon, and Iraq. That is what is coming.” That is what is being perpetrated by the rhetoric here on this floor. That is what is being staged in appropriations bills that we will certainly see coming after this resolution.

The destiny of America is put at risk. Mr. Speaker, and this says to all of our enemies it is easy to take on the United States if you can just get Congress to lose their will, if you can get them to lose their spine. So I would then simply close with the reiteration of a request made from a major from Kentucky whom I met with in my last trip over there in Iraq. He lost his kid and he doesn’t love the United States. He asked to see me. He said, “Do you call yourself a Christian?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “How can you say Jesus is the way? God and I know he speaks the truth.” He said, “We have everything we need. So when you pray for us, pray for the American people. Pray they understand the threat and pray they do not lose their resolve. We will not lose ours.”

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 5 minutes to my friend and
colleague, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE).

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, America will have three separate ideas about Iraq, but I want to note one great shining light about our country. The American people are absolutely unified, no matter what they think about the policy in Iraq, of holding American warriors and our sons and daughters close to our hearts. This is a unified position across this country, and it is a bright light for America.

Now, I have heard some people have suggested that soldiers who fall in Iraq will have fallen in vain. That is wrong. Any American who falls in the course of the conduct of American wars, they do not fall in vain. They fall in our arms, and they fall into our hearts, and there they will always remain. And we are unified on this principle. And when I go to remind young service for a young man from Redmond, Washington next Monday, I will carry the unified American prayers and hearts of the 650,000 people I represent.

Now we are in a difficult situation in Iraq and none of us have a silver bullet, and none of us have a magic wand. And it seems to me that when we are in dark times, we should go back to fundamental American character to find a way forward.

There are three parts of the American character: first, the character of the American mission in Iraq; second, the character of American common sense; and, third, the character of American democracy.

What is the character of our mission in Iraq? President Bush, when he started this war, said we have three missions: Eliminate WMD. Mission accomplished; they were never there. Second, eliminate any terrorist that attacked us on 9/11. Mission accomplished. They were never there.

Third, eliminate Saddam Hussein as a threat. Mission accomplished. He is gone. The American people and the American people had a message to George Bush that there has to be a change in Iraq policy. And he is not listening to the generals, he is not listening to the bipartisan commission, and he is not listening to the American people.

Congress has a responsibility coequal with the President under Article I of the Constitution to declare war, to raise and support armies, to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces. It is time for Congress to stand up on our hind legs and take away the keys from the man who has driven our foreign policy into a ditch. It is time to restore the American people where it belongs, to American common sense where it belongs, and to American democracy where it belongs.

Support this resolution. Prevent this escalation in Iraq. Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS), who has made 15 visits to Iraq. Mr. SHAYS, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for conducting this debate.

This debate has been constructive. I appreciate the thoughtful comments made on both sides. Speaking for the second time, I realize it may be tempting for some to support this resolution to somehow express our strong dissatisfaction with how the administration has conducted the war and to separate ourselves from an unpopular President.

I do not believe, however, support of what is truly a “stay the course,” “status quo resolution” will be a constructive outcome of the debate. It sends the wrong message to our troops, to the Iraqis, to our allies throughout the world, and, in particular, to our enemies.

Is it the American way to attack another country, disassemble its entire security forces—military, border patrol and police—and then leave before this broken country is capable to rebuild its security forces and stand on its own?

The shame of this possibility haunts me.

And how can this resolution possibly help our troops on the battlefield who are there already who still have to carry out their mission?

We, the Congress, are in effect telling our troops, we support you, but we do not want you to have the reinforcements you need to carry out your mission, and we do not trust the judgment of your new commanding officer, General David Petraeus. How destructive is that?

Our troops deserve to know we have a plan to win. If we do not have a plan to win, we have a plan to leave. The resolution before the House neither helps us succeed nor gives us guidance on how to leave.

It is so counterproductive for 335 Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate to micro-manage the war.

It is the responsibility of the administration to conduct the war effort. It is Congress’ responsibility to conduct tough oversight, holding the administration accountable for the implementation of the war.

Having chaired 14 hearings on the operations in Iraq and been to Iraq 15 times to conduct on-the-ground oversight, I will continue to ask the administration the difficult questions and provide my observations and recommendations.

Regretfully, too few Members of Congress have fully considered the consequence of leaving Iraq prematurely. The Iraq Study Group warned, “If the situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate, the consequence could be severe for Iraq, the United States, the region and the world.”

The ultimate goal for me is to bring our troops home without leaving Iraq in chaos. This is achievable if Republicans and Democrats, the White House and Congress, agree on a bipartisan solution as outlined by this Study Group. Officially endorsing the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group and acting on them is the best way to make this happen.

The only way I think we should leave Iraq is the same way we got into Iraq, together.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 8 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON).

Ms. CARSON. I certainly appreciate very much the gentleman yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, as you would guess, I am an American, a very proud American. If I had selected my place of birth, I would have chosen the United States of America. It is just full of...
Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to the chorus of those who have said enough is enough. The President has had the chance to plead a case for victory in Iraq, and he has failed. That one day, we have lost 139. Yet over 3,000 have now died, and the mission has not been accomplished. We have sent children into battle in Iraq without a clear exit strategy. We have sent children into the hostile seas and not send more into the hostile atmosphere of the enemy. Because, as he firmly established, the American people will not have enough armor nor equipment, and they did not have enough benefits at the time, and this Congress has turned some of that around.

When we have soldiers on foreign soil depending on the kindness of strangers for the donation of armor and helmets because their President has failed to provide them with the life-saving tools after placing them in harm's way, we know something is not right. We have stretched ourselves too thin and used the awesome power of our military might in the wrong way.

Mr. Speaker, our priorities are not straight. We have sent children into harm's way, and if the President had his way, we would send more recklessly into battle in Iraq without a clear exit plan or understanding of their roles.

In Indiana alone, we have seen 76 Hoosiers lost to this and 511 whose lives were forever altered by injuries sustained in this war. Unfortunately, however, President Bush's interest in supporting our troops ends the moment they become veterans. Because, as he asks for more troops, he has cut the funding for the Veterans Administration to help them return to civilian life healthy and prepare for what lies ahead.

On May 1, 2003, the President announced, “Mission accomplished.” At that time, we had lost 139. Yet over 3,000 have now died, and the mission still has not been accomplished. We will not know the mission has been accomplished until we have set the goals and benchmarks that allow us to place Iraqis in a position of being self-governing and allow our troops to come home.

In short, I love our troops. I love them as neighbors, as friends, and I love our country. It is time to begin to bring our loved ones home from overseas and not send more into the hostile battlefields in downtown Baghdad.

We often sing a song in church that goes, “We are soldiers in the army. We have to fight before we die. We have to hold up the bloodstained banner. We have to hold it up until we die.”

Let us not beat around the bush, so to speak. Our military presence in Iraq cannot diminish the violence there. It will only escalate it. We have lost a lot of our support, a lot of our friendship with other nations because of our reckless behavior in Iraq. So to stay there, our military presence will increase violence there and bring on more around the world.

They have suicide bombs; we have a suicide policy. And those who started this madness, not being the young Americans they sent to be slaughtered, strutted their vicarious, which is to say ridiculous, bloody blunder was conceived in childlike computer game fantasy and executed in unconstitutionally, borrowing billions from foreigners to borrow trouble from other foreigners, pumping this land we love into international hock and its prestige into an international hodge-podge.

There are a lot of bad-guy dictators in this world, some of whom are friends of this administration and one of whom was a friend of this administration’s forbearers. That one was Saddam Hussein. But John Adams tells us, “America does not go abroad in search of monsters to destroy...” When you realize you’re making a mistake, sanely calls for stopping it.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE). Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, this vote and the debate that we are having is a political game play. It has absolutely no effect. It has no power, no teeth and absolutely no enforcement.

To be more specific, there is not one single mention in the Democrat resolution of how we will send more body armor for the troops, not a single mention of new tools to detect IED explosives, not one word dedicated to up- armored Humvees.

Mr. Speaker, there is not one mention of American dollars to fund the health care needs of the veterans who come home. Not one mention. And this is important to remember: It has absolutely no mention of sending one soldier, let alone the 20,000 additional who are going over there or our fine young men and women who are already there, when they are going to come home one day sooner.

In my district, Floridians have seen through this nonbinding resolution. The headline of the Orlando Sentinel calls it an “empty measure.” It says, “The pointless House resolution on Iraq fails to set goals.” The editorial goes on to say that the resolution “isn’t thoughtful policy; it’s political cover.” It is not just me saying it. This is certainly not a conservative newspaper, the Orlando Sentinel.

My constituents know over the past few days we have debated a resolution with no teeth, no enforcement, delivered in a way that has no guts, no character, and provides no leadership.

Need to hear more? The Veterans of Foreign Wars said that, “Other generations have learned the hard way when military decisions are second-guessed by opinion polls or overruled by politicians.” The VFW and the American Legion know what happens when politicians play politics with war. Our veterans’ mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, who are being placed in harm’s way by being deployed two or more times to Iraq. Transfixed and horrified, we watch an escalation in violence that has all the characteristics of a civil war. We recognize that on November 7 the American people asked for a new
Mr. Speaker, various news organizations have now confirmed what the Democrats really have in mind with this nonbinding resolution, and that is, choke off funding for the troops.

Though they haven’t really said it on this House floor, they have said it to their political base, moveon.org, and I hold the transcript in my hand. Let’s listen to the words of our colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA) who, as we all know, controls our military spending panel.

“They won’t be able to continue. They won’t be able to do the deployment. They don’t have the equipment, they don’t have the training and they won’t be able to do the work. There’s no question in my mind.”

He was further quoted as saying, “We have to be careful people don’t think this is the vote.”

Last evening, CBS News noted that our colleague’s proposal “is a way to get at the same goal without holding a vote to cut funding.” Again, Mr. Speaker, that goal is to cut funding of the troops. The goal is to accept defeat.

Now, many of us know that the author of this proposal has served his Nation with great courage and great honor, but I for one fail to see the courage and the honor in this proposal.

The Politico Magazine has called this proposal the “Slow Bleed Strategy.” The slow bleed strategy, I wonder who it is who is doing the bleeding.

Mr. Speaker, how does anybody look one of our brave soldiers in the eye and tell them, I don’t believe in your mission. I don’t believe you can succeed and I have the power to bring you home; I have the power to bring you home today but I am not willing to do it because, if I did, I would have to take responsibility and I am concerned about political ramifications.

Mr. Speaker, if my Democrat colleagues truly want to cut off funding for the troops and withdraw from Iraq, then let them vote on it today. Let them state these convictions and vote on it today. We cannot accept this slow bleed strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I know that fighting this war is costly. It is costly in terms of blood. It is costly in terms of money. Like many other of my colleagues, I have met with the mothers who have lost sons in Iraq. Their grief is profound; it is sad. But Mr. Speaker, I never, never, never want to meet with the mothers whose children might perish in the next 9:11 if we accept defeat in Iraq.

Iraq must be seen in the context of this larger war we are having with radical Islam. The battle lines are drawn, and whether we like it or not, they are drawn; we don’t take my word for it. Listen to Osama bin Laden. “The epicenter of these wars is Baghdad. Success in Baghdad will be success for the United States. Failure in Iraq is the failure of the United States. Their defeat in Iraq will mean defeat in all their wars.”

We have to soberly reflect on the enemy that we are facing. Listen to the number two in al Qaeda, al-Zawahiri. “Al Qaeda has the right to kill 4 million Americans, 2 million of them children.” As the father of a 4-year-old and a 3-year-old, I find that to be a chilling statement.

Mr. Speaker, the manner of our withdrawal from Iraq will dramatically affect the credibility of American foreign policy. Our actions must not lead to anti-Semitism masquerading as the President of Iraq with the misimpression that his thirst for nuclear weapons can ever end with the realization of his dream of nuclear holocaust, this time engulfing the Jewish national homeland. In the larger geopolitical context, like it or not, credibility is the currency of a global Superpower.

The argument has been made on this floor that our engagement in Iraq has had the effect of diverting our attention from other threats to our security interests such as a nuclear North Korea or the military buildup of China or even a resurgent Russia.

The recent glimmer of hope from the multiparty talks with the hermit kingdom demonstrates that it is possible for our Nation to, yes, talk and chew gum at the same time. The war in Iraq has not come at the cost of disengagement. However, perhaps more importantly, we cannot avoid the fact that...
the manner in which we turn control over their country to the Iraqis will send a message across the globe to friend and foe alike of whether we are a reliable ally and a predictable adversary.

It is simply not possible for us to divorce our role in the world from our credibility as a Nation. The stakes are great for Iraq, but they are just as great, if not greater, for those of us in the United States, for those of us presently in the United States and for our children and grandchildren.

Although everyone including the President has acknowledged the fact that things have not gone as planned in Iraq, this should not lead us to overlook the fact that the Iraqi people have chosen their Nation’s leadership in democratic elections, three in a row, with more and more people participating, larger percentages of the population participating, in numbers and percentages that frankly would embarrass us all if you look at the kind of Saddam Hussein, but look at the mess those people are in over there. It is a difficult proposition. This President warned us after 9/11 it would be a difficult proposition. This President warned us after 9/11 it would be a difficult proposition. This President warned us after 9/11 it would be a difficult proposition. This President warned us after 9/11 it would be a difficult proposition. This President warned us after 9/11 it would be a difficult proposition. This President warned us after 9/11 it would be a difficult proposition. 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need to safely and effectively accomplish the mission that is charged to them. I oppose this escalation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. God bless the men and women in uniform.

Mr. BOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the balance of my time be extended by 36 minutes.

I think I have the authority to do that under the rule; it has been done in consultation with the minority leader.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ESHOO). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland? There is no objection.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to recognize Mr. KING from New York, the ranking member of Homeland Security, for 7 minutes.

Mr. KING of New York. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this resolution and in strong support of our troops and their mission.

This resolution is wrong in every respect. It is wrong constitutionally. Never before in our history has Congress attempted to control or restrict battlefield decisions. It is wrong as a matter of policy, and it will come back to haunt us for years to come.

Madam Speaker, wars must not be waged according to opinion polls or applause meters. For instance, just look at the battle of Iwo Jima, an island in the Pacific where in less than 6 weeks, more than twice as many Americans were killed as have been killed throughout the entire Iraq war, and yet Congress didn’t jump in to question the policies of the President.

And look at the Korean War. There was no declaration of war. The United States and the overwhelming majority of coalition troops in the field, 36,000 Americans were killed and another 8,000 were missing. More than 70 percent of the American people opposed President Truman and his handling of the war. Yet today, President Truman is honored as one of our greatest Presidents, and the Korean War is looked upon as a key turning point in our struggle against communism.

Madam Speaker, Iraq cannot be looked upon or looked at in a vacuum. This war in Iraq is an absolutely essential component of the war against Islamic terrorism which must be fought in multiple places throughout the world, including right here at home.

As a Member of Congress who lost upwards of 150 friends, neighbors, and constituents on September 11, 2001, I have seen firsthand how evil this enemy can be. And al Qaeda itself has said that Iraq is a major battleground in this war.

Madam Speaker, we cannot allow ourselves to do anything which would undermine our troops who are the frontlines soldiers in this war against Islamic terrorism.

I know that the resolution expresses support for the troops, but talk is cheap and actions have consequences. You cannot support the troops if you are undermining their mission and challenging their commander in the field. And that is what this resolution does.

Speaker after speaker in support of the resolution has said that the new policy in Iraq will not work. But General Petraeus, who is the author of this policy and who has just been unanimously confirmed by the Senate, has said this policy can work and that his troop commanders by imposing this new policy, the supporters of the resolution are clearly undermining a new commander in Iraq at such a vital time in the conduct of this war.

As the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars said earlier this week, “When military decisions are second-guessed by opinion polls or overruled by politicians, it is the common soldier and their families who pay the price. The VFW is very concerned with the tone and timing of this debate. We need to send the message to our troops that America wants them to succeed in Iraq by giving the buildup a chance to succeed.”

Madam Speaker, what makes this worse is that we know today’s resolution is only the first step to prevent General Petraeus and his troops from carrying out their mission. The Democratic leadership has admitted, indeed proudly acknowledged, that it is their goal to impose as many conditions as they can on General Petraeus from getting the troops and the reinforcements he needs to win this war.

Madam Speaker, never in our history have the Speaker of the House or the House Appropriations Committee attempted to superimpose their policies on troop training or troop leave, and override the Commander in Chief and the commander in the field.

Madam Speaker, this is not the time for shining light on summertime patriotism. It is time to Members of this body to show at least a small percentage of the courage shown every day by our troops in Iraq.

If you want to cut off the funding for our troops who will be in the line of fire, don’t be cute, don’t try to sneak it through the back door. Have the guts to do it directly.

Madam Speaker, this debate is not about this President or this Congress or the next election. It is about our survival as a Nation, and our survival as a civilization. Vote for our troops and against this misguided and dangerous resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to yield 10 minutes to my friend and colleague and neighbor from California, the esteemed Speaker of the House of Representatives (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his exceptional leadership in the national interest.

My colleagues, for 3 days and nights, more than 350 Members of Congress have come to the floor to speak their conscience about the war in Iraq and the President’s escalation proposal. I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the tenor, for the most part, and the substance of their remarks.

There is one proposition on which we can all agree: Our troops have performed excellently in Iraq. They have done everything asked of them. And as the resolution states, Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect our members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq. We owe our troops a debt of gratitude for their patriotism, for their courage, and for the sacrifices they are willing to make.

As a sign of our respect for them, particularly those who have lost their lives in the war, and for their families, I request that we observe a moment of silence.

Thank you.

We owe our troops a course of action in Iraq that is worthy of their sacrifice. Today, we set the stage for a new direction in Iraq by establishing a resolution with fewer than 100 words which supports our troops and disapproves of the President’s escalation proposal. Instead, Democrats have proposed a different course of action to the President.

Over and over again we have suggested a different plan.

One year ago, Senator HARRY REID and I stood with House and Senate Democrats to propose our agenda for real security, to project our power and our values, to protect the American people. Consistent with our real security agenda, Democrats have sent the President four letters, starting in July, and the most recent one the end of January, urging him to adopt a strategy for success, containing these elements: change of mission, redeployment of troops, broader protection of civilians, end of the war of ideas, and I stand with House and Senate Democrats to propose our agenda for real security, to project our power and our values, to protect the American people. Consistent with our real security agenda. Democrats have sent the President four letters, starting in July, and the most recent one the end of January, urging him to adopt a strategy for success, containing these elements: change of mission, redeployment of troops, broader protection of civilians, end of the war of ideas, and I stand with House and Senate Democrats.

In terms of changing the mission, U.S. forces in Iraq must be transitioned from combat to training of Iraqi forces, real counterterrorism activities, force protection and logistics. A shift in mission will allow the number of U.S. troops in Iraq to be reduced, diminishing their presence in the daily lives of Iraqis and minimizing the chance of these troops being caught in the crossfire between rival Iraqi factions. Ending the emphasis on a combat mission will allow the phased redeployment of our forces from Iraq beginning within the next 4 to 6 months.

Declining troop levels will require fewer bases, and none of them will need to be permanent, consistent with legislation introduced and passed by this House by Congresswoman BARBARA LEE and introduced by Congressman DAVID PRICE.

A smaller military presence in Iraq will also relieve some of the strain on
January 16, 2007

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

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our troops, their families, and our military equipment. Success in Iraq requires more than military force, and that really is what this debate is about today.

General Peter Chiarelli, a three-star general who recently led the Command of the Multinational Corps Iraq, observed in December, and I quote, “We need to get out of thinking that this is solely a military conflict where we must simply apply more U.S. or coalition or Iraqi forces against an enemy that is all out of forces. All our forces’ strengths—diplomatic, economic, political—must be leveraged to help the Iraqis find their way through this process.”

Unfortunately, there has been no sustained and effective effort to engage Iraq’s neighbors diplomatically. Iraq’s neighbors have the greatest stake in Iraq’s stability and the role it will play in the region. Leaders of those countries are best able to help Iraqi leaders improve arrest rates, reduce tensions. To this end, an international contact group should be established to support a political settlement in Iraq and preserve Iraq’s sovereignty.

Senator Reid and I also wrote to the President that an international conference should be convened to broaden support for the reconstruction effort that is essential if Iraqis are going to be put to work building their country’s future.

On the subject of reconstruction, there has been little effective reconstruction in Iraq because of mismanagement and disappearances of funds. That is why we propose that, in order for the reconstruction of Iraq to attract international support, it must be conducted according to practices which are honest, transparent, and accountable.

Reconstruction must be guided by the kind of process set forth in legislation introduced by Congressman RICK MURPHY and the Blue Dog Coalition. The United States should take the lead on accountability in reconstruction. Politically, there has been no sustained and effective effort to engage rival Iraqi factions.

The U.S. must insist that Iraqi leaders make the political compromises needed for a broad-based and sustainable political settlement that will produce an inclusive political system in Iraq. A good beginning would be to press Iraq to amend the Constitution to achieve a fair sharing of power and resources. That was promised at the time of the referendum over 1 year ago.

The resulting political consensus will allow Iraqi security forces to challenge the militias on behalf of the nation and to disarm them.

Proponents of the President’s escalation are equating the war on terror to the war in Iraq. All our Nation’s armed services, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Congressman IKE SKELTON of Missouri, a great patriot, has observed, “Two conflicts. Two wars. And the two should not be confused. There are those who attempt to fuzz the two conflicts together as ‘the war on terror,’ but the wars are truly separate and distinct.” Chairman SKELTON stated.

The war in Iraq continues to detract from our ability to fight against the war on international terrorism effectively. We need to finish the job started more than 5 years ago in Afghanistan against al Qaeda and the Taliban and address other conditions around the world to which the appeal of terrorism breeds.

The longer it takes us to resolve the situation in Iraq, the longer resources and attention will continue to be diverted from the war on terrorism. Our ability to respond to the escalating conflict in Afghanistan and other potential crises in the world is constrained severely by the deterioration in military readiness to levels not seen since the Vietnam era.

In Afghanistan, there were the six elements that we talked about: change of mission, redeployment of troops, building of political consensus, engaging in diplomacy, reform of reconstruction, and a refocus on the war on terror. By placing so much emphasis, instead, on dealing with the problems in Iraq militarily and not enough emphasis on sustained political and diplomatic engagements, the President’s escalation plan repeats past mistakes.

The stakes in Iraq are too high to re-cycle proposals that have little prospect for success. The bipartisan resolution today may be nonbinding, but it will send a strong message to the President. We here in Congress are committed to protecting and supporting our troops.

The passage of this legislation will signal a change in direction in Iraq that will end the fighting and bring our troops home safely and soon. Our troops have worked together to secure our Nation, and we in this House must work together to secure our Nation as well and to do so in a way that honors their sacrifice.

I urge my colleagues to support our troops and a new direction in Iraq by voting “aye” on the bipartisan Skelton-Lantos-Jones resolution.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 6 minutes to Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, a prominent feature of this debate has been two sharply contrasting visions of the future. One vision sees no hope for us in Iraq and counsels that we withdraw, just give up. By contrast, the other mission focuses on success. We understand what accepting defeat means for Iraq.

We understand what accepting defeat means for Iraq. We support modifications and strategy to address the enemy’s changing tactics, and we are committed to destroying the enemy before the enemy can destroy us. This success policy is rooted in the fabric of the American character, in our belief in the ability of our troops to achieve success in Iraq and Afghanistan and on all the front lines of this global struggle against Islamic extremist jihadists.

The resolution at the center of this debate, Madam Speaker, lacks hope. It accepts defeat. It opposes reinforcements for our troops on the battlefield, reinforcements that strengthens their resolve to fight the enemy and succeed in their mission.

General Petraeus said that he cannot accomplish his mission without the deployment of additional U.S. forces. This resolution, however, announces that Congress will deny the commander in Iraq the means he says he needs to win. This resolution seeks to transform this House into 433 generals.

What is the next step in the strategy, Madam Speaker, after the crippling of our effort? We know from statements and bills that have been introduced that plans will mandate the nature and the timing of a withdrawal by placing limitations on the funding of our efforts. A vote for this resolution translates into a vote to proceed toward defunding of our troops.

Some believe that the impact of these decisions is confined to Iraq, but Iraq is only one front in the global war against radical Islamic jihadists. This war has no boundaries. This is a war that poses the greatest challenge to our generation.

I will quote al-Zawahiri in his own words. He describes this fight in this way:

‘‘. . . Afghanistan and Iraq are the two most important fields for confronting the contemporary Crusader war. Therefore, the Muslim nation should support the mujahidin in these two countries with all its power. . . . Afghanistan and Iraq are al-Zawahiri’s words. He talks about the war in Iraq as being central. He added that Iraq “is the gateway to the liberation of Palestine and the restoration of the Islamic Caliphate.”’’

Iran’s leader has echoed similar views. He stated, we will soon experience a world without the United States; and he goes on to state, we must prepare ourselves to rule the world.

The enemy understands what is at stake. We must, also.

Once the retreat has started, where will it stop? Afghanistan? The Persian Gulf? The entire Middle East? Once we have abandoned our allies in Iraq, why should anyone in this world believe we say that we draw a line in the sand and say that we will never abandon them.

Lawrence Haas, a former communications director for Vice President Gore, stated recently, ‘‘. . . our enemies anticipate that Iraq is the latest chapter in the book of American defeatism. Our withdrawal will embolden them to push ahead, confident that we
lack the stomach for confrontation, that our commitments mean nothing, that they can win simply by outlasting us."

A withdrawal in this generational fight will ensure that what is to come will be even worse. While pursuing a withdrawal, some state that they support the troops. But as leaders of the American Legion and the Veterans for Foreign Wars have stated, you cannot separate the warrior from the war.

My friend, Representative Charles Lehtinen, and his wife, Lindsay, proudly served as Marine pilots in Iraq. Lindsay will soon leave for a tour in Afghanistan. Far from seeing their mission as hopeless, far from urging withdrawal, they and their fellow service men and women are committed to victory. They are so confident in that success that they are willing to risk their lives to secure it.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), the ranking member on the Intelligence Committee.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, this debate is about whether or not America is a great Nation that will lead in the face of difficulty. We have come up short. This resolution falls short. It is small and not worthy of this House. Why small? Let me begin with a threat that some either don’t understand or refuse to acknowledge.

This resolution does not address the fact that the current threat is not just the single front in Iraq, but rather the larger threat of militant Islamic jihadists who hate us enough to want to kill. These militant Islamic jihadists are a fringe element of Islam who have very specific ideas and goals about how to revive Islam and Muslims to world power, and how to deal with their enemies.

They are committed to a violent overthrow of existing international systems and to their replacement by an all-encompassing Islamic state called the caliphate. In explaining his approach to creating the caliphate, centered in Iraq, al-Qaeda’s number two leader, Zawahari, outlined a four-stage plan:

Stage 1, expel the Americans from Iraq in defeat.
Stage 2, create an Islamic religious government in Iraq, developing and supporting it until it achieves a level of political stability.
Stage 3, extend the jihad wave to secular countries neighboring Iraq.
Stage 4, clash with Israel, because Israel was established only to challenge any new Islamic theology.

I think you get the picture.

Let me also be clear. This jihad is about them, their God, and their religion, it is not about us. These militant jihadists believe that the modern world has forsaken the pure religious life and that only with a caliphate can they return to “pure life.”

It is this narrow ideology that poses the direct and real threat to us. It is this ideology that poses the threat not only to us, but also includes the belief that killing other Muslims is justified to achieve their radical goals. Here is the true threat to America and the world, this militant Islamic jihad, a jihad that attacks around the globe, including the United States in Iraq.

The resolution we debate today does not address this global problem, this threat to peace and stability. Iraq is not the problem, it is only one front in this larger war.

The second point. This resolution omits specifically all of the men and women of the Armed forces who are defending our freedoms in other theaters.
such as Kuwait, Afghanistan and Bosnia. It says, by not saying, that this Congress may not support troops who will be sent to Iraq.

Is this intentional? Is this part of the plan to choke off funding for our troops? It is quite alarming that this resolution omits and completely slights the incredible contributions to this Nation’s security of our dedicated men and women in the Intelligence Community, many serving in Iraq, who provide critical information vital to their security.

Is this the first step in cutting off our funding, too, returning to the Clinton administration’s policies of the 1990s that decimated our intelligence capabilities?

Finally, Madam Speaker, I need to address the issue of the consequences of failure. What happens if Iraq collapses due to a sudden withdrawal of U.S. and multinational forces? That would make it clear that they will fill the void. Surely America is wary of the conflict in Iraq, but the difficulty of this conflict does not justify giving into their strategy: yes, their strategy. They believe that the way to win it is by wearing America down. Will we quit? Do we understand the consequences?

Make no mistake, this resolution is a dangerous and naive first step to cutting funding to our troops in an unwise withdrawal from the region. Iraq is not a faraway place where the United States has no interest and where we can pull our troops out of without paying a price in the global war against militant Islam.

This debate is not about Iraq, it is about us, us as a Nation of people who will do the right thing. The fundamental question is, Do we have the resolve that will be necessary to defeat radical and militant Islamic Jihadists that contain bad actors such as Iran, and will we stand and fight for the future of our kids and their kids?

We have seen similar threats before. In 1914, my great-uncle was liberated by Canadians and American troops in the Netherlands. They never forgot the sacrifices that were made by brave soldiers and by a great Nation, a Nation on a great mission.

America did it for them, but it also did it for itself. America recognized that the threat was a direct threat to America and the world. We then led a global effort to victory. Today we face a very different but, again, a very real threat: radical militant Islam. The challenge to this Congress is to rise to the occasion, to help lead America and to help lead the world to victory.

This petty resolution falls far short of that noble and worthy calling. Vote “no.” 2002 was a mistake; we must do better.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous-consent request to my friend from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, this week during the debate on H. Con. Res. 63, I spoke of the men and women of our Armed Forces and the sacrifices they have made for our country. I noted that I had visited them in theater, at Walter Reed, and with their families in New Jersey. As I said, the quality of these men and women and the readiness of the military to serve their country, makes this situation in Iraq all the more tragic. I am sure I was quite clear regarding my sentiments, but it would appear that some in this House chose to mischaracterize my remarks.

The gentleman from California, Mr. HUNTER, said that I “referred to our wounded folks in Walter Reed as tragic.” I want the gentleman to know I said no such thing, and I will ask him to be accurate if he chooses to quote me again.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 5 minutes to my good friend and our distinguished colleague from West Virginia, Congressman MOLLOHAN.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution opposing the President’s decision to escalate this war. My position on the Iraq war is uncomplicated. I voted against the initial war resolution back in 2002 and I have never believed the President made a compelling argument that Iraq posed the sort of substantive threat to the United States that would justify war, and the considerable human, political, and financial costs that it would bring. It is the last call for the President to come back to the people. He may ignore that call. He may dismiss this resolution and this debate as meaningless. He may dismiss the voice of the people expressed through 439 newly elected Representatives as meaningless. But if he does, Madam Speaker, he forces us to move forward without him. I hope that doesn’t happen.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this resolution, and I urge the President to listen to this debate and to join with us.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, at this time, I would yield 5 minutes to Mr. HUNTER of California, ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. HUNTER. I thank my friend for yielding.

This is, indeed, a sad time in our country. Five years ago we came to this floor united. We joined in sending our troops off in this war against terror.

You know, Madam Speaker, for the first number of strikes that were delivered by Muslim extremists in this war, the terrorists chose the battlefields. They chose a battlefield as a Marine barracks in Beirut. And Mr. SKELETON and I were there, he shortly after the explosion that killed our Marines, I shortly before that. And then they chose the Khobar Towers, they chose the embassies in Africa, they chose the USS Cole, and then they chose New
York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania. We chose the next two battlefields, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Our Democrat colleagues say that Iraq was the wrong battlefield, and I have heard resonating through the floor over the last 4 days statements that they were tricked, hoodwinked, fooled about Saddam Hussein.

From my side of the argument as to whether or not Saddam Hussein was a dangerous terrorist, I will simply offer all the statements by every Democrat leader in America during the 1990s, when there was no Bush administration to, in the words of my Democrat colleagues, “trick them.” I will offer their statements about Saddam Hussein.

Madam Speaker, we have expanded in the last 60 years. We have been in the business of expanding freedom. We understood after World War II that if we didn’t change the world, the world would change us. And that lesson was released.

No one would argue that it is not in our interest to have a Japan on the other side of the Pacific, where we stood up a free government, where we have a free nation, or that it is not in our interest to have a free El Salvador in our own hemisphere, or that it is not in our interest to have those dozens of nations that were behind the Berlin Wall that are now free and working for freedom. Many of them are partners in Iraq, and so that.

And now we are trying to expand freedom in a different part of the world, a very dangerous part of the world. And we are undertaking the same three-point strategy that we have had for 60 years: Number one, you stand up a free government; number two, you stand up a military capable of protecting that free government; and, number three, the Americans leave.

And we can build on this Baghdad plan, now in the execution phase, this plan of having two or three Iraqi battalions out front, with an American backup battalion to mentor them, and we can rotate every one of the 129 Iraqi battalions through this type of a combat rotation, stand them up, give them battlefield experience, and then the Americans can leave.

Now, Madam Speaker, I have heard it said throughout this debate that there was somehow a smooth road not taken. And we understand that, that is not true. There are no smooth roads in the Middle East. There are no smooth roads to standing up new governments, especially in communities and states where people have been trained to live under dictators.

And for those who say if we had just kept Saddam Hussein’s army in place, with it is 11,000 Sunni generals, everything would have been fine and we would have had a peaceful situation in Iraq right now, that is nonsense. And for those who said if we had had 200,000 or 300,000 troops, the Shites and Sunnis would have forgotten their ancient rivalries, that is also nonsense.

What are the facts, the reality, our Democrat friends say we have to be realists here, is this a tough, difficult road. We are on the second stage right now. Most importantly, Madam Speaker, our troops are in the field already on this plan that is now being retroactively disavowed by the Democratic leadership.

You know, it was in June, I think it was 2130 hours, June 6, 1944, when the first elements of the first aircraft of the Pathfinder companies went out in front of the sector Normandy, and they shortly were followed by hundreds of airplanes with American paratroopers. The 82nd Airborne going into Normandy had the full support and prayers of everybody in the United States Congress.

Today, you have got an 82nd Airborne Second Brigade now operating under this plan in Baghdad already there in Baghdad. Now, is this going to be the day, I would ask my colleagues, when eventually our Army and our Airborne writes on the concrete wall next to his position in Baghdad, “This is where I stood when the United States House of Representatives led by the Democrat leadership rejected my mission? I hope that doesn’t happen, Madam Speaker.

Vote “no” on this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time each side has.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ESPHO). The gentleman from California has 29 1⁄2 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas has 32 minutes remaining.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, we reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 5 minutes to Mr. McCOTTER from Michigan, the chairman of the Republican Policy Committee.

Mr. McCOTTER. Madam Speaker, President Bush, while warning, “A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. It will become all one thing or all the other.”

Today, our House is divided; tomorrow, it will become all one thing or all the other. What are the possibilities?

In our divided House, one side believes we must win in Iraq to avoid a catastrophe; another side assumes we can lose in Iraq without consequence. One side believes we must support our troops in harm’s way and continue their funding; another side claims we can support our troops in harm’s way and cut their funding.

One side assures we must defeat al Qaeda in Iraq; another side asserts we can retreat from al Qaeda in Iraq.

And one side believes the American people voted to change course in Iraq to win; another side feels the American people voted to change course in Iraq to lose.

Shortly, we will see how divided we are. One side will vote to support the President’s plan to win in Iraq by reinvigorating our troops, and then pray to God we are right; one side will vote against the President’s plan. And in this question rests the answer to the future of our divided House.

My friends, many of you are about to put yourselves in a position, for no one knows what the future holds. While we may feel sure of our decisions in the evanescent present, the unfathomable vagaries of fate have yet to fully play upon the stage of human existence. As a result of the deliberations of this resolution made an ominous omission while urging its adoption: In denouncing the President’s plan, too few of you have openly hoped our troops’ new mission would win the day.

Being your colleague, I know you share this hope in your hearts. But your fellow Americans in fields abroad and constituencies at home must now wonder, will you cut our troops funding to prove yourselves right?

Sooner than you imagine, this non-binding resolution will instigate binding legislation to commence a “slow bleed” of funding cuts while our troops bide against the evil, because I serve beside you every day, I know you abhor the thought of American soldiers being harmed by such an abject betrayal of their trust during combat, but it is upon this crucial of confidence you will be judged by all. And when the time comes to confront the consequences of today’s expediency, I pray you make the right decision. If, however, you make the wrong decision, you will not only betray our countrymen, you will disastrously unite this House in a callow contentment with our own liberty and a calloused apathy to others’ enslavement.

Could there be any more dishonorable epitaph for our free Republic’s revolutionary experiment in democracy? True, some allege I exaggerate the danger, but they have turned a blind eye to the epitaphs of liberty etched above the ruins of nations now dead: the Athenian city-state, the Roman Republic, the Weimar Republic.

Thus, even as we today divide in our own House, we remain compelled to unite behind the cause of our free Republic in this dangerous age of globalization, wherein humanity’s destiny is daily entwined across the disparate reaches of Earth.

Our cause is this: Our world cannot permanently endure half free. It will become all one thing or all the other, as it has before in the darkest ages of human existence.

My friends, at this crossroads of our Republic, we must heed the better angels of our nature. We must unite our divided House behind the self-evident truth that all human beings are endowed by their Creator, with the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We must extend freedom to the Iraqis and, in so doing, enhance the liberty of ourselves and all free peoples and inspire our fellow human beings caged in
tyranny’s embrace. And emulating our nation’s greatest generations, we must let hope to flow from God’s heart to our humble hands so we may, where He allows, emancipate humanity into a new birth of freedom for ourselves and generations yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, we must reject this resolution, unite behind our heroic troops and, God willing, win our country and humanity’s mortal struggle to be free.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 5 minutes to my good friend from Mississippi, the distinguished chairman of our Homeland Security Committee, Congressman THOMSPSON.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, 3 months ago the American people sent a resounding message for change. They voted for a new direction in Congress and new direction for the war in Iraq. In solemn tribute to the sacrifices of the men and women of the Armed Forces in Mississippi’s Second Congressional District who have served in Iraq and who have paid the ultimate sacrifice, I would like to recognize some of Mississippi’s Second District heroes:

Staff Sergeant John McGee. Cary, Mississippi; 24 years old; died April 5, 2003, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Larry K. Brown, Hometown: Jackson, Mississippi; 22 years old; died April 5, 2003, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Raphael S. Davis, Hometown: Tutwiler, Mississippi; 24 years of age; died December 2, 2003, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Captain Kermit O. Evans, Hollandale, Mississippi; 31 years old; died December 3, 2006, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Joshua S. Ladd, Port Gibson, Mississippi; 20 years old; died May 1, 2004, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.


Staff Sergeant John McGee, Cary, Mississippi; age 36 years; died May 2, 2005, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.


Madam Speaker, the Department of Defense reports that as of February 15, 2007, 3,126 U.S. military service members have died as a result of their service in Iraq. More than 25,000 have been wounded.

This bipartisan resolution before us today asks Members a straightforward question: Do you approve of the President’s announced proposal on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq?

There is no question that the way forward in Iraq is one of our greatest challenges. The open debate offered here today allows us all an opportunity to express our sentiments on the administration’s proposal. The sacrifices, dedication, and patriotism of our elite military and their families deserve no less.

I oppose the President’s proposal. Until the President is willing to sit down with Congress and provide accurate data on what is really going on in this war, I cannot in good conscience support putting more men in harm’s way.

This administration used bad intelligence to justify the rationale for war, and I fear that they are using bad judgment here today in their call for sending 25,000 more troops into harm’s way. The administration keeps calling this proposal a troop surge. Let us call it what it is. The proposal is a troop increase. Rather than a troop surge, what we need from this administration is a truth surge. The incompetence and misbehavior that has gotten us into this mess is not the competence it will take to get us out.

The President and this administration must remain faithful and truthful to Congress and the American people and allow Congress to do what it was formed to do under the Constitution. The President must allow Congress to do what it was intended to do under the Constitution. This decision to continue in this direction is not democratic and, therefore, does not demonstrate the best example of what we are fighting for in Iraq. We must not allow the President to escalate the Iraq War without specific congressional approval.

Madam Speaker, we must send the President a message he cannot ignore. We must pass the Skelton-Lantos-Jones resolution.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the deputy whip of the minority.

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, just 2 days ago on February 14, Osama bin Laden’s deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, posted a speech on an Islamist Web site where he blessed jihad fighters in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia and urged the mujahadeen all over the world to remain steadfast since complete victory was near. He made special mention of those in the Islamic jihadist media and thanked them for their blessed efforts which cause the Crusaders to lose sleep.

There is no doubt about it, Madam Speaker. We are fighting against an enemy that uses every weapon at its disposal to inflict casualties upon our soldiers in the field. This enemy seeks not just victory in Iraq but the reestablishment of Islamic caliphate that would threaten the security of America and freedom-loving people throughout the world.

Today, this House will vote on a nonbinding resolution that disapproves of a surge and what will happen in the midst of a power vacuum . . .

The soldier went on to say: “I personally served in the streets of Baghdad in 2006, and I would have felt better serving, thinking that both houses of Congress gave me their full support.”

Madam Speaker, what we debate in this House, how we conduct ourselves, does have real consequences. Some of our country’s bravest are on the battlefield and on the streets of Baghdad as we speak.

We have seen throughout our history what happens when our resolve is weak. In 1993 this country halfheartedly supported the commitment of troops to subdue the violent warlords of Somalia. The precipitous withdrawal in the face of casualties left a chaotic nation to this day that harbors terrorists and is a feeding ground for instability.

The lessons of history must not be forgotten as we face a determined enemy of Islamic terrorists who are waging a war upon freedom.

Madam Speaker, the American people want us to fight and win in Iraq and bring our troops home. Our soldiers seek nothing more than the support they require to perform their mission and the knowledge that the American people believe that their sacrifice is necessary and noble.

Contrary to some of those on the other side of the aisle who have stood here in this well believing and saying
that this debate is a breath of fresh air. Our enemies will be the only ones satisfied by this debate. They will have received all the political rhetoric they require to convince their followers that complete victory is at hand. One can only imagine with horror how many Islamic extremists will continue the fight after this House resolves that it supports our troops but not the mission we ask them to perform.

To those who support this resolution and oppose any effort to achieve victory in Iraq, I challenge you to be true to your convictions and bring a binding resolution to the floor to cut off funds for our troops, because that is really what this is all about.

Madam Speaker, I oppose this resolution and urge my colleagues to vote “no” and send a message worth hearing to America, our soldiers, and our enemies.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM).

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

While this resolution may be nonbinding, it will be bound by its consequences: the immediate and long-lasting consequences, those here and in the combat zone.

Democrats continue to put forward an inherently contradictory message with one hand and offering rhetorical support for the troops and on the other, advancing a slow-bled strategy that methodically contricts those troops’ ability to succeed.

From the testimonialis we have heard, it is clear our troops believe their mission is winnable. And the message they are routinely delivering to us could not be more clear. They want a chance to get the job done.

Ladies and gentlemen, our troops are not staffed by a slickly produced focus group-tested set of talking points. They are vocalizing the overwhelming sentiments that exist on the front lines. We do a disservice to the very troops we claim to support when we advance a slow-bled strategy that cuts off their lifeline of support.

We don’t support them when we choke off the funding they need to succeed. We don’t support them when we erect political roadblocks designed to deny them equipment that they need to carry out their mission. We don’t support them when we tie their hands behind their back. And we certainly don’t support our troops when we attach strings to the funding needed to ensure that when they need help, it is on the line.

Yesterday the chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee unveiled this dangerous slow-bled doctrine on a Web site, movecongress.org, that is directly affiliated with some of the most extreme elements of the antwar left. This is a political machine designed to elect and defeat politicians by using our troops as pawns, and now they seek to deprive those same troops of the resources they need to succeed in their mission. According to news reports, these groups are prepared to spend $8.5 million on a national ad campaign to target lawmakers who did not adhere to their extremist views.

This resolution is not an earnest expression of congressional sentiment. It is phase one of the far left’s plan to elect more of their own. And all of this is for what? To send a message or set the stage for a score in Chief? To raise campaign cash?

It turns out our worst fears are true; that this resolution is, in fact, a first, dangerous step to cutting off the funds our troops so desperately need. The remarks of the Defense Appropriations chairman, the remarks of the Speaker with major national reporters lending support to the slow-bled doctrine; and next week senior House leaders will convene to map out their strategy for maximizing their ability to defund the troops while minimizing the political fallout.

Before you cast your vote today, you should see this resolution for what it is: phase one of a political campaign to strip our troops of the funds they need.

Right now, in some cave in Iraq or Afghanistan, information is being located on a hard drive that talks about a plan for a new attack in America. Right now, somewhere in the Middle East, teenage boys are being groomed to be human bombs to further the aims of these Islamic extremists. Right now, money is being transferred across a global finance network to fund the attacks here on our soil or on other allies’ soil who believe in the types of freedom and open society we enjoy, in Madrid, in London, in Hamburg, in New York, in Washington. Regrettably, how many Republicans cross the aisle and vote with the Democrats or how many Democrats cross the aisle and vote with the Republicans, tomorrow morning the terrorists will still wake up with hate on their hearts, plotting the next scheme to bring down our economy, to bring down our system of government, to bring down the lives of innocents.

As recently as last August, as if we didn’t learn from the events of 9/11, as recently as last August, there was still an attempt to blow up 10 more airliners using baby food as the means for bringing on the explosive device.

Resolutions like this do nothing to stop that type of hate. They only send the wrong signals to the men and women on the front lines for all of us.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the minority whip.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for the time.

Madam Speaker, I rise again today, as I did at the beginning of this debate, to urge a “no” vote on this nonbinding resolution. We have spent the week discussing the situation in Iraq and trying to find out what the resolution may really mean.

As I said at the start of this debate, it is hard to imagine a less qualified question prepared to dance on the ground than 535 Members of Congress, or 535 members of anything else; how many troops to deploy, where to deploy them, which car to stop. Where does it end?

There is a disagreement on how we should fight this war on Islamic totalitarianism, but this fight is the challenge of our generation.

Madam Speaker, many of my friends on the other side of the aisle supported this mission at the beginning. Now they are ready to give up in the middle of the fight.

Those who join me in opposing this nonbinding resolution have been saying all week, while this resolution will have no impact because it is nonbinding, it is still the first step toward cutting funding for our troops.

Yesterday, we were told that this is the first step toward pulling the rug out from under our troops in the field. This week, one of the veterans on our side of the aisle was accused of being dishonest in her representation when she said that this resolution we will vote on today did not support those who are deploying. But the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. MURTHA, said just yesterday, during the unveiling of his strategy to pull the rug out from under our troops, “They won’t be able to do that.”

They won’t be able to do the deployment. They won’t have the equipment. They don’t have the training, and they won’t be able to do the work.”

He also said, “I think, first of all, we have to be careful that people don’t think this is the vote. The real vote will come on the legislation we are putting together. This nonbinding legislation is just an opinion. I would say this resolution says just enough not to say anything at all. We have already heard the Democrats calling the debate this week the “bark before the bite.” Their so-called slow-bled approach is the bite that will surely hurt those fighting under America’s flag overseas.

This nonbinding resolution is the first step in an all-too-binding spiral toward defeat in a fight that we cannot afford to lose.

I am not pleased to vote “no” today, but I will vote “no,” knowing that the “no” vote is the right vote.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, as we come to the end of this debate, I want to commend every participant on both sides for their powerful and eloquently their deeply held views.

I started this debate in the firm belief that escalation is a flawed idea. After listening carefully for the past 4 days to all of my colleagues, I am more convinced than ever that escalation is a flawed idea. Escalation is not only the wrong policy for the United States, it is also the
wrong policy for Iraq. If Iraq is to succeed as a stable and prosperous state, it must learn to take responsibility. It must learn to make difficult decisions. It must amend its constitution in the interests of Iraqi reconciliation. It must devise an equitable law for distributing its revenues. And it must take primary responsibility for its own security.

Unless we de-escalate, Iraq will never step up to the plate. But that is not the only reason we must de-escalute. Unless our great Nation will be unable to fulfill its many far-flung global responsibilities. Unless we de-escalate, we will simply lack the resources for critical tasks here at home and overseas.

All of us, Madam Speaker, are passionately committed to supporting and defending our troops. In the coming weeks, my fellow Democrats and I will bring forth specific proposals to enhance this Nation’s support and defend our brave troops.

Madam Speaker, the American people are not well-served by the surge and our present course in Iraq. This omlet cannot be unscrambled. There have been far too many mistakes made to undo the damage.

For the sake of Iraq, for the sake of our own national interests and for the sake of our incomparable troops, de-escalation must begin, and it must begin now.

I strongly support the resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do so.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support our troops and our Nation. It is really that simple.

We in Congress have an obligation and duty to debate the many different issues facing the country. Our words and our actions traditionally make their way to our constituents’ living rooms and the national news, but now, with communications being what they are, to our troops in the field through the Internet.

Our words are the guiding principles by which the voters ultimately make their decision on who they want representing them here, and this week obviously no exception.

Our words will carry on for many months to come. Our constituents are listening, as there is no issue more sobering or more somber than this one.

Over the last 4 days, though, I have been struck not so much by the rhetoric on display here but the effects this debate will have on the morale of our troops. Our words have carried much further than those living rooms this past week. This debate will inevitably make its way to the parents of our troops, their spouses, their children. These children will remember parts of this debate and will grow up learning just how much their country supported their parents during these trying times.

The talk also goes to the enemy, who is watching and waiting to us in the caves, on the battlefield, the terrorist cells wherever they may be. They monitor what we are saying to learn of our resolve. So even if we just talk, we ought to be very careful what we say.

The world is watching and listening. And we are ever closer to finding our military. I want to talk briefly. We have one Commander in Chief. The President’s premise for going to war in both Afghanistan and Iraq has always been to go on the offensive. It is hard to prove a negative, but it is obvious we have not had one terrorist attack in the U.S. since 9/11. That is not all because of our decision to go to war in Iraq, but it is one of the reasons.

Everybody ought to know by now the basic mistake the jihadis. They are attracted to volatile parts of the Middle East, where broken regimes make it okay to practice hatred and violence. They are looking for safe sanctuary that provides secrecy, communications capabilities and a basic infrastructure with which to concoct their next scheme. They plan and plot and wait to pounce in various hot spots around the world, just as they have done in Kenya, Tanzania, the USS Cole, Bali, Madrid, London. It is a low-grade war.

If we finish this job, Iraq might be a place where people are more concerned with getting to work and raising a family than one where terrorists can plan attacks and sectarian violence is rampant. It won’t be perfect.

And let’s be honest about what is called sectarian violence. Where did that come from? A lot of it from terrorist organizations, al Qaeda foremost. It is supplied along because our enemies know it will test our resolve. Listen to the tapes of Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahari. They talk about it all the time.

What they want for themselves is for the U.S. to give up. They call us a paper tiger, a country that gives up when support wanes or when the going gets difficult. In their view, after we give up, they will claim victory and turn Iraq into a terrorist factory of weapons making and surveillance operations, all designed for the express purpose of waging the next attack in the U.S. or otherwise advancing this low-grade war.

The President knows this, and we need to end this war. He has taken the input of others and readjusted our strategy and, as we speak, is readjusting our tactics. The Iraqis must take charge of their own security.

Our military is pressing for action, action from our own troops to quell the violence and action to get the Iraqi security forces trained, equipped and ready to act.

I hope to bring the Kentucky troops home, but not until the work is done. Oppose the resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, this is a bipartisan resolution, and I am pleased to yield 5 1/2 minutes to my friend the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am grateful to Chairman SKELTON and Chairman LANTOS for giving me the opportunity and the privilege to be part of this resolution, first of all, to thank our men and women in uniform for their service and, secondly, to question whether the sending of 20,000-plus troops to be police in Baghdad is the right thing to do.

I think this has been a great debate, no matter which side of the aisle you have been on or which position you have had.

Madam Speaker, I want to say again, as I did 2 days ago, I know we cannot live in the past, but I will tell you, my heart has ached ever since I went to a Marine’s funeral in April of 2003.

Michael Bitz died a sergeant, a sergeant who left a wife and three children, twins that were born 2 weeks after he was deployed. He never saw them. At the funeral, the wife read the last letter word for word. She cried, and I cried too, by God.

Then I started questioning. The intelligence given to the Congress and the American people, was it verified? Was it true? Then I started knocking out and asking for those who were on the inside, and I am going to read this to you today very quickly.

General Gregory Newbold, Marine general, and as far as I am concerned, he is a hero because he gave up a third star because he could not sit there and the manipulation of the intelligence to send our troops to Iraq, and I quote very quickly from an article that he wrote for Time magazine, April 9, 2006.

“Two senior military officers are known to have challenged Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on the planning of the Iraq War. Army General Eric Shinseki publicly dissented and found himself marginalized. Marine Lieutenant Greg Newbold, the Pentagon’s top operations officer, voiced his objections internally and then retired, in part out of opposition to the war.”

I further read from his writing to Time magazine, “From 2000 until October 2002, I was a Marine Corps Lieutenant general and director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. After 9/11, I was a witness and therefore a party to the actions that led us to the invasion of Iraq, an unnecessary war. Inside the military family, I made no secret of my view that the zealots’ rationale for war made no sense. And I think I was outspoken enough to make those senior to me uncomfortable. But I now realize I did not more openly challenge those who were determined to invade a country whose actions were peripheral to the real threat, al Qaeda. I
Madam Speaker, I am proud to be part of this resolution. Debate has never hurt anyone. In fact, at the Armed Services meeting 2 weeks ago, a question was asked, either by my side or your side, Would this demoralize the troops? And General Pace and Secretary of Defense Gates said, no, it will not; they are smart, they understand. This is what freedom is all about is debate, disagreement, and discussion.

Madam Speaker, our troops have done a magnificent job, and they cannot afford to continue to be policemen in a civil war. It is not fair and makes no sense at all.

Seventy percent of the American people are opposed to this surge, and Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the minority leader, for his commitment to our troops in harm's way, a duty to provide them with the full support and resources they need to accomplish their mission and return home safely.

My friends on the other side have described this nonbinding resolution as their first step. It is a first step. It is the first step in a plan to cut off funding and reinforcements for American troops in harm's way.

The next step is to micromanage the war through the budget process. To quote the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA), who said yesterday, “They won’t be able to continue. They won’t be able to do the deployment. They don’t have the equipment, and they won’t be able to do the work.”

Mr. Speaker, at this very moment American troops are fighting radical Islamic terrorists thousands of miles away, and it is unthinkable that the United States Congress would move to discredit their mission, cut off their reinforcements and deny them the resources they need to succeed and return home safely.

The American people will not support a strategy that involves pulling the rug out from under American troops in the combat zone by cutting off their reinforcements and forcing them to face an enemy without our full support.

This resolution is nonbinding, but it is the first step toward a tragic, unthinkable goal.

Four years ago, this body agreed that fighting this war was a worthy cause. There have been setbacks where Members on both sides of the aisle are right or wrong with the results. But this is war. We face a sophisticated, determined enemy who wants to annihilate our way of life.

After a crippling depression in the 1930s, we defeated Japanese imperialism and Hitler in Germany. We then defeated the Soviet Union and their communist empire in a test of wills that lasted for a generation.

The greatness of Members of Congress from both parties, defaulted in fulfilling their constitutional responsibility for oversight.

These are not my words. They are the words of the General. General Secretary Newbold who gave up the third star because he could not stay and see what was happening to our military and to this country.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the minority leader.

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Texas for yielding and thank him and all of you for, once again, to have an opportunity to come and speak on the floor on this resolution.

The resolution before us is nonbinding. Who is it the first step down a very treacherous path, a path that, if followed, will endanger Americans for generations to come.

Iraq is the central front in a global war between the United States of America and radical Islamic terrorists, a war that began long before the tragic events of 9/11, a war the American people did not seek and did not start.

It is mind-boggling to consider how fanatically committed our enemies are to destroying America, even at the cost of destroying themselves in the process. Our enemies recruit young people, fill them with hate and rage, and then send them on suicide missions to kill innocent victims. We face an enemy that loves death more than it loves life.

As Americans, we cherish freedom and democracy. Ours is a way of life. Theirs is a way of death, of murder, of suicide.

The global reach of radical Islam stretches from North Africa, through the Middle East, to South Asia, to Indonesia and to the Philippines.

The other Americans, the Americans who believe that the war in Iraq is different from the war on terror. They even say that we are not fighting al Qaeda in Iraq, ignoring the fact that al Qaeda has made it the central front in their war against America.

According to the experts, and according to their own words, radical Islamic terrorists will never stop fighting until much of the world is under Islamic law.

The global reach of radical Islam and the Islamic terrorists will never stop fighting until much of the world is under Islamic law.

It is not fair and makes no sense at all.

We face an enemy without our full support. Duty is defined as a God-given task. Without duty, life is worthless.

Our troops are not the only Americans who have a God-given task. If a noncommissioned officer can understand his duty, then certainly Members of Congress can understand theirs.

And our enemies are watching this debate, and through the Arab media we know what they are saying.

Recently, the second-in-command of al Qaeda issued a warning to moderate Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan who are working and dying to build peace and security, and he said this: “These traitors in Iraq and Afghanistan must face their inevitable fate, and face up to the inescapable facts. America is about to depart and abandon him, just as it abandoned their like in Vietnam.”

The consequences of failure in Iraq would be catastrophic for America and the world.

Last month, General Petraeus spoke of the very real possibility of Iraq's neighbors taking sides in sectarian violence.

Failing in Iraq would jeopardize Israel and greatly benefit Iran, a nation governed by a fanatic and actively rein forcing and denying them the resources they need to accomplish their mission and return home safely.

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We have a duty to stand and fight against those who seek to destroy America and the freedom that defines us. Our troops are committed to fighting and winning this global war. We owe them our unfailing support.

I urge my colleagues to stand with the heroes, the soldiers, the sailors and the airmen and vote down this resolution. I urge my colleagues to think about our duty, our duty to support our troops, our duty to protect the American people, and our duty to leave for our children and grandchildren a safe, free, and secure America. Our soldiers are dying around the world to protect us, upholding their duty. Do we have the courage to uphold our duty?

Vote "no" on this resolution.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to yield 7 minutes to an American hero, a hero of the State of Texas, a pilot in Vietnam, one of the longest serving prisoners of war of the Vietnam era and a personal hero of mine, Mr. SAM JOHNSON.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. You know, as he said, I flew 62 combat missions in Vietnam and 29 in Vietnam before being shot down. I had the privilege of serving in the United States Air Force for 29 years, attending the prestigious National War College, commanding two air bases, among other things.

I mention these stories because I view the debate on the floor not just as a U.S. Congressman elected to serve the good people of the Third District in Texas, but also through the lens of a lifelong pilot, student of war, a combat warrior, a leader of men, and a prisoner of war.

Ironically, this week marks the anniversary that I started a new life and my freedom from prison in Hanoi. I spent nearly 7 years as that prisoner of war, more than half of that time in solitary confinement. I flew out of Hanoi on February 12, 1973, with other long-held prisoners of war, weighing just 140 pounds. And tomorrow, 34 years ago, I held prisoners of war, weighing just 140 pounds. And tomorrow, 34 years ago, I had the honor of being able to hold prisoners of war, weighing just 140 pounds. And tomorrow, 34 years ago, I had the honor of being able to hold prisoners of war, weighing just 140 pounds.

Our captors would blare nasty recordings over the loudspeaker of Americans protesting back home, tales of Americans spitting on Vietnamese veterans them home, and worse. I don't think we should ever, ever let that happen again. The pain inflicted by your country's indifference is tenfold that inflicted by your ruthless captors.

Our troops and their families want, need, and deserve the full support of this country and the Congress. Moms and dads watching the news need to know that the Congress will not leave their sons and daughters in harm's way without support.

Since the President announced his new plan for Iraq last month, there has been steady progress. He changed the rules of engagement, removed political imperatives, expanded our role in Iraq, wounded the number two of al Qaeda and killed his deputy. And, yes, al Qaeda operates in Iraq. It is alleged that top radical jihadist, al-Sadr, has fled Iraq maybe to Iran, and Iraq has closed its borders with Iran and Syria.

The President has changed course, has offered a new plan. We are making progress. We must seize the opportunity to move forward, not stifle future success. Debating nonbinding resolutions aimed at crafting political points only destroys morale, stymies success, and emboldens the enemy.

The grim reality is that this House resolution says two simple things: We support the troops completely, wholeheartedly, now and in the future; and we disapprove of the White House's plan to deploy more than 20,000 additional combat troops to Iraq.

That is what we are voting on today, and nothing said on this floor or in this Chamber will change the fact that that is what is before us.

I oppose the President's plan because it will embroil our troops even more deeply in a sectarian conflict. Some call this conflict a civil war, some call it more complicated than a civil war, and, either way, it is a conflict we cannot resolve and which ultimately cannot be resolved militarily.

The President's plan to deploy more troops is simply not the answer. It cannot fix the three irretrievable mistakes made in 2003 when the administration insisted on de-Baathification, dissolving the Iraqi army, and shutting down the state-run industries, throwing hundreds of thousands of Iraqis out of work and creating untold numbers of insurgents.

The President's plan hastily put together is insufficient in a number of ways:

- It is insufficient in the requirements for progress it places on the Iraqi political system, the true center of gravity in this whole conflict.
- It is insufficient in the support it provides to our combat forces both in terms of equipment as well as support forces.
- And it is insufficient in the amount of training time it allows for deploying units.

Now, finally, I oppose the White House's plan because it will heighten the already unacceptable level of strategic risk currently facing our Nation,
strategic risk that exists because our military is overcommitted in Iraq and is ill-equipped and ill-positioned to respond to emerging crises elsewhere in the world. And this worries me, it worries me deeply.

I have been privileged to serve here in Congress slightly over 30 years, and over that time 12 significant military contingencies have occurred in which our military have been involved. Each of them occurred in an unexpected place and at an unexpected time. It will not happen again. Right now, we are not prepared as we should be for an unforeseen military threat. That worries me.

Unfortunately, it is the magnificent, wonderful, courageous men and women of our military who will pay the price for that failure.

Madam Speaker, we must send the White House a message that cannot be ignored; and that is why we are here today. I urge that we pass the Skelton-LaTourette bill of my colleagues.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Madam Speaker, despite my belief in the inadequacies of the President's new strategy, to vote for the resolution is already weakening, and is a step I cannot take. I am unwilling to, after the fact—say to them, I oppose your mission.

My vote should not be interpreted as approval of the administration's conduct of this war. I have had the opportunity to meet General David Petraeus, the new commander of the U.S. forces in Iraq. I believe he is one of the most capable military commanders America has available for this mission. General Petraeus has indicated there is a chance for success and that he will report to the American people in 6 months as to whether or not the President's plan is working.

Let us give the new leaders and the new strategy this short period of time to see if stability can be achieved—an investment necessary to ensure the lives lost and families damaged thus far have not sacrificed in vain.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Madam Speaker, given my tenure in the House of Representatives, I have seen more than my fair share of good and bad legislation come to the House floor. In addressing the nonbinding House Continuing Resolution 63, I would like to take a step back and call this bill what it is, it is a façade, and a political maneuver. If we are going to spend four days discussing a piece of legislation, if we are going to vote on something, we should vote on funding. Our power in Congress is the power of the purse. If the Democrats have an action item, we should get to the point; let us vote on funding the war in Iraq, and stop making pointless partisan political arguments.

However, all of my colleagues are aware that a vote to stop funding for the war will not pass, as the Republicans will not mandate it and many Democrats would oppose such legislation as well. This is true because we all have American resolve, meaning we will work together as a country to finish what we began.

American resolve does not quit when a situation gets messy. We do not buckle our belt between our legs and run away scared. My colleagues and I are also aware that our legislative agenda does not exist in a bubble; that there are many factors at play. If we do not have the intestinal fortitude in Iraq, how will we be viewed by other countries like Iran? It is vital to our prosperity that the United States maintains her impenetrable stance in the international community. If the United States of America Tiger there will be many deep, far reaching implications; one of them being Iran's nuclear missile program, which threatens the safety of the world.

In addressing the real threat posed by Iran, Ambassador Gregory Schulte has explained that, “The pursuit of nuclear weapons by the leadership in Tehran threatens Iran's neighbors and threatens the wider world community. In the Middle East, Iran's influence is rising. The fall of both Talibin and Saddam, increased revenues from the high price of oil, the electoral victory of Hamas, and the perceived success of Hezbollah in attacking Israel all extend Iran's shadow.”

He also stated that: “A nuclear-armed Iran could embolden its leaders to advance their ambitions even more aggressively across the Middle East. Even without detonating a single nuclear weapon, the mere possession of an atomic arsenal could encourage Iran's leaders to expand conventional forces and step up terrorism to advance their regional ambitions. Iran, with Syria, is allowing terrorists and insurgents to use its territory to move in and out of Iraq and is helping to train and arm militants who are killing coalition forces and innocent civilians.”

In today's news, it was reported that Iran had shut down its border with Syria and Iran. U.S. officials have long suspected Syria of allowing foreign fighters to cross its long, porous border into Iraq, and this past weekend evidence was presented of Iranian-manufactured weapons being smuggled into Iraq. We will be paving the way for Iran and Syria to be the victors if we do not allow our troops the full force of our assistance in Congress.

I would like to be the bearer of a positive aspect of our work in Iraq, highlighting some major accomplishments achieved by our leaders and troops. Here is the positive side of the story that is rarely brought to light or reported on in the mainstream media:

Free Elections are transforming Iraq. In 2005, Iraq held a constitutional election and a constitutional referendum, with turnout increasing each time cumulating in 76 percent of registered voters participating in the December 2005 elections.

Economic recovery is picking up. The International Monetary Fund estimates GDP grew by 2.6 percent in 2005, and is expected to grow by 10.4 percent in 2006, adjusted for inflation.

A stable currency, introduced in April 2004, has allowed the Central Bank of Iraq to grow by 10.4 percent in 2006, adjusted for inflation.

Foreign and domestic banks are opening new offices.

The stock market established in April 2004 currently lists nearly 90 companies.

Iraq has virtually no cell phone subscribers in 2003. Today, there are more than 5 million cell phone subscribers, and an estimated 2,000 Internet cafes.

Seventy-seven percent of Iraqi businessmen anticipate growth in the national economy over the next 2 years, in a recent nationwide poll, and 69 percent are "optimistic" about Iraq's future.

In conclusion, we must stand behind our troops, military commanders, and our Commander in Chief. We need to finish the job and secure areas in Baghdad and the Anbar Province. We must secure the situation on the ground so Iraq can establish the rule of law. We must provide this secure environment so social and economic development can take place.

Finally, we must protect the population and critical infrastructure. These are fundamental elements of counter insurgency strategy. These fundamental elements simply have not been able to take hold due to the amount of insurgents in the area and their ability to overturn our previous work.

I ask my colleagues to refuse to allow our troops to become a casualty of partisan rhetoric. If we want to win the war, then we have one option. Support them. Support the mission. Support the military intelligence officers focused on this victory. Refuse to quit, refuse to walk away. We can win this counter insurgency this chance to succeed.

Mr. ADHERHOLT, Madam Speaker, today is a day that we will look back on and know that fundamental decisions regarding our Nation's history were made.

The discussions that we are engaged in will go a long way in determining our future in the ongoing global war on terror and Iraq's role in that fight. When this vote is cast on the nonbinding, Democratic resolution, we will be sending a message to the world. The only question remaining is what message will we send?

Will we say that America remains steadfast against the rising tide of hate and intolerance offered by militant Islamists? Will we say that we don't have the stomach to finish the fight against terrorists who actively seek to kill us and destroy our way of life?

The war in Iraq has become such a flashpoint that we struggle to separate the politics of the situation from the reality. The politics attacks the intelligence that led us to war, questions our Nation's elected leadership, and condemns the decisions made along the way. It leads to the resolution that we now have before us. The reality recognizes that we are at war now and our troops are putting their lives on the line each and every day. It says that if the direction that we believe in, a fight against global terrorism, we must do everything possible to support the men and women who are carrying it out on our behalf and never giving a hint to the contrary.

Unfortunately we are at a point today where some have forgotten exactly who and what we are and what we will not stand for. Prior to 9/11, we failed to understand the hate of people like Osama bin Laden and what could result from it despite all evidence to the contrary. In 1979, 66 American diplomats were held hostage in Iran for 444 days; in 1983, 241 Marines were killed in Beirut when their barracks was attacked; militant Islamic terrorists bombed the World Trade Center in 1993; 225 people were killed in attacks
on U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998; and, in 2000, 17 American sailors were killed when al-Qaeda attacked the U.S.S. Cole.

Today we are at a historic crossroads: we either boldly tackle the issue of militant Islam that exists in Iraq; we ignore and allow it to spread to other countries; or, we apply the lessons we have learned from the years leading up to 9/11, or we approach the issue as we naively demonstrated before 9/11 and expect more attacks and more American deaths.

The war in Iraq has gone on longer than any of us would have wished. We’ve seen too many funerals for too many sons and daughters, husbands and wives. To all those who have lost a friend or loved one, our hearts go out to you.

It should be noted that mistakes have been made, of that there can be no doubt. We must know without question what led us to this point, and that time will come. But now is not that time. Not while we still have American service men and women in harm’s way. History will play its part, teaching us our mistakes and using what happened. Before we don’t have the luxury of waiting on history to pass its judgment.

Without resolve, it is certain we will fail in Iraq and there will be far-reaching consequences for our Nation, the region and ultimately for the world. All of these terrorist attacks present in Iraq to win, we can expect more of the same. We can expect to see another al-Qaeda—puppet government established to support and back the aims of their terrorist masters. This is totally unacceptable.

Victory in Iraq is our only option. It is the only path through which we can hope for peace. Without victory, our terrorist enemies gain confidence in their opposition to the United States and their ability to defeat us militarily. We embolden them and offer them the opportunity to further their attacks against American men, women and children.

The resolution that we are debating will send a message to the world. What will that message be? My fervent hope and prayer is that it will be a message of resolve, a message of strength, a message of victory.

Now is the time to support our troops in the field unequivocally and vote against this non-binding resolution. We don’t want anyone to construe our action here today as not fully supporting our men and women who serve us in Iraq.

Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I wish to address three questions here on the floor today: Where are we? Where do we go? Where do we get to?

First, where are we? We’re in phase 3 of a conflict in Iraq. In Phase 1 we overran Iraq in response to an American national security threat. We won.

Then came Phase 2. We were forwardly deployed; the terrorists brought the fight to us; we basted up terrorist networks; America was protected from further attacks. We won.

Now comes Phase 3. At best, Iraq is engulfed in a sectarian killing spree. At worst, Iraq has descended into a civil war.

So where are we? We’re thankful for the incredible work of our military in winning Phase 1 and 2. We’re aware—and I think all of us are aware—that only the Iraqi people can win Phase 3. We’re united in imploring the Iraqi people to choose order over chaos; pluralism over theocracy; and freedom over authoritarianism. As we had the help of the French, the Iraqis have had the help of the United States.

But just as it was only American patriots who could decide the future of our country, only Iraqi patriots can decide the future of their country. It is a neo-con mistake to charge our war fighters with building an Iraqi national consensus. Iraqis must decide for themselves if they want a country and if they want a realistic Iraq. No amount of American military might can compel that result.

So where are we? Thankful for success in the outcomes that we could control; aware of the outcomes that we cannot control.

Where do we want to be? We want the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own country. The President is wisely pressing them to do so. We want the Iraqi leadership to make some key political decisions that could bring reconciliation and there’s no other way to do it. We want them to divide up the oil fairly, to allow banned Baathists back into positions of public trust and to develop a working model of pluralism.

We want the Iraqi leadership to know that they don’t have the luxury of deciding whether to keep these reconciliation questions quickly. We want them to know that we are not content to provide an overall security umbrella for their country while they dispatch death squads to kill their enemies and improve their sectarian positions. We want them to know that we’re reaching for the button that would lower that umbrella. And we want to avoid the error of nation building.

The job of the U.S. military is to crush, kill and destroy the enemies of the United States. They are not nation builders; they are warriors. And they do their jobs very, very well. As commanded, our military entered Iraq to destroy what we understandably believed were threats to our national security.

We were successful in destroying those threats and those interrupting terrorist networks. Those were outcomes that we could control.

Now we are rightly asked for inputs that we can control but we are faced with outcomes that only the Iraqi political system is right to evaluate the quality of our forces’ inputs, but wrong to hold them accountable for outcomes beyond their control. Diplomats, statesmen, peacemakers and everyday Iraqis must work with us to develop a path to progress—a path that has milestones along the way and which has rewards for meeting those milestones and the consequences for failure. Our military must help plan the path because they are the most stable and trustworthy institution on the ground in Iraq and because they are experts at discipline and logistics.

Since our military is in control of the “planning” input, they will rightly be evaluated on the basis of the quality of that planning. Because they are the most trained and capable force in the world, our military must also continue to insist on a timetable for these decision makers as they plan the path to progress. The quality of that protection is an input that will rightly be evaluated.

Because they are experts at discipline and structure, our military must help define the agreements that they expect for meeting those milestones and the consequences for missing them. The quality of those inputs will rightly be evaluated.

Because they are capable, our military must provide strength for the first steps on the path. The quality of that strength and the capabilities with which it is delivered will rightly be evaluated.

Having well supplied those inputs, the American military will learn in a painful way—perhaps painfully in Phase 2 and 3. If the Iraqi people follow the path to progress to a peaceful, pluralist and unified Iraq, they will have been successful. The path may lead to something less.

Any lesser outcome is the responsibility of the Iraqi people. So we want a path to progress, and we hope for the blessings of liberty for Iraq.

Now, how do we get there? The President has ordered an increase in troop strength in Iraq. He thinks a surge in troops will give breathing room for the development of a path to progress.

I’m concerned that a surge will have the opposite effect—that it will give breathing room to the death squads, that our service men and women will be caught in the crossfire and that the surge will end right where it began. In fact, these things happened in Baghdad in August and September of 2006.

I’m concerned that a surge sends a conflicting message. On the one hand we’re telling them, “You don’t have forever; you’ve got to make progress in solving these political questions and you’ve got to try and leg up on your enemies; it’s your country.” By surging, we may be saying, “Not to worry, we’re increasing the size of that American security umbrella; there’s no urgency; we’re here to stay; in fact, more of us are coming.”

I will ask Iraqis facing facts of factions to worry. I want them to see us reaching for the button that would bring that umbrella down. I want them to imagine the click of that button and the feel of the wind from the descending umbrella.

The resolution before us isn’t written the way I would have written it, but it’s the resolution before us. Resolutions are the way that Congress discharges its constitutional responsibility to communicate with the President. This resolution says, “We disapprove of the situation.”

Parties on both sides have added additional and conflicting meaning to those words. In the end, I just have to vote on the basis of the words. That’s why I’m going to vote in favor of the resolution and express my concern about the effectiveness of the surge.

Unlike many others who will vote for this resolution, I will not follow it with a vote to cut off funding. Nor will I follow it with a vote to withdraw immediately. Both of those actions would be mistaken.

Some will say that I am too impatient and insistent for decisions from the Iraqi leadership. It’s true that it took us nearly 100 years to figure out that slavery was antithetical to freedom. It took us even longer to figure out that women should have the right to vote.

But as I had the opportunity to say to one of Prime Minister Maliki’s advisors in Baghdad in August, it is our right as Iraq’s protector and our obligation to our servicemen and women to insist on a timetable for these decisions. I’ve only been to Iraq twice. Both times I found the hardest thing was leaving.

While there, I found leading by America’s best. I had the sense that I was at ground zero of mission and purpose. The Americans serving in Iraq are the most impressive people in the
Mr. BERGER. Madam Speaker, as an elected representative of our brave men and women in uniform's way, every vote regarding war is a solemn matter.

Debate about the war in Iraq is necessary, required, and many important points were brought up over the more than forty hours of discussion. No doubt about it, there have been setbacks in Iraq. And mistakes have been made on the ground and here in Washington. It's safe to say that all of us—the President, the Congress, and the American people—wish we could have achieved stability in the region sooner.

However, I believe it's necessary to separate the resolution being debated in the House from the real issue. The real issue is that a failed state in Iraq poses an ever-present threat to the United States' national security interests, could allow terrorists to further establish safe-havens in Iraq, and could create regional and global unrest for many years to come. This is a threat we must not pass on to our children and grandchildren. September 11th showed us that terrorists can reach our soil and kill innocent Americans. We must fight this war on our terms, but on their turf.

This non-binding resolution, H. Con. Res. 63, is nothing more than an opinion about a strategy. While opinions are interesting, solutions are necessary.

So I say to those who want to support this non-binding resolution: If you disagree with the strategy, fight the war...put forward an alternative; if you disagree with the mission...put forward a solution.

A non-binding resolution means non-leadership; a non-binding resolution means non-accountability; a non-binding resolution is not a plan for victory.

This week, Congress has spent a lot of time debating one of the most important issues facing this body. Unfortunately, this legislation limited a true debate on the alternatives and direction we can now take. A real resolution on Iraq needs to include real benchmarks and real guidelines, not simply a vote of no confidence.

There are those of us who are willing to disagree with the President at the strategic, tactical or project level, and a true solution would be for Congress to debate the McCain-liebermann proposal. This bipartisan alternative not only reaffirms Congressional support for our troops, but provides military, political, and social benchmarks for governance. This approach lays the groundwork for not only victory, but also brings our troops home as soon as possible.

We owe it to our troops and their families to provide the necessary oversight to ensure any new strategy is successful, while at the same time giving our troops confidence that Congress will not cut off their funding to settle policy disputes while they are separated from their families by distance and danger. I continue to stand, ready, willing and able to contribute to that goal.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, and I am in complete opposition to President's plan to send an additional 21,000 Americans into Iraq.

This ill-conceived plan will only make a war that never should have started much, much worse. The generals don't want this surge. Our allies oppose it. 60 percent of the American people think it is a terrible idea and, the enemy is using it to boost recruitment. There is no believable plan for this surge. Yet, President Bush is pushing ahead with it.

I opposed the original Iraq war resolution because I didn't see the connection between Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein, the evidence of an immediate threat from Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, or even compelling evidence of the existence of WMD. But, we went in anyway. We rushed off, unprepared, into a needless war that has killed thousands and scarred 10's of thousands of Americans and hundreds of thousands of Iraqis.

Now, here we go again. It is time for this administration to end its policy of ready, fire, aim. It is time to begin a policy of ready, aim, fire. I urge all of my colleagues to listen to the American public, to our troops and to our friends around the world. Vote yes on this resolution.

Mrs. BONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 63, the non-binding Iraq War Policy resolution.

We are being asked today to vote on a non-binding resolution that stands as nothing more than a political statement on an issue that greatly transcends the politics of the Nation's capital. The importance of ensuring our troops have the supplies and equipment they require for battle is clear. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to use valuable time during this legislative week to address true tangible needs for our troops.

The importance of a stable and secure Iraq should not be underestimated, given the responsibility to assist the Iraqi people to further their personal freedoms. Saddam Hussein's brutal dictatorship is one that cannot be soon forgotten. Those who share this world view of oppressing fundamental human rights must know that we Americans will continue to support policies that will protect all citizens from these radical and militant Islamic terrorist cells. This battle is only one front on the larger war on terror, and today's non-binding resolution does nothing to achieve more stability in the international community.

To me, supporting this resolution only serves the purely political purpose of second-guessing a decision already made to move forward by the Commander in Chief. Those who favor this resolution appear only to have a hunger to score meaningless political points, while lacking an appetite for pursuing the larger goals of keeping our brave soldiers equipped as they strive to ensure the safety of our country and citizens abroad.

I would like to make clear that I have grave reservations regarding the current situation in Iraq. For too long, circumstances have limited our ability to reduce the sectarian violence plaguing this region, especially in Baghdad. It is critical that we see a greater commitment from the Iraqi government and the citizens of Iraq. We need to help the Iraqis, given their extensive desire to have a government that is ready, willing and able to stand up for the freedoms our country affords.

The importance of a stable and secure Iraq should not be underestimated, given the responsibility to assist the Iraqi people to further their personal freedoms. Saddam Hussein's brutal dictatorship is one that cannot be soon forgotten. Those who share this world view of oppressing fundamental human rights must know that we Americans will continue to support policies that will protect all citizens from these radical and militant Islamic terrorist cells. This battle is only one front on the larger war on terror, and today's non-binding resolution does nothing to achieve more stability in the international community.

To me, supporting this resolution only serves the purely political purpose of second-guessing a decision already made to move forward by the Commander in Chief. Those who favor this resolution appear only to have a hunger to score meaningless political points, while lacking an appetite for pursuing the larger goals of keeping our brave soldiers equipped as they strive to ensure the safety of our country and citizens abroad.
February 16, 2007
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

The war in Iraq is not a part of the war against al-Qaeda. And, in fact the war in Iraq is undermining our fight against al-Qaeda.

Some in this debate have made the ridiculous argument that if the U.S. leaves Iraq that somehow Osama bin Laden will take control and establish a safe haven for terrorists to attack the U.S. There is no chance that the Shias and Kurds, who represent around 80 percent of the population in Iraq, will allow Sunni foreign terrorist elements like al-Qaeda to take over the country. Even many Sunnis have grown tired of foreign terrorists operating in their country, such as those influenced by radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

The President and his allies justify the continuing U.S. presence in Iraq by claiming that if we don’t fight there, we’ll have to fight here at home. However, the Iraqi Sunnis reject the notion that want want to return to power. Again, they are Sunni. And, he mentioned foreign terrorists affiliated with or inspired by al-Qaeda, which even the President acknowledged was the “smallest” element of the insurgency. The one huge element he left out was nationalist Sunnis. They are being influenced by radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

The war in Iraq is not the driving force for violence in the Middle East. In a speech on December 12, 2005, the President made important distinctions between the insurgent elements in Iraq. He mentioned “rejectionists,” which are mostly Sunnis who miss the privileged status they enjoyed under Saddam Hussein. He mentioned “Saddamists”, who are former regime elements, and Shiites who want to return to power. Again, they are Sunni. And, he mentioned foreign terrorists affiliated with or inspired by al-Qaeda, which even the President acknowledged was the “smallest” element of the insurgency. The one huge element he left out was nationalist Sunnis. They are being influenced by radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

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It is past time to end the open-ended commitment the President has made in Iraq. As long as the U.S. military remains stuck with the President’s pledge of open-ended support, Iraqi politicians and security forces will use the U.S. presence as a chance. They will continue to fail, too, those necessary steps to solve their differences and establish an effective and inclusive government, end sectarian violence, and create the foundation for a secure and prosperous society.

Democracy and stability cannot be imposed on unwilling parties. The New York Times editorial, written by Thomas Friedman, said on June 20, the removal of U.S. troops would ‘...improve the standing of the Iraqi government in the eyes of its own people, a thing else, improve the standing of the Iraqi government could, more than possibly any other time, move their country forward. If not, there is no reason to prolong the U.S. involvement in Iraq. And they all said no. And the reason is because we want the Iraqis to do more. It is easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces perhaps set timelines for political developments and create the foundation for a secure and prosperous society.

Negotiating a timeline for bringing home U.S. troops with responsible parties in the Iraqi government would also bolster the Iraqi government’s legitimacy and claim to self-rule, and force the Iraqi government to take responsibility for itself and its citizens. Negotiating a withdrawal timetable and strategy with the Iraqi government could, more than possibly anything else, improve the standing of the Iraqi government in the eyes of its own people, a significant achievement in a region in which the standing of rulers and governments is generally low.

As the Iraqi National Security Advisor, Mr. Nouri al-Maliki, said on June 20, 2006, the removal of U.S. troops from Iraq, “will help the Iraqis who now see foreign troops as occupiers rather than the liberators they were meant to be. It will remove psychological barriers and the reason that many Iraqis joined in the so-called resistance in the first place.” He went on to write, “Moreover, the removal of foreign troops will legitimize Iraq’s government in the eyes of its people... the drawdown of foreign troops will strengthen our fledgling government to last the full term of the constitution.” Being confronted with the reality of a U.S. withdrawal should force the Iraqi factions to reach the political compromises necessary to move their country forward. If not, there is no reason to prolong the U.S. involvement in Iraq if we want a stable country more than the Iraqi people and their elected leaders do. The U.S. cannot force Sunnis, Shiias, and Kurds to make peace or to act for the common good. They have been in conflict for 1,400 years. Nor should the U.S. military be forced to remain in Iraq essentially as an army for one side or the other.

The administration increased the number of U.S. troops in Baghdad last summer in Operation Together Forward and has increased the number of troops throughout Iraq at other times as well, yet the violence against our troops and Iraqi security forces and civilians continues to increase. Short-term improvements in security in the wake of U.S. troop increases have always given way to the long-term trend of increased violence and a growing civil war.

For the resolution on the floor this week, Congress did not authorize U.S. troops to remove American troops from Iraq, say are vital to accomplishing that mission. The training and equipping of Iraqi security forces decreased to normal size and authority rather than establishing one of the largest embassies in the world.

The administration’s pledge of open-ended support, in Iraq is everyone’s second choice except ours. The Shiias want power for themselves. The Sunnis want power, and the Kurds want power and independence. What they don’t want to do is share that power. The President’s stay-the-course, more-of-the-same, status quo policy provides no incentive for the parties to reach the political compromises that are necessary.

The bottom line is that a proposal to increase U.S. troop levels in Baghdad or Iraq more generally by more than 20,000 is not a serious effort to restore stability to Iraq. As General John Abizaid, then the head of all U.S. forces in the Middle East, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on November 15, 2006, “I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the corps commander, General Dempsey, we all talked together. And I said, in your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they all said no. And the reason is because we want the Iraqis to do more. It is easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces perhaps set timelines for political developments and create the foundation for a secure and prosperous society.

A better strategy for Iraq is to announce a timeline negotiated with the Iraqi government for bringing our troops home over the next 6 months to a year. The administration has always set timelines for political developments in Iraq—for elections, for the drafting of the constitution, etc. The administration argued such timelines were necessary to focus the energy of Iraq’s leaders and to force compromises. We need to do the same on the military side.

In the interim, I have also proposed that U.S. troops be removed from front line combat positions in Iraqi cities and towns, turning over daily security patrols, interactions with citizens, and any offensive security actions to the Iraqis themselves.

The training and equipping of Iraqi security forces should be accelerated and the sectarian violence must be reduced.

The U.S. must renounce any U.S. interest in constructing permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq.

It is also important to accelerate reconstruction spending and grant the bulk of reconstruction contracts to local companies employing Iraqis rather than multinational corporations, whom have proven inefficient, inflexible, sometimes fraudulent and have ever imported workers rather than employing Iraqis.

The U.S. embassy in Baghdad should also be reduced to normal size and authority rather than establishing one of the largest embassies in the world.

And, the U.S. must engage in robust diplomacy with all factions in Iraq, except the foreign terrorists and domestic Al Qaeda elements, and work with Iraq’s neighbors in an effective manner to bring about political reconciliation among Sunnis, Shiias, and Kurds.

Our troops have done all that has been asked of them in Iraq. Saddam Hussein is dead. His allies are on the run or in prison. The threat from WMDs in Iraq is nonexistent. Arguably, the war that Congress authorized has been won. Our troops should come home. Congress did not authorize U.S. troops to rescue a civil war in Iraq.

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I would like to submit for the RECORD an Editorial from The Wall Street Journal regarding the Iraq Resolution, H. Con. Res. 63.

(Awaiting the Discharge Roll)

Congress has rarely been distinguished by its moral courage. But even grading on a curve, we can only describe this week’s House debate on a vote of no-confidence in the mission in Iraq as one of the most shameful moments in the institution’s history.

On present course, the Members will vote on Friday to approve a resolution that does nothing to remove American troops from harm’s way in Iraq,wi
to sweat for, what we bleed for and we die for.” Added another soldier: “If they don’t think we’re doing a good job, everything we’ve done here is all in vain.” In other words, the bipartisan realization that the first part of the resolution is empty posturing, while the second is deeply immoral.

All the more so because if Congress is so strongly about the troops, it arguably has the power to start removing them from harm’s way by voting to cut off the funds they need to stay in Iraq. But that would make Congress responsible for what followed—whether those consequences are Americans killed in retreat, or ethnic cleansing for the toppled Baathist government of Aatrooq, or the timely elections of a government by radical Shiites or military forces. The one result Congress fears above all is being accountable.

We don’t have the evidence. Young John Kerry, but this week’s vote reminds us of the comment the antitar veteran told another cut-and-run Congress in the early 1970s: “How do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake?” The difference this time is that Speaker Nancy Pelosi and John Murtha, the Democratic leaders, have vowed to keep dying for something they say is a mistake but also don’t have the political courage to help end.

Instead, they’ll pass this “non-binding resolution,” to be followed soon by attempts at micromanagement that would make the war all but impossible to prosecute—and once again hide Congress’s responsibility. Mr. Murtha is already broadcasting his strategy, which the new Politico Web site described yesterday as “a slow-bleed strategy designed to gradually limit the administration’s options.”

In concert with antiwar groups, the story reports, the goal is crafted to “circumvent the biggest political vulnerability of the antiwar movement—the accusation that it is willing to abandon troops in the field.”

Mr. Murtha will “slow-bleed” the troops with “readiness” restrictions or limits on National Guard forces that will make them all but impossible to deploy. These will be attached to appropriations bills that will also purport to “support the troops.”

“Their timing is in part, and it’s going to start with the supplemental and finish with the ‘08 [defense] budget,” Congressmen Neil Abercrombie (D., Hawaii) told the Web site. He must mean D-Day as in Dunkirk.

All of this is something that House Republicans should keep in mind as they consider whether to vote for this retreat. The Democratic leadership has been stalwart, even eloquent, this week in opposing the resolution. But some Republicans figure they can use this vote to distance themselves from Mr. Bush and the war while not doing any real harm. They should understand that the Democratic willingness to follow the Murtha “slow-bleed” strategy will depend in part on how many Republicans follow them in this vote. The Democrats are themselves divided on many Republicans follow them in this vote.

Today we are taking the first step towards defeat. No one likes where we are today, but our goal should be success, not to accept the defeat the Democrats are leading us towards. I am very disappointed that the new Democratic leadership will not allow a true debate on what we should be our focus today: what can we do to help achieve victory in Iraq, and what metrics should we use to measure that success. That is the debate we should be having on the floor this week. Our military, our children, our fellow citizens, and the people of Iraq deserve nothing less.

Instead, what the new Politico Web site described yesterday as “a slow-bleed strategy designed to gradually limit the administration’s options” is being sold to Congress as a way to end the war. The new Politico Web site described yesterday as “a slow-bleed strategy designed to gradually limit the administration’s options” is being sold to Congress as a way to end the war.

We’ve been safe in the United States since September 11, 2001. But that is only because the Bush Administration and Congress and our brave troops took the fight to the terrorists. But it is by no means over. The United States remains a Nation at war. It’s hard for Americans who do not have loved ones in the military to remember that.

We are not safe simply because we have not seen an attack on U.S. soil since September 11, 2001. We are safer today because of the professionals of the worldwide network of intelligence, military and law enforcement officials who have stopped al-Qaeda and its followers.

September 11, 2001 showed us the danger of Islamic terrorism. It also taught us that we can’t wait for them to come to us. We have to go to the root cause of terrorism and sever the root.

We are blessed with an outstanding military that has taken the battle to the enemy. It is very important that we take the fight to them in places where fortunately every American carries a gun—rather than on the streets of New York, Washington or Wichita, KS. And make no mistake, Iraq is where the terrorists have to come to fight.

Our most important duty as Members of Congress is to protect our Nation from ever experiencing the lesson of 9/11 again. For that reason it makes no sense to improvise on our national security, our homeland security and our intelligence systems. Today’s resolution does the opposite and sends the exact message the enemy wants to hear.

Our enemy is not going away. The war in Iraq is a tough one, as is the overall Global War on Terrorism. What is that the terrorist have promised in their letter, written by Ayman al-Zawahiri?

Just because it is tough does not mean that it is not worthwhile. The Democratic approach is dangerous and naïve. We cannot put our heads in the sand because our enemies are all ready to strike. Leaving Iraq will not mean the end to our troubles or to our enemy’s plans.

Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden’s chief deputy, has stated again and again that Iraq is the centerpiece of Al Qaeda’s strategy to establish dominance in the Middle East and beyond. A July 9, 2005 letter from al-Zawahiri listed Al Qaeda’s objectives in Iraq. Let me remind my colleagues on the other side of the aisle what those objectives are: 1. Expel Americans from Iraq. 2. Establish a caliphate in Iraq. 3. Extend a jihad from Iraq to secular states neighboring Iraq. 4. Clash with Israel.

Today, we face a great challenge. The Democrats are leading us towards a defeat, and they should be our focus today: what can we do to help achieve victory in Iraq, and what metrics should we use to measure that success. That is the debate we should be having on the floor this week. Our military, our children, our fellow citizens, and the people of Iraq deserve nothing less.

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the capabilities to become a nuclear power. Iran is also collaborating with many radical Islamist groups, including Hezbollah and Hamas. With Iraq also under its thumb, the U.S. could avoid being drawn into such a conflict. This would put our troops in an even graver situation than they are today, with less hope for success. It also will reverberate through our economy at home, with skyrocketing oil prices.

The Democrats need to understand the reverberations of their defeat. House Republicans take our role in Iraq seriously, and we want to see success. Our leadership has called on the Speaker to appoint a bipartisan select oversight committee to monitor and implement the effectiveness of the President's new strategy. Instead of taking this responsible suggestion, what is their response? Spending a week on a do-nothing resolution to embarrass the President and encourage our enemies. Even in the majority, they are still more comfortable with being the party of “no” rather than the party that governs.

Republicans on the other hand have a plan, because we know that success in Iraq means a safer, more secure America. We have proposed strategic benchmarks to measure our effectiveness and to work with the Democrats to construct a plan for success in Iraq. The Democrat leadership will not allow us to present our plan this week because they do not wish to see success in Iraq, they want to pull out despite its effects on Iraq and the United States. We need to support our military, our new Secretary of Defense, and our Commander-in-Chief as they work to achieve success in Iraq and the Global War on Terror.

I leave you with a question a constituent asked me recently: If the Democrats get their wish and we pull out of Iraq without attempting to achieve victory, what happens the next day? Unfortunately, we know that answer because our enemies have made it clear: they bring the fight to the United States.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I thank you to debate the very important issue of the war in Iraq. The resolution we are debating today is technically non-binding—but we must not discount the influence of the words of this body. I am here today to reiterate to the American people that the war in Iraq, as a part of the larger Global War on Terror, is absolutely vital to the security of our great nation as well as the rest of the free world.

It is true, we were led into this war with poor intelligence; yet intelligence that every major fact-finding group investigated was generally believed to be true. Nevertheless, spreading freedom to the Muslim world is our best long-term strategy in the Global War on Terror.

Four years after the invasion of Iraq, our brave military men and women are still actively engaged in combat, and their actions have not gone without great achievement—the Iraqi people participated in their first true democratic election, they have established a representative government, elected a parliament and written an Iraqi constitution. These great achievements should not be taken off as mere side notes, because to do so would diminish the achievements of the Iraqi people and the tremendous courage of our soldiers; some of whom have bravely given their lives for the chance an Iraqi citizen would be able to vote and live free from fear.

The establishment of a democracy in the Middle East is fundamental to winning the Global War on Terror. The United States is in it for the long haul, and as I am sure many of my colleagues will agree—we haven’t exactly perfected it yet. The Iraqi people are barely in their second year of a democratic government. The Iraqi government needs time to grow their citizens’ confidence in the institution of democracy and become a stabilizing force in the region. We must help them achieve this.

We are fighting an enemy who does not believe in democracy, freedom, or the inherent value of human life. These radical Islamic terrorists see a democratic Iraqi government as a direct threat to the mayhem and havoc they seek to impose on the free world. To retreat from Iraq—to wave a white flag in submission to these terrorists, would only worsen the instability we now see in the region, and embolden terrorists around the world.

When the United States rid itself of Saddam Hussein, we committed ourselves to assisting the new Iraqi government become self-sustainable. The President has consulted his commanders in Iraq, who have heard from the soldiers on the ground. The result of these meetings is a request for an increase in troops so we may finish the job we set out to do. I ask my colleagues to trust the military commanders, and allow our courageous military do their job. I ask my colleagues to not support this resolution.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today not because I want to take part in this debate, but because I am ashamed that this Congress is engaging in it at all.

I’ve heard a lot of posturing so far this week. I’ve heard a lot of hyperbole and a lot of revisionist history. I’ve also heard some things that just don’t mesh with reality. I don’t think that everything my colleagues say is completely honest. So for a moment, let’s be honest—because that is the least we owe to our constituents and to the men and women who are fighting to keep us safe.

I am willing to admit that if Congress knew in 2002 what it knows today it might not have voted to authorize the war. Knowing that Saddam Hussein apparently did not have weapons of mass destruction, Congress might have preferred to contain him, perhaps bomb him, strengthen international sanctions, and work with our allies in the region to undermine his regime.

But we can’t go back to 2002 and redo that vote. We have to deal with the situation that is there. Mr. DRAZIC, the courageous Congressman from Wisconsin, is right now is a Congressional resolution that undermines our troops while they are in the middle of fighting a war that Congress sent them to fight. I do not understand why my colleagues on the other side of the aisle don’t see that.

For just a moment, I want to ask my colleagues to put themselves in the positions of the thousands of soldiers on the ground in Iraq. What would you think if you learned that the very people who sent you to fight this war are now saying that they don’t support what you are doing? On the ground in Iraq, there are two things that keep you going: the thought of returning home to your family and the knowledge that you are doing something to protect your nation from terrorist. But if Congressional Democrats have their way today, they will take away from our soldiers the support of their Congress and of their country. What a terrible message to send to these brave soldiers.

You would put yourself in the shoes of the terrorists. What would you think when you heard the U.S. Congress is voting against the war? You would think you were winning. You would be encouraged by the news. You would think that everything Osama Bin Laden had said about Americans had been true all along. You would think that Americans cannot stand bloodshed and will cower from the fight.

You would think that they don’t have the stomach for a long-term battle and if the terrorists just hold on, the United States will eventually leave with its tails between its legs. What a terrible message to send at the exact moment that we are preparing to send more troops into battle.

At some point, my colleagues across the aisle have to let go of the fact that their new-found opposition to the War in Iraq is popular in their districts and act in the best interests for the future of our Nation. This resolution isn’t a diversion, a side-show, or even a shot across the bow. It is a dangerous message to send.

I don’t see any of this lightly and I don’t say it for political reasons. I say it because I mean it. In 2006, I was the only Republican to vote against the rule when my party tried to embarrass Mr. MURTHA. Then, I thought that my party was playing games with the war and I refused to support that effort. Today, I think that the other party is playing games with the war and I refuse to have any part of this.

I would rather we consider a motion to pull all of our troops out of Iraq immediately than vote on this Democrat resolution that undermines our troops while at the same time puts them in harm’s way. This resolution is the worst of all worlds. My final thought today is that it is clear to many of us that this resolution is simply a Democratic attempt to embarrass President Bush. My friends across the aisle know they can’t approach him. They can not change the fact that many of them voted for the War in Iraq. And most of them recognize the dangers of voting to defund the war. So instead, they are trying to embarrass the President.

I say fine, embarrass the President. Send him a message that you are now in charge. Remind him that voters demanded change last November. Do whatever you need to do, but don’t undermine our troops in the process. Leave them out of your plans for payback because they did nothing to attract your anger or frustration.

Madam Speaker, what we are doing today is wrong. We’re better than this. We’re smarter than this. We’re above using the war, and our troops, for political gain. What the Democrats and holding the resolution is not just intellectually dishonest, it is morally wrong.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Madam Speaker, five and a half years ago, our Nation was attacked by terrorists opposed to freedom and individual liberty. Our President vowed to keep Americans safe by taking the fight to the terrorists, undermining the regimes that support them and accountable. We are currently engaged in that fight. Like any war this size, mistakes have been made, but we must continue to progress.
The consequences of failure in Iraq would be dire. Allowing al-Qaeda the opportunity to gain a safe hold would be dangerous to Americans. Leaving before the Iraqi government can defend itself would only lead to further destabilization, and open the door to outside influence from countries such as Iran, which has called for the destruction of our society and for the destruction of Israel, our ally in the Middle East.

With violence headlining the nation’s nightly news, at times we forget that successes have been achieved. Through successful elections which were brought about by a sustained and persistent counter-insurgency effort—the counter-insurgency effort which we now see is under threat—American soldiers and women in the military have done all that is necessary to move us toward the goal of our mission. They are heroes who represent the finest our country has to offer—and they should be treated accordingly. From private to general, military leadership that have served under this administration has spent more time planning its attacks on those who offered legitimate criticisms of the war and its tactics, than it has on planning for a stable and peaceful reconstruction of the region. And the results have been devastating and unworthy of our brave men and women serving in harm’s way.

Enough is enough. Troop surges have not worked in the past, and there is no evidence that the same can be said for future. In fact, former Secretary of State Colin Powell said in December, “I am not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of suppressing this communal violence, this civil war, will work.” Yet, this administration continues to ignore the guidance of military experts, the Iraq Study Group, diplomats, decorated war heroes and former senior White House officials of both parties. And rather than being open to debate and discussion with these experts, this Administration has routinely attacked their character and questioned their patriotism. Many of these individuals have bled on the battlefield. But to this administration, and its swift boat strategists, they are treated merely as political pawns. It is truly shameful.

Because of this Administration’s hubris, we have seen troops without proper equipment, without basic body armor, without vehicles equipped to deal with roadside bombs and without the appropriate veteran’s services when they return home. Because of their ignorance, we have seen giant banners saying, Mission Accomplished, hung on the side of the Enterprise. General Petraeus has stated this will only embolden the enemy, and I agree.

Many Democrats have stated this is only the first step toward cutting the funding for our troops in Iraq, and forcing a withdrawal before stability has been achieved. But the majority offers no plan to achieve stability. Without any alternative, withdrawal can only lead to defeat.

Our troops should have every confidence their government will ensure they have the necessary supplies and funding to achieve their mission. Military leaders should be able to move forward with their directives without fear that Congress is working to tie their hands. Yet this objective has been the stated one of the majority: to precipitate a withdrawal by slowly cutting off funding to our soldiers. I believe this is the wrong approach to supporting our troops currently involved in the military operation.

This Administration does nothing to win the war, and by not allowing amendments or other measures to be considered, true debate is being restricted. It is my hope, for the safety of our troops and for the good of the Nation, that all members of the House may reject this administration’s policies and that is what this debate is about—protecting our military leaders and our troops from the mistakes that this administers has committed. But Democrat leaders are bringing a non-binding resolution to the floor, denouncing the President, and does nothing to support our troops or help solve the issues that we are facing in Iraq. The resolution offers no solutions or recommendations, but instead criticizes an action that is already underway. As ranking member of the Subcommittee on Military Readiness in the House Armed Services Committee, I am open to supporting legislation that actually presents us with the means to stabilizing Iraq. Unfortunately, this resolution does not provide anything other than criticism, and I would have opposed this resolution if I had been in Washington, DC for the vote.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution.

Four years ago, President Bush plunged our Nation into a misguided, pre-emptive war with Iraq. I voted against authorizing it then—and I have come to the floor today to affirm my strong opposition to this irresponsible war.

Unfortunately, after 4 years of failed strategies by this administration, the President is now poised to confound his tragic blunder, and ignore the will of the American people, by attempting to increase our presence in Iraq. And that is why this resolution is so important. Because it sends a strong statement. A statement that the vast majority of the country supports. And that the President is poised to confuse our presence in Iraq will not lead to success in the region, and more blank checks will not make America more secure.

Madam Speaker, our brave men and women in the military have done all that is asked of them over the course of the last 4 years. They are heroes who represent the finest our country has to offer—and they should be treated accordingly. But, from day one, this administration has spent more time planning its attacks on those who offered legitimate criticisms of the war and its tactics, than it has on planning for a stable and peaceful reconstruction of the region. And the results have been devastating and unworthy of our brave men and women serving in harm’s way.

We are here today to begin to set our strategy back on the right course. To protect our soldiers. And to ensure that we can win the real war on terror.

Madam Speaker, we are here today as patriots because we love our country. We are here because we support our troops. And we are here because we want our troops to be able to come home to their families and loved ones.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote on this important resolution.

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I stand before you today, offering a candid reflection of the tasks before us. I am not here to be a leader in this great nation, I find myself humbled by the decisions we make and the traditions of this institution. In times of hardship, America has often looked to the House of Representatives, the “people’s house,” as a place for deliberation and decision. Many great leaders have preceded our place in this Chamber, and many more will undoubtedly follow. By design we find ourselves here again today, in the footsteps of those who stood so firm against the winds of adversity. It was in this very room that President Franklin Roo-

America was forged long ago as a beacon of democracy, shining bright onto the shores of the world. Ever since our bold proclamation to others that we would shelter “your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,” we have called on this body to answer the question: How tired, how poor, how yearning must the oppressed be to war-
rage out of our shores? Are we here today, paused at an intersection on the road of democracy. Will we turn back and embolden those that oppress the free and murder
the innocent? After careful consideration, I must vote against this resolution and choose instead to follow the path blazed by those who pledged our commitment to freedom.

On September 11, we were forced to witness the consequences of a decade of inaction as the enemy and his terrorist helpers attacked our own soil. The Americans who died in that tragic moment had sacrificed their lives in a war that Americans chose to fight.

And I concur with his observation. But his conclusion should come as no surprise. After all, this administration's Iraq policy has been a series of mistakes and bad choices from the beginning.

The Bush/Cheney team was obsessed with Iraq, and some of our closest allies were left out in the cold. When the Iraqis are ready, they will be ready. They will be ready when the time is right. And I will support that day.

But the responsibility for this mess is not the President's alone. It is shared by the pre-ceding two Congresses, which abdicated their constitutional responsibility to oversee and review the conduct of the war and the occupation. We will never know if serious oversight during these past 4 years would have made a difference.

And I will support the President's efforts to bring our troops home.

Meanwhile, the war in Iraq has done nothing to stop al Qaeda and its affiliates from launching attacks around the world. I refer you to a Dear Colleague letter sent by two of our Republican colleagues which clearly describes that reality. It includes a list of attacks that plainly demonstrates that terrorism is global in nature. While we are stuck in the sands of Iraq, radical Islamists are launching major assaults everywhere. Because this Administration, as a result of its bungled misadventure in Iraq, has hurt our efforts against terrorism.

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The Middle East is on the verge of a war that could devastate the region and the global economy. And terrorist groups are multiplying because of Iraq. Some confuse the war on Iraq with the war on terror. But that could not be further from reality.

The fact is that the war in Iraq has severely dampened our efforts to fight al Qaeda and terrorism. That’s not just my judgment; that’s the consensus judgment of U.S. intelligence agencies.

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I rise today to address the President’s plan to deploy additional 21,500 American troops in Iraq. I oppose this course of action and feel that contributing more troops to this war is not in the best interest of our country.
One only needs to look back on the timeline of events in Iraq to realize how much we have given that country. From the deposing of Saddam Hussein and his ruthless heirs, to the drafting of a constitution and free elections, the United States has fulfilled its role in liberating Iraq. However, the sacrifices our country has made must be met by an even stronger commitment by Iraq’s leaders to face the challenges of a fledgling democracy and ensure the safety and freedom of its own people.

Our troops have served with tremendous bravery during this nearly 4 year endeavor. The resolution must be discussed today by Congress to reaffirm the commitment of the United States Armed Forces continue to have the resources they need while they are in harms way and after they return home.

However, I am in disagreement with the President on sending 21,500 more troops to Iraq because the time has passed for the leaders and citizens of Iraq to ascend and defend their country. The people of this country sent a message to the Congress a few months ago and my constituents have made it clear that they need while they are in harms way and Armed Forces continue to have the resources they need while they are in harms way and after they return home.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The question is on the concurrent resolution. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

So the concurrent resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE
A message from the Senate by Ms. Davis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills and a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:


S. 487. An act to amend the National Organ Transplant Act to clarify that kidney paired donor donations shall not be considered to be involvement of a human organ for valuable consideration.

S. Con. Res. 12. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of a National Medal of Honor Day to mark the significance and importance of the Medal of Honor and to celebrate and honor the recipients of the Medal of Honor on the anniversary of the first award of that medal in 1863.

PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE TWO HOUSES
Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 67) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 67
Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjoins on the legislative day of Friday, February 16, 2007, or Saturday, February 17, 2007, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Thursday, February 22, 2007, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs