Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the rule, I call up the resolution

(H. Res. 571) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that

the deployment of United States forces in Iraq be terminated

immediately, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

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

On October 15 of this year, 63 percent of Iraq's eligible voters

stood in the suffocating heat for hours risking their lives to suicide

bombers and guns. And why? Because they dared to vote.

Do we honor their bravery by abandoning them?

Nobody wants war. War has been truly described as hell. But at the

same time, things are worth fighting for and even dying for. And among

those things is precious freedom. Our own freedom was born in the

crucible of a 9-year war to the sounds of muskets well described as the

``shots heard round the world.''

We can argue endlessly about the wisdom of getting into this war, but

there should be no argument about how

this war should end. The consequences of our retreat have not been

discussed here tonight, but they deserve consideration.

This debate has been a report card on Jack Murtha, and I give him an

A-plus as a truly great American. But among his many fine qualities,

infallibility is not one. And on Iraq I prefer my country not to

retreat, not to run to the high grass.

I prefer the counsel of John McCain who said last week, ``If we leave

Iraq prematurely, the jihadists will interpret the withdrawal as their

great victory against our great power. Osama bin Laden and his

followers believe that America is weak, unwilling to suffer casualties

in battle. They drew this lesson from Lebanon in the 1980s and Somalia

in the 1990s, and today they have their sights set squarely on Iraq.''

The recently released letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri, bin Laden's

lieutenant, to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, draws out the implications.

The Zawahiri letter is predicated on the assumption that the United

States will leave Iraq and that al Qaeda's real game begins as soon as

we abandon the country.

In his missive, Zawahiri lays out a four-stage plan: establish a

caliphate in Iraq, extend the ``jihad wave'' to the secular countries

neighboring Iraq, clash with Israel, none of which shall commence until

the completion of stage one: expel the Americans from Iraq.

Zawahiri observes that the collapse of American power in Vietnam

``and how they ran and left their agents,'' suggests that ``we must be

ready starting now.''

We cannot let them start, now or ever.

We must stay in Iraq until the government there has a fully

functioning security apparatus that can keep Zarqawi and his terrorists

at bay and ultimately defeat them.

I prefer the counsel of another war hero, my personal hero, the

gentleman from Texas (Mr. Sam Johnson), who stands with the President,

the Iraqi people, and freedom fighters everywhere.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield the balance of my time

to the gentleman from California (Mr. Hunter) for purposes of control.