Mr. Speaker, this Republican withdrawal

resolution was drafted in haste.

No matter how you felt about getting into this war, our kids are

there now. They're in the middle of harm's way, right now. As many

thousands of families, friends and loved ones can tell you--they've

been over there a long time.

I'm a member of the Armed Services Committee. I voted against going

to war with Iraq without exhausting all our diplomatic efforts. But

here we are. We didn't do that.

I've been to Iraq. I've sat through scores of hearings on Iraq. I've

spoken to the Secretary of Defense. I've spoken with our military

commanders. Like everyone here tonight, I've lost sleep over it. I've

given it a lot of thought. I know my colleagues have too. I know that.

Let's calm down for a second. Let's look at the choice before us

tonight.

On one hand, House Republican Duncan Hunter is asking us to withdraw

our troops immediately without protection or support. On the other

hand, the White House is asking us just to keep our troops on the same

course.

I can't choose either of these options in good conscience. Honestly,

I don't see how any of us can.

To put it simply, we have more options than ``all or nothing'' here

tonight.

We should be looking for the ``better course'' not the ``same

course.''

There is no military solution to Iraq. We've got to look to diplomacy

and joint civilian-military efforts. This war has demonstrated the need

for trained civilian professionals who can provide continuity and hand-

in-glove partnerships with Iraqi citizens.

Everywhere I've gone and everyone I've talked to has cited the need

for this.

It was obvious early on that the future of Iraq depends on Iraqis.

And yet, the administration is only now beginning to place an emphasis

on training Iraq's own security forces.

James Fallows of the Atlantic Monthly wrote recently, ``an orderly

exit from Iraq depends on the development of a viable Iraqi security

force. But the Iraqis aren't even close. The Bush administration

doesn't take the problem seriously--and it never has.''

We have other options besides this draconian resolution. It's too bad

we're not able to have hearings on those. It's too bad we're not able

to consider these other options tonight.