Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the

gentleman, my dear friend from California, for the time.

Mr. Speaker, after the debate in the Rules Committee last night where

I hoped, and I made clear that it was my hope, that there would be an

opportunity for the minority to present an alternative to this debate

in the form of an alternative motion, an amendment, it was

disappointing that that was not made possible. So now we are faced with

a resolution before us that we cannot seek to amend with regard to that

extraordinarily serious problem facing the United States of America:

the crisis in Iraq.

Iraq presents the United States, Mr. Speaker, as the leader of the

free world, with very difficult options, tough options. None of the

options before us are simple nor easy. Clearly, as in every war in

history, mistakes have been made. I believe, for example, that we

should have learned the lessons from a neighbor of Iraq, from the

creation in the 20th century of the Turkish state, modern Turkish

state, by Ataturk, the father of that state, where the ability of

religious parties, for example, to insert themselves into the political

process was significantly limited. I think we could have done things

such as that.

I admit, we all must admit, that mistakes have been made. But, Mr.

Speaker, as the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset said: ``Man is man

plus his circumstances,'' and our circumstances in Iraq today

constitute our options.

What are our options? One option is partition. I do not believe that

it is reasonable nor appropriate nor acceptable to very important

realities in the region and factors in the region, I don't think that

is a reasonable alternative. Another alternative is to withdraw before

the situation is stabilized, before the democratically elected

government in Iraq is stable. That is an option.

I happen to believe that the resolution before us, in effect, says

this is the beginning of withdrawal. That is what the resolution says

in effect. Melt it down. The resolution states this is the beginning of

withdrawal, despite the fact that the situation in Iraq by the

democratically elected government has not been stabilized.

So what will occur if we withdraw prematurely? Ethnic cleansing on a

massive scale; obviously, the collapse of the current government; the

creation of an ideal vacuum in power, a power vacuum for international

terrorism. We would see the creation of terrorist camps that would

dwarf what we saw in Afghanistan before 9/11. Inevitably a surge in

influence and the projection of power by the Iranian dictatorship. That

uncontrolled projection of power in its quest to acquire, by the way, a

nuclear weapon, that uncontrolled projection of power by Iran may very

possibly lead to a regional war, Mr. Speaker, because the reality of

the matter is that that region of the world cannot permit the

uncontrolled projection of power by the Iranian dictatorship.

Now, the withdrawal could be, as I have stated, either announced and

immediate or announced and phased. The reality of the matter is what

the new congressional majority is bringing to the floor today is an

announcement of withdrawal irrespective of what the situation may be on

the ground in Iraq.

Another alternative, Mr. Speaker, is the President of the United

States' attempt to stabilize the situation, to provide sufficient

order, sufficient absence of chaos, for the government of Iraq to

survive, for the sake not only of Iraq but of our national security.

That is an option the President of the United States is trying to

convert into a reality for the sake of our national security.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the options before us are not difficult. The

resolution before us constitutes the wrong message at the wrong time in

the wrong manner.