Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate this resolution

coming to the floor of this Congress.

I would say that, Mr. Speaker, as we are holding this debate, our

Armed Forces overseas are engaged in the active defense of our

homeland. Their daily contributions and sacrifices are working to bring

democratic stabilization to a country which has never known the freedom

it has achieved today.

After decades of tyrannical rule under Saddam Hussein, yesterday, the

Iraqi people voted in their third national election this year. They

selected a government that will now for the first time establish really

true and pure sovereignty for this Nation. And as the Iraqis put

together their formal parliament, as they elect themselves a prime

minister and are seated at the United Nations, they will be the freest

and most representative Arab country in the world.

What a legacy for the United States of America to contribute to? What

a noble cause that we are seeing come to fruition today? And I

appreciate the tone that I am hearing from over here on the other side

of the aisle. It sounds to me like we are coming together in a way we

have not in the past, coming together in support and pulling for the

Iraqi people and pulling for this common cause of freedom that we all

struggled so long for.

When we look back across the history of this country and think about

some of the other conflicts this Nation has been involved in, we have

always had disagreements about whether to go forward and how to go

forward; but look at the legacy of a place that is left in a place

like, for example, in 1898 the USS Maine was sunk to the bottom of

Havana Harbor. Who said then that the Filipinos would be free today and

grateful for a century because of that act of our war against the

Spanish at that time?

Who said at the beginning of the Civil War that it was about freeing

the slaves? No, it was about saving the Union, but we know it now as

the war that freed the slaves.

This will be the war that freed the Iraqi people, the war that

established Iraq as the lone star to create a free Arab world which

means the elimination of the habitat that breeds terrorists.