Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this so-called victory in Iraq

resolution, and I do so for two central reasons.

Firstly and procedurally, it is unusual for a resolution which

purports to set forth a congressional directive for our military in

wartime to be so vague. Notable is the absence of any definition

section in this bill. On its face, the resolution commits the Congress

and the American people to ``victory in Iraq,'' but nowhere does it

define or attempt to explain what that term means. Nowhere does it set

forth the conditions under which an objective observer could determine

what number of Iraqi forces must be in place or what functions they

must undertake before we begin the withdrawal of U.S. troops which

leads me to my second reason for opposing the resolution.

This resolution is essentially a stay-the-course resolution that

blindly supports an open-ended commitment to continue to send and keep

our sons and daughters in uniform in Iraq and to write a blank check to

continue pumping billions of dollars into that country

without requiring anything of the new Iraqi Government.

Moreover, this resolution does not allow us to fulfill the

constitutional oversight responsibilities of this Congress. It says we

need to stay in until the Iraqis stand up. That is rhetoric. We owe the

American people better than this.

I am concerned that this resolution may have been offered to position

people on either side of the aisle. I support our troops, as we all do,

both sides of the aisle. We share that. We also share the heavy

responsibility to ensure that our people do not stay in Iraq one minute

longer than is required, and this bill does not allow an objective

observer or any Member of this Congress to determine when that point is

reached, when that point occurs.

With the Iraqi elections yesterday, an enormous success did occur. We

have entered that phase of this war that we must ask how much more can

we do for the Iraqi people as an occupying force. We must ask whether

our presence in Iraq is undermining the stability we hope to provide.

At some point, we all have to stop the politics on this issue.

I agree with the gentleman from Ohio, it is not good for America. It

is not good for the best Americans, those men and women who are in

uniform in Iraq and for their families who are carrying the heaviest

burden for all of us.