Thank you very much, Chairman Lantos. And thank you,

Chairman Skelton, for crafting this resolution and giving us the

opportunity to discuss the war. And I want to thank our Speaker, Nancy

Pelosi, who has been steadfast in moving this Congress and this country

towards an honorable exit from our occupation of Iraq.

We are now 6 months into President Bush's vaunted escalation of the

war in Iraq, and we are not seeing progress. Recently, the Washington

Post reported that U.S. military commanders are increasingly relying on

Sunni militias to fight insurgent groups. Our military officers are

giving these militias weapons and intelligence and setting them loose.

Mr. Speaker, just a few months ago, the President told us he needed

to escalate the commitment of the United States soldiers to Iraq to

disarm ethnic militia. Now, we are arming them? Just a few months ago,

the President told us that ethnic militias were undermining the

security and stability of Iraq. Now, they are the guarantors of the

stability and security of Iraq?

When the President's strategy for victory involves arming the people

who, just a few months ago, were our sworn enemies, it becomes

difficult for any of us to explain to our constituents what our troops

are still doing there in Iraq.

The troops have done their job, and in an honorable way, but they

will not be successful if the President cannot decide what the mission

really is. And I remember him several years ago saying ``mission

accomplished.'' I am sure we will hear from a number of people here

that we need to give the escalation more time, that we need to wait

until September. I'm not willing to do that, Mr. Speaker. I'm not

willing to explain to the families of the soldiers who will die between

now and September that it took an extra 3 months to figure out the

President's plan, and there has been no strategy given to us for

success.