I thank my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, today is not cause for celebration, nor is it a time for

high rhetoric. Instead, today is a moment of conscience. Hundreds of

billions of dollars have been spent, 3,600 of our best and brightest

have been called upon to sacrifice in the unforgiving sands of Iraq.

When in a hole, it is best to stop digging. We must make plans to

protect those we can best protect, to institute a rational response

capability

within the region. But first we must make immediate plans to disengage

ourselves from Iraq.

I urge my colleagues to find consensus on this issue. We owe it to

the brave men and women that have sacrificed and will continue to

sacrifice until we find and implement resolution.

Once we have disengaged ourselves from the Iraqi civil war, maybe,

with patience, dialogue and an open ear, we may find new relationships

within the Middle East to help our partners secure the peace we have

thus far found so elusive.

Let us renew our commitment to finding a solution for Middle East

conflict. It is time we used our heads and hearts rather than fists and

force.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting once again for changing

course in Iraq.