I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the proponents of this bill are fond of citing

historical examples as they declare the futility of combat operations

in Iraq. The Congressional Record is full of stories describing the

failed British invasion of Gallipoli or the far more popular

comparisons to the American experience in Vietnam.

Another more prescient historical comparison, however, was made by

the British author George Orwell. Contemplating the defeatist rhetoric

of the English intelligentsia during the German offensive against

Britain in World War II, he remarked, ``The quickest way of ending a

war is to lose it. And if one finds the prospect of a long war

intolerable, it is natural to disbelieve in the possibility of

victory.'' Those in favor of the bill presented on the floor today, Mr.

Speaker, do not believe in the possibility of victory, despite the

protests of the soldiers and Marines returning from the battlefield

saying otherwise.

By advocating a rapid withdrawal, they endorse the quickest way of

ending the war, by losing it. It has been less than a month since the

full force of troops requested by military commanders arrived in Iraq,

but already some have declared the operation to be a failure. General

Petraeus arrived in Baghdad in February with a new strategy designed to

reinforce the Iraqi security forces confronting al Qaeda, terrorists

and Iranian-supplied insurgents. Rather than giving him the opportunity

to fully implement his surge strategy, opponents in Congress

immediately sought to undermine his credibility and his ability to

command.

Mr. Speaker, our troops serving in Iraq don't need 435 armchair

generals dictating the tactical movements of troops, as this

legislation would surely do. They have true commanders whose

professional military skills have been honed by decades of military

service. They need us to renew our commitment to them and their

commanders. And more importantly, they need us to trust their

commanders' decisions.

General Petraeus said in a letter to his troops, ``Success will

require discipline, fortitude and initiative, qualities that you have

in abundance.'' The question before us today, Mr. Speaker, is, do we

have those qualities?