I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H. Con. Res. 63 and in

support of a just cause that is facing a critical turning point. The

outcome hangs in the balance, and, Mr. Speaker, we should not kid

ourselves into believing that victory is foreordained.

Churchill once said that there would not be war if both sides did not

believe that they could win it. The enemy we face in Iraq and in the

broader war against the radical Islamists is driven by an apocalyptic

vision of God, and because such apocalyptic visions are rooted in faith

and not facts, they are very hard to dispel. We, therefore, face an

opponent who is neither open to reason nor to compromise, nor will he

necessarily be defeated by calculations of military strategy and

prudence.

We face the paradox of a perilous time. At the opening of the 21st

century, we are opposed by an adversary who preaches the savagery and

barbarism of the 12th century. We face in Iraq an enemy that will allow

us absolutely no quarter, and, Mr. Speaker, I am bound to say that I

think we in this chamber, and, indeed, even in the country at large,

have been slow to grasp that fact.

However, the difficulty of the fight should not dissuade us from

waging it if the cause is just, and the cause is just.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the sad duty to attend the funerals of

several of the servicemen killed in Iraq who come from my district.

There are those who say that we should not withdraw from Iraq because

to do so would mean that they died in vain. That is not correct.

Nothing that we have done or will do will ever subtract one ounce from

the valor and nobility of those who have died in the service of their

country.

As Lincoln said in the Gettysburg Address, ``We cannot dedicate, we

cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living

and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor

power to add or detract.''

However, we should pause to note that our service men and women are

fighting and sometimes dying because they know the terrible price that

will be paid if our adversaries prevail. They have seen, as I have seen

when I traveled to Iraq, what a world our enemies would have us live

in. It is a world filled by a grotesque and distorted vision of God. It

is a world of slavery and submission, where the Almighty is not a

benevolent and loving creator of his children, but rather is a pagan

idol that demands blood sacrifice and glories in the murder of the

innocent.

You need look no further than the carnage in Baghdad, or Kabul, or

Mogadishu, or never let us forget the Twin Towers, to see the truth in

that axiom. That is what our enemy, for all his talk of God, seeks to

do, and we are all that stands between our adversary and the

realization of this nihilistic vision.

Mr. Speaker, there are those in this House who are far better versed

than I in the strategy and military calculations that are the essence

of this conflict. There are those who say that we mistakenly entered

the war in Iraq on the basis of flawed intelligence. This, I think,

underestimates the nature of our adversary.

Given the expansiveness of our enemy's nightmare vision, I think it

is safe to say there would have been a war in Iraq no matter what we

did. That, of course, will be for historians to decide. But this much I

do know: We stand for hope. We fight for peace in a world that is free.

We sacrifice now so that the little children that I met when I was in

Iraq might live in a better world tomorrow, and because they will have

a better world, we Americans will live in a safer one. To quote

DeGaulle, ``Behind this terrible cloud of our blood and tears here is

the sun of our grandeur shining out once again.''

Mr. Speaker, I do have one concern. I think that we in this Congress

have allowed too wide a gap to develop between the society we help to

govern and the war we have been compelled to wage. We have to correct

this, because we will not win this war in Iraq or beyond unless we as a

Nation come to grips with what we face and begin to act accordingly.

We must never forget, to quote Lincoln again, ``Public sentiment is

everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it,

nothing can succeed.'' Right now I look around me and I see a Congress

and a country distracted, and nothing could be deadlier to our security

and our hopes for a better future.

To some extent, this is understandable. America is and has every

right to be tired of conflict. In 1917, for the first time we went

``over there'' to make the world safe for democracy. In 1941, in

Churchill's evocative phrase, the new world stepped forth, yet again,

to the rescue and liberation of the old.

Then after 1945, we stayed on to wage the long twilight struggle that

came to be called the Cold War.

Then, in 1989, a miracle. We stopped holding our breaths. The Berlin

Wall came down and the Soviet Union disappeared. The hair trigger

nightmare of the nuclear world seemed to recede. We came off of the

figurative tip-toes on which we had been standing for nearly 50 years.

We had grown so accustomed to it that when the Cold War ended, we

scarcely realized just how nerve wracking, and what a strain, it had

all been.

Now here we are again. More war, more sacrifice, more death. It is

not a pleasant picture but it offers this. It offers hope. It offers an

alternative to yet another in a long line of obscene and perverted

visions that seem to be forever conjured in the minds of men.

Mr. Speaker, I have dared to say today something that very few of us

seem to be willing to say. We could lose this war.

There is nothing in the stars that says we must prevail. In history,

freedom is the exception, not the rule. So I say to my colleagues, we

must press on in Iraq. We must fight wisely, but we must not falter.

Churchill once said in the midst of another terrible war, ``Give us

the tools and we will finish the job.'' Mr. Speaker, it is the duty of

this House and of this Congress and of this Nation to give our men and

women the tools they need to see this conflict through to the end. We

must send them the reinforcements they need to win this war--and that

is why, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat this misguided

resolution.

Most of all we must stand together. That way, when our children and

grandchildren look back at this moment in history, they will say that

at the threatened nightfall the blood of their fathers ran strong.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding. I have

great respect for him, and I know of his strong dedication to the

troops and to the people serving.

I had in my office yesterday a constituent, a young man that played

football for my brother at home. I introduced him to the chairman. He

has spent the last 3 years at Walter Reed. He says he is like one of

those dinosaurs that has a big mouth and two hands that he can't use,

and he does struggle, and he has a bad leg. He was a master sergeant

and he protected his troops but he took rounds from mortar. In talking

to him he said, this debate is very distracting and hard for the morale

of the troops.

I pray that they will understand that all of us have different

feelings, but we do understand their devotion and their commitment to

duty, and they understand our commitment. We just see things

differently, and at the end of the day, I hope what we end up doing is

what will be best for our troops and for our country and for the world.