I thank the lady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the question before us is whether the front line in the

war on terrorism moves from Baghdad back to America.

Although this resolution is nonbinding, the message it sends to our

troops on the battlefield and to our enemies is crystal clear. Our

words have consequences, as powerful as our actions. We must choose

them carefully, for they are being listened to all over the world. And

the words this Congress speaks today will send a message to both our

allies and enemies about our resolve.

It is not a contradiction to support our warriors in battle and also

to seek a lasting peace. That principle has guided us through tougher

times than this. Indeed, it is America's gift from one generation to

the next that we create a Nation that is stronger, freer, more

prosperous, and more likely to enjoy God's world in peace.

To abdicate this responsibility for political expediency is a

dereliction of duty and a sign of lost faith in the promise of America.

Throughout history, it has been proven that you cannot surrender the

battlefield and still win the war. This war on terrorism was thrust

upon us. America and other free nations were attacked by evil forces.

To leave these forces unchecked would stoke the insatiable appetite of

the beast. We know this because we have seen it before.

Regarding the fall of Cambodia, Henry Kissinger wrote:

Sirik Matak, who was the prime minister, was asked by then Ambassador

John Dean if he would like to be evacuated, as the United States had

just announced it was leaving. The prime minister responded, in part:

Thank you for your offer to transport me towards freedom. I cannot,

alas, leave in such a cowardly fashion.

As for your great country, I never believed for a moment that you

have the sentiment of abandoning people which have chosen liberty. You

have refused us your protection and we can do nothing about it. You

leave, and my wish is that you and your country will find happiness

under the sky. But mark it well, that if I shall die here on this spot

and in my country that I love, it is no matter because we are all born

and we must die. I have only committed this mistake in believing in

you, the Americans.

The very next day the New York Times reported the evacuation with the

following headline, ``Indochina Without Americans: For Most, a Better

Life.''

As for the Prime Minister, he was shot; and it took him 3 days to die

without medical help. Every other government official and their

families were executed, and one to two million Cambodians were rousted

from their homes and led to the slaughter like cattle.

Is this the fate we wish to leave millions of Iraqis who have tasted

freedom after decades of oppression?

Is this the fate we wish for our allies and the leaders who are

nurturing an infant democracy?

Is this the legacy we choose for our airmen and our soldiers and for

those heroes who have fallen?

With an open mind I have spent hours this week listening to the

debate. Like many Americans, I was willing to listen to new ideas and

explore a new course in Iraq. But an opportunity was wasted, because

all I have heard is no from the other side. I have not heard a plan,

nor have I heard a strategy.

And let me be clear. It is not my place to question one's motivation

or patriotism. But I can question judgment. This resolution is either

an endorsement of the status quo or a clarion call of retreat, and

neither is acceptable to me or to many in this Chamber.

Some now talk about a slow bleed strategy to cut off funding for our

troops. I ask, if we surrender this battlefield, which battlefield will

our enemy choose next? Will it be New York? Will it be Los Angeles?

Will it be Washington, D.C.? Appeasement does not work. Just look back.

The World Trade Center in 1993, Somalia, the Khobar Towers, Kenya and

Tanzania, the USS Cole and, of course, September 11, 2001.

This copy of the Staten Island Advance, my local paper, shows the

faces of some of the victims, 240 on this sheet alone. These are the

people I knew, and they were the people who we promised, these 240

people who left 450

children without parents because they perished because evil people

attacked this country. We made a promise to them that we will never let

this happen again. I ask you, do we break that covenant? Do we

surrender to the beast? To that I simply respond, no.