Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I

thank you, Mr. Speaker, for conducting this debate.

This debate has been constructive. I appreciate the thoughtful

comments made on both sides. Speaking for the second time, I realize it

may be tempting for some to support this resolution to somehow express

our strong dissatisfaction with how the administration has conducted

the war and to separate ourselves from an unpopular President.

I do not believe, however, support of what is truly a ``stay the

course,'' ``status quo resolution'' will be a constructive outcome of

the debate. It sends the wrong message to our troops, to the Iraqis, to

our allies throughout the world, and, in particular, to our enemies.

Is it the American way to attack another country, disassemble its

entire security forces--military, border patrol and police--and then

leave before this broken country is capable to rebuild its security

forces and stand on its own? The shame of this possibility haunts me.

And how can this resolution possibly help our troops on the

battlefield who are there already who still have to carry out their

mission?

We, the Congress, are in effect telling our troops, we support you,

but we do not want you to have the reinforcements you need to carry out

your mission, and we do not trust the judgment of your new commanding

officer, General David Petraeus. How destructive is that?

Our troops deserve to know we have a plan to win. If we do not have a

plan to win, we have a plan to leave. The resolution before the House

neither helps us succeed nor gives us guidance on how to leave.

It is so counterproductive for 535 Members of the House of

Representatives and the Senate to micro-manage the war.

It is the responsibility of the administration to conduct the war

effort. It is Congress' responsibility to conduct tough oversight,

holding the administration accountable for the implementation of the

war.

Having chaired 14 hearings on the operations in Iraq and been to Iraq

15 times to conduct on-the-ground oversight, I will continue to ask the

administration the difficult questions and provide my observations and

recommendations.

Regretfully, too few Members of Congress have fully considered the

consequence of leaving Iraq prematurely. The Iraq Study Group warned,

``If the situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate, the consequence

could be severe for Iraq, the United States, the region and the

world.''

The ultimate goal for me is to bring our troops home without leaving

Iraq in chaos. This is achievable if Republicans and Democrats, the

White House and Congress, agree on a bipartisan solution as outlined by

this Study Group.

Officially endorsing the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group and

acting on them is the best way to make this happen.

The only way I think we should leave Iraq is the same way we got into

Iraq, together.