I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this resolution

and in strong support of our troops and their mission.

This resolution is wrong in every respect. It is wrong

constitutionally. Never before in our history has Congress attempted to

control or restrict battlefield decisions. It is wrong as a matter of

policy, and it will come back to haunt us for years to come.

Madam Speaker, wars must not be waged according to opinion polls or

applause meters. For instance, just look at the battle of Iwo Jima, an

island in the Pacific where in less than 6 weeks, more than twice as

many Americans were killed as have been killed throughout the entire

Iraq war, and yet Congress didn't jump in to question the policies of

the President.

And look at the Korean War. There was no declaration of war. The

United States and the overwhelming majority of coalition troops in the

field, 36,000 Americans were killed and another 8,000 were missing.

More than 70 percent of the American people opposed President Truman

and his handling of the war. Yet today, President Truman is honored as

one of our greatest Presidents, and the Korean War is looked upon as a

key turning point in our struggle against communism.

Madam Speaker, Iraq cannot be looked upon or looked at in a vacuum.

This war in Iraq is an absolutely essential component of the war

against Islamic terrorism which must be fought in many places

throughout the world, including right here at home.

As a Member of Congress who lost upwards of 150 friends, neighbors,

and constituents on September 11, 2001, I have seen firsthand how evil

this enemy can be. And al Qaeda itself has said that Iraq is a major

battleground in this war.

Madam Speaker, we cannot allow ourselves to do anything which would

undermine our troops who are the frontline soldiers in this war against

Islamic terrorism.

I know that the resolution expresses support for the troops, but talk

is cheap and actions have consequences. You cannot support the troops

if you are undermining their mission and challenging their commander in

the field. And that is what this resolution does.

Speaker after speaker in support of the resolution has said that the

new policy in Iraq will not work. But General Petraeus, who is the

author of this policy and who has just been unanimously confirmed by

the Senate, has said this policy can work and that his troops can carry

it out. By opposing this new policy, the supporters of the resolution

are clearly undermining a new commander in Iraq at such a vital time in

the conduct of this war.

As the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars said

earlier this week, ``When military decisions are second-guessed by

opinion polls or overruled by politicians, it is the common soldier and

their families who pay the price. The VFW is very concerned with the

tone and timing of this debate. We need to send the message to our

troops that America wants them to succeed in Iraq by giving the buildup

a chance to succeed.''

Madam Speaker, what makes this worse is that we know today's

resolution is only the first step to prevent General Petraeus and his

troops from carrying out their mission. The Democratic leadership has

admitted, indeed proudly acknowledged, that it is their goal to impose

as many conditions as they can to prevent General Petraeus from getting

the troops and the reinforcements he needs to win this war.

Madam Speaker, never in our history have the Speaker of the House or

the House Appropriations Committee attempted to superimpose their

policies on troop training or troop leave, and override the Commander

in Chief and the commander in the field.

Madam Speaker, this is not the time for sunshine soldiers or

summertime patriots. It is time for Members of this body to show at

least a small percentage of the courage shown every day by our troops

in Iraq.

If you want to cut off the funding for our troops who will be in the

line of fire, don't be cute, don't try to sneak it through the back

door. Have the guts to do it directly.

Madam Speaker, this debate is not about this President or this

Congress or the next election. It is about our survival as a Nation and

our survival as a civilization. Vote for our troops and against this

misguided and dangerous resolution.