Madam Speaker, I rise today to support our

troops and our Nation. It is really that simple.

We in Congress have an obligation and duty to debate the many

different issues facing the country. Our words and our actions

traditionally make their way to our constituents' living rooms and the

national news, but now, with communications being what they are, to our

troops in the field through the Internet.

Our words are the guiding principles by which the voters ultimately

make their decision on who they want representing them here, and this

week obviously is no exception.

Our words will carry on for many months to come. Our constituents are

listening, as there is no issue more sobering or more somber than this

one.

Over the last 4 days, though, I have been struck not so much by the

rhetoric on display here but the effects this debate will have on the

morale of our troops. Our words have carried much further than those

living rooms this past week. This debate will inevitably make its way

to our troops there in Iraq standing watch in some remote outpost,

training Iraqi security forces.

This debate will inevitably make its way to the parents of our

troops, their spouses, their children. These children will remember

parts of this debate and will grow up learning just how much their

country supported their parents during these trying times.

The talk also goes to the enemy, who is watching and listening to us

in the caves, on the battlefield, the terrorist cells wherever they may

be. They monitor what we are saying to learn of our resolve. So even if

we just talk, we ought to be very careful what we say. The world is

watching and listening.

And since we have the power to fund our military, I want to talk

briefly. We have one Commander in Chief. The President's premise for

going to war in both Afghanistan and Iraq has always been to go on the

offensive. It is hard to prove a negative, but it is obvious we have

not had one terrorist attack in the U.S. since 9/11. That is not all

because of our decision to go to war in Iraq, but it is one of the

reasons.

Everybody ought to know by now the basic mindset of the terrorist

jihadists. They are attracted to volatile parts of the Middle East,

where broken regimes make it okay to practice hatred and violence. They

are looking for safe sanctuary that provides secrecy, communications

capabilities and a basic infrastructure with which to concoct their

next scheme. They plan and plot and wait to pounce in various hot spots

around the world, just as they have done in Kenya, Tanzania, the USS

Cole, Bali, Madrid, London. It is a low-grade world war.

If we finish this job, Iraq might be a place where people are more

concerned with getting to work and raising a family than one where

terrorists can plan attacks and sectarian violence is rampant. It won't

be perfect.

And let's be honest about what is called sectarian violence. Where

did that come from? A lot of it from terrorist organizations, al Qaeda

foremost. It is provoked and prodded along because our enemies know it

will test our resolve. Listen to the tapes of Osama bin Laden and Ayman

al-Zawahari. They talk about it all the time.

What they want for themselves is for the U.S. to give up. They call

us a paper tiger, a country that gives up when support wanes or when

the going gets difficult. In their view, after we give up, they will

claim victory and turn Iraq into a terrorist factory of training camps,

weapons making and surveillance operations, all designed for the

express purpose of waging the next attack in the U.S. or otherwise

advancing this low-grade world war.

The President knows this, and we need to end this war. He has taken

the input of others and readjusted our strategy and, as we speak, is

readjusting our tactics. The Iraqis must take charge of their own

security.

Our military is pressing for action, action from our own troops to

quell the violence and action to get the Iraqi security forces trained,

equipped and ready to act.

I hope to bring the Kentucky troops home, but not until the work is

done. Oppose the resolution.