Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Texas

for yielding and thank him and all of you for, once again, to have an

opportunity to come and speak on the floor on this resolution.

The resolution before us is nonbinding, but it is the first step down

a very treacherous path, a path that, if followed, will endanger

Americans for generations to come.

Iraq is the central front in a global war between the United States

of America and radical Islamic terrorists, a war that began long before

the horrific events of 9/11, a war the American people did not seek and

did not start.

It is mind-boggling to consider how fanatically committed our enemies

are to destroying America, even at the cost of destroying themselves in

the process. Our enemies recruit young people, fill them with hate and

rage, and then send them on suicide missions to kill innocent victims.

We face an enemy that loves death more than it loves life.

As Americans, we cherish freedom and democracy. Ours is a way of

life. Theirs is a way of death, of murder, of suicide.

The global reach of radical Islam stretches from North Africa,

through the Middle East, to South Asia, to Indonesia and to the

Philippines.

The other side wants Americans to believe that the war in Iraq is

different from the war on terror. They even say that we are not

fighting al Qaeda in Iraq, ignoring the fact that al Qaeda has made it

the central front in their war against America.

According to the experts, and according to their own words, radical

Islamic terrorists will never stop fighting until much of the world is

under Islamic law.

In 2004, Osama bin Laden said the following about the conflict in

Iraq: ``The whole world is watching this war and the two adversaries;

the Islamic Nation . . . and the United States and its allies on the

other. It is either victory and glory or misery and humiliation.''

And our enemies are watching this debate, and through the Arab media

we know what they are saying.

Recently, the second-in-command of al Qaeda issued a warning to

moderate Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan who are working and dying to

build peace and security, and he said this: ``These traitors in Iraq

and Afghanistan must face their inevitable fate, and face up to the

inescapable facts. America is about to depart and abandon them, just as

it abandoned their like in Vietnam.''

The consequences of failure in Iraq would be catastrophic for America

and the world.

Last month, General Petraeus spoke of the very real possibility of

Iraq's neighbors taking sides in sectarian violence.

Failing in Iraq would jeopardize Israel and greatly benefit Iran, a

nation governed by a fanatic and actively building nuclear weapons.

The battle we fight in Iraq is the biggest part of our global war,

and if we leave, the fight will, in fact, follow us home. And what we

will leave behind is chaos, the same kind of chaos we left behind in

Vietnam, the same kind of chaos we left behind in Lebanon, and the same

kind of chaos that we left behind in Somalia.

Who does not believe that we will not see chaos in Iraq,

destabilizing the Middle East and jeopardizing the very safety and

security of the American people?

As Americans, we are fortunate in so many ways. We have so many

blessings, including a great and proud history to inspire us. Earlier

this week, I talked about President Lincoln and the challenges he faced

during some of America's darkest days. During the Revolution, America

faced down what was then the most powerful empire in the world, with a

rag-tag army. We survived a Civil War that would have permanently

divided any other Nation.

After a crippling depression in the 1930s, we defeated Japanese

imperialism and Hitler in Germany. We then defeated the Soviet Union

and their communist empire in a test of wills that lasted for a

generation.

The greatness of America is exemplified in a simple short letter

about duty and sacrifice. The letter was written by Marine Staff

Sergeant Daniel Clay, the husband of my former staffer, Lisa Bell Clay.

Sergeant Clay was one of 10 Marines who were killed in Fallujah a

little over a year ago, and he left behind this letter to his family in

case he did not come home.

In it, he said, ``What we have done in Iraq is worth any sacrifice.

Why? Because it was our duty.'' He says, ``That sounds simple. But all

of us have a duty. Duty is defined as a God-given task. Without duty,

life is worthless.''

Our troops are not the only Americans who have a God-given task. If a

noncommissioned officer can understand his duty, then certainly Members

of Congress can understand theirs.

Congress has a duty to protect the American people now so that the

next generation can enjoy prosperity and freedom.

Congress also has a duty to the men and women in uniform when we send

them into harm's way, a duty to provide them with the full support and

resources they need to accomplish their mission and return home safely.

My friends on the other side have described this nonbinding

resolution as their first step. It is a first step. It is the first

step in a plan to cut off funding and reinforcements for American

troops in harm's way.

The next step is to micromanage the war through the budget process.

To quote the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Murtha), who said

yesterday, ``They won't be able to continue. They won't be able to do

the deployment. They won't have the equipment, they don't have the

training and they won't be able to do the work.''

Mr. Speaker, at this very moment American troops are fighting radical

Islamic terrorists thousands of miles away, and it is unthinkable that

the United States Congress would move to discredit their mission, cut

off their reinforcements and deny them the resources they need to

succeed and return home safely.

The American people will not support a strategy that involves pulling

the rug out from under American troops in the combat zone by cutting

off their reinforcements and forcing them to face an enemy without our

full support.

This resolution is nonbinding, but it is the first step toward a

tragic, unthinkable goal.

Four years ago, this body agreed that fighting this war was a worthy

cause. There have been setbacks where Members on both sides of the

aisle are rightly dissatisfied with the results. But this is war. We

face a sophisticated, determined enemy who wants to annihilate our way

of life.

We have a duty to stand and fight against those who seek to destroy

America and the freedom that defines us. Our troops are committed to

fighting and winning this global war. We owe them our unfailing

support.

I urge my colleagues to stand with the marines, the soldiers, the

sailors and the airmen and vote down this resolution. I urge my

colleagues to think about our duty, our duty to support our troops, our

duty to protect the American people, and our duty to leave for our kids

and their kids a safe, free, and secure America. Our soldiers are dying

around the world to protect us, upholding their duty. Do we have the

courage to uphold our duty?

Vote ``no'' on this resolution.