Madam Speaker, the Wall Street Journal accused us of

trying to micromanage this war. Well, this President has not listened

to the generals. He hasn't listened to the American people. And he

hasn't listened to the Iraqi people. He has micromanaged this failure.

Four and a half years ago, Madam Speaker, on this floor I stood in

this Chamber, along with 295 of my colleagues, to support the

resolution authorizing the President to attack Iraq. I regret that vote

deeply. And I told my constituents in my district 1\1/2\ years ago that

I made a mistake. Down the street they make no mistakes. They are

infallible.

I did so because the premise on which we authorized this war was

false, the military plan for victory has been weak, and more than 5

years later, this war has made our Nation less safe.

We stand ready to vote on a different resolution that could take a

significant step towards remedying the historic mistake we made in

October of 2002. The troop escalation advocated by President Bush will

only widen our involvement in this conflict and put more brave American

troops in the middle of a vicious civil war. Voting in favor of the

President's escalation plan is an historic error, and I stress the

historic nature of this debate because I am a firm believer that

history is telling of the future.

The history of this war shows that this President cannot form the

right policy for victory. He should have sent additional troops in 2003

when the generals asked him to do that, when it was possible to restore

order in Baghdad, instead of now in 2007 when violence reigns supreme.

The history of Iraq shows it has been wracked by sectarian and ethnic

division long before it was even a state, a fact conveniently ignored

by this President and his supporters on their march to Baghdad.

Remember, Iran and Syria and others are possibly fighting a proxy war

by

supplying insurgents against an unpopular foreign occupier, the same

role that we played in helping the Afghans to fight the Soviets 20

years ago; and we know how that conflict turned out.

In history I see the lessons, Madam Speaker. As I speak today, in 280

B.C. when King Pyrrhus of Greece defeated the Romans during the Pyrrhic

War, his army suffered irreplaceable casualties in battle. And when he

was congratulated on his victory, he replied: ``Another such victory

like that over the Romans and we are undone.''

We have heard the word ``success'' and we have heard the word

``victory'' so many times that they are now as pyrrhic, empty,

fleeting, hollow.

The lesson is clear. The President's escalation plan offers an

illusion, when only the real hope is that it offers a Pyrrhic victory

at best.

Our Armed Forces have been used, abused, refused and accused. They

have been overstretched. They were ill-equipped from the very

beginning. Don't tell us we don't support the troops, when you did not

give what they deserved in the field of battle. Our military readiness

to fight the ongoing war on terror is now in serious doubt because of

this war. Don't question our patriotism. Don't question our support or

the American people's. Listen.

By the way, Madam Speaker, have we asked the Iraqis what they feel?

Well, 80 percent of them want us out. Don't they count? Can't we ask

and listen to at least the very people whose country we occupy, this

sovereign nation? This is unbelievable. It is illusionary at best. And

what will we say to these Iraqi people? I want to hear the answer from

the other side. What is your answer for them when they say, Don't stay

here, and certainly don't escalate. I ask the loyal opposition to our

resolution to tell the American people how much do the intentions of

the Iraqi people really matter to you?

The epicenter of our fight against terror is on the border of

Afghanistan and Pakistan. Many of us have been there. Many of us have

gone there. You have forgotten that part of the world, which many did

not even know on September 11, 2001, where Afghanistan was in the first

place.

The clear message we send to the Iraqi people and the American people

is that we will bring freedom to Iraq, even if it takes the blood of

every Iraqi and the lives of more American soldiers. That is not good

enough. That is not acceptable.

You have heard the statistics from speaker after speaker. Previous

escalations in this war have not worked. Why will this one work? Our

ill-fated presence in Iraq is being used as a propaganda tool for the

enemy, al Quaeda, and other terrorists worldwide.

In the years since 9/11, more terrorists have been created through

this President's policies than were captured or killed. There weren't

any terrorists in Iraq in 2003, but there are now.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.