I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico.

Madam Speaker, we have heard many speeches this week talking about

the honorable men and women of our Armed Forces. We all have

constituents who have served bravely in Iraq and some have paid the

ultimate price for this service, and we are forever grateful for that.

We are grateful because these men and women put our freedoms and our

country before themselves. It is this freedom that affords us the

ability to undertake the debate on this shallow, shortsighted

resolution.

If the purpose of this resolution is scoring political points and

playing political games, then bravo to the Democratic majority, they

have succeeded. But if the purpose of this resolution is for a new

direction in Iraq that will secure victory and secure the second

democracy in the Middle East, then this resolution comes up woefully

short.

I am not prepared to look our soldiers and their families in their

eyes and say I voted for this resolution, because while I support you,

I do not support your mission.

We debate a resolution this week that represents a cavalier attitude

about the mission our troops are carrying out, day in and day out,

without fear, and without knowing whether some in the halls of this

Congress still support them in this war on terror.

While we debate this resolution, let me be clear that, like my

constituents, my patience is limited in Iraq. We must see more progress

sooner rather than later. We must see the Iraqis play a larger role and

take control of their country. The Iraqis need to recognize their

failure to take control has consequences, the consequences of

fulfilling bin Laden's wish to see Iraq become a new central base for

terrorists, the consequences of destabilizing the Middle East and

endangering Israel, our strongest democratic ally in the Middle East.

The consequence is of involving our enemies like Iran and other rogue

states to develop weapons of mass destruction without the fear of

repercussions. Ultimately in Iraq, it is Iraqis who will decide if

democracy or tyranny rule the day, and whether they avoid the

consequences of their failure.

But while my patience is limited, and I want to see progress, I will

not play politics with our troops, which is what this resolution does.

Like Majority Leader Hoyer said yesterday, no one should hide behind

the troops. I agree, but equally important, Members of this body should

not be hiding behind this resolution if their true aim is to cut off

funding for our troops. Because while this resolution will indeed score

a few political points for some debating in this Chamber today, this

resolution also sends a message far beyond this Chamber.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, this nonbinding resolution, while lacking any

bite in terms of strategy, and not changing anything on the ground in

Baghdad, will send a message loud and clear to our troops: We are

consigning your mission to failure before you even have a chance to

execute it.

As I listened to Sam Johnson today, as he recounted the unspeakable

damage antiwar efforts back home did to our soldiers in Vietnam, I

wondered whether our brave men and women are listening to the taunts of

America's enemies at this very moment as we debate not just this

resolution but their mission. Sam Johnson is not alone in questioning

the damage to the morale we may be doing to those fighting forces.

One of my constituents, a highly decorated Iraq war veteran, David

Bellavia wrote, ``Each day . . . move(s) us closer to losing a winnable

war and abandoning a worthy ally.''

Madam Speaker, for Congress to support this resolution gives

encouragement to the jihadists and cuts the morale of our troops. In

our global war on terror, we cannot show a lack of resolve because, as

we know, after decades of attacks by these jihadists on our citizens,

the World Trade Center in 1993, our embassies and the USS Cole, we know

what a lack of resolve has meant. That lack of resolve hit us all when

the jihadists attacked us again on the morning of September 11, 2001.

That fateful Tuesday brought devastation to this country not seen since

Pearl Harbor and, God willing, that we will never experience again.

The skies were thick with smoke, debris piled so high it brought to a

standstill the city that never sleeps. Just days after the attacks, I

stood at Ground Zero amidst the rubble, in anguish. I knew this was

bigger than any political party, bigger than any one country. It is a

global war on Islamic jihadism, and that war, as the jihadists have

said, is now set in Iraq.

The question raised by this resolution is, will we yield? As Winston

Churchill said, reflecting on the darkest days of the global war of his

time, one that pitted the hopes of freedom against the ideology of

hatred, ``Never give in--never, never, never, never, in nothing great

or small, large or petty;

``Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming

might of the enemy.''

Madam Speaker, in the daunting challenge of our time, we must not

waver, and we must not yield.