Madam Speaker, I believe that the statements made

earlier by our good friend from North Carolina was right to the point.

Unilateralism was our policy. We told the world, We don't need you. And

what are we doing now? We are practically begging the world to come and

help us with this mess that we created.

Diplomacy? Look at the success of the multilateralism that we have

now advocated in our dealings with North Korea. But that was not the

case with Iraq, and this is why we are having this problem.

Madam Speaker, I could not agree more with my good

friend in just quoting Daniel Webster. ``God grants liberty to those

who love it.'' The problem that I have right now is that I don't know

if the people among the Shiites and the Sunnis love liberty that much

to want to make sacrifices. The point of the matter is Saddam Hussein

tortured and murdered over 300,000 Shiites. One mass grave contained

30,000 dead bodies. So we have got a real serious problem here.

Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may

consume.

Madam Speaker, I would say in response to the gentleman's comments,

we gladly accept the responsibility. That responsibility was truly

exhibited in the election in November. This is the reason why we are

taking action. I think this resolution, every bit, is part of that

accepting the responsibility and the will of the American people who

have spoken in the November election. I just want to note that.

Madam Speaker, I submit it is not General Petraeus

that we are questioning here. It is the decision of our Commander in

Chief, our President, his decision to deploy some 20,000 troops,

additional troops to this mess that we created in Iraq. We planned and

carried out this war on the cheap, saying we only needed 140,000 when

in fact the experts said we needed at least 250,000 or 300,000 to

complete and do the job. That didn't happen. So why do you think that

adding another 20,000 troops is going to make that much difference?

That is what is at issue and I think this is what we need to debate on.

Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may

consume.

I just want to note with interest also in my good friend from New

York's observations, on this side of the aisle we are in no way trying

to criticize or humiliate the integrity of the great general that is

now leading our forces in Iraq. In fact, I have the utmost respect for

General Petraeus. He received his doctoral dissertation from Princeton

University on counterinsurgency; and that is why, as the former

commander of the 101st Airborne Division, he was so successful as a

general up in Mosul. So I think we need to have that framework

understood with my good friend from New York. We are not questioning

the integrity of the good general, General Petraeus. It is the decision

made by our President, who is the Commander in Chief, that we are

debating about in this great debate that we are having this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as I may consume at

this time.

Mr. Speaker, I support House Concurrent Resolution 63, and I want to

thank our chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, the gentleman

from Missouri (Mr. Skelton); also, our chairman of the House Foreign

Affairs Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. Lantos); and

especially the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. Jones), my good

friend and colleague, as original cosponsors of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr.

Wolf) and Mr. Richard Solomon of the United States Institute of Peace

for their initiative and leadership to establish what is commonly known

today as the Iraq Study Group, composed of nationally recognized

leaders from both political parties, and co-chaired by former Secretary

of State James Baker and former Congressman and director of the Woodrow

Wilson International Center for Scholars Mr. Lee Hamilton.

The Iraq Study Group conducted for well over eight months a most

comprehensive review, in my humble opinion, of the crisis that we are

now faced

within Iraq, and I sincerely hope that in the weeks and months to come

that we here in this body will review seriously its recommendations for

a resolution to the conflict in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, almost 5 years ago, as a member of the House

International Relations Committee, I voted in support of the resolution

which authorized our President to use military force against Saddam

Hussein and his military regime, for the most critical reason presented

by our President, our Vice President, our Secretary of Defense, and our

National Security Adviser, that Saddam Hussein had in his possession

supposedly nuclear weapons. Our Nation's own national security was

severely at risk, imminent danger. These were the phrases that were

used. And besides for other reasons, the nuclear issue was the

linchpin, in my humble opinion, that convinced many of us on both sides

of the aisle to approve the resolution to allow our President to wage

war against Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation, and especially the American people, have now

come to realize that Saddam Hussein never had in his possession nuclear

weapons, due to faulty intelligence and misleading statements made by

top officials of this administration in order to totally change the

atmosphere to have the public believe that our number one public enemy

was Saddam Hussein and not Osama bin Laden.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues, how in the world did we end up in

Iraq and we have now caused more tension in the Middle East than ever

before?

As I recalled, Mr. Speaker, our Nation was attacked by some 18

terrorists, 14 Saudi Arabians, one Egyptian, two from the United Arab

Emirates, and one Lebanese, on September 11, 2001. None of these

terrorists came from Iran or Iraq. Most of them were from Saudi Arabia,

and they were members of a terrorist organization that we now know as

al Qaeda, and the leader of this terrorist group is Osama bin Laden.

Our Nation was attacked on September 11, 2001. Most of the nations

around the world not only sympathized with us but supported us, but the

Congress gave authority to our President to go after Osama bin Laden

and his al Qaeda organization that was under the protective custody of

the Taliban, which at the time controlled Afghanistan and certain parts

of Pakistan.

It is critically important, I submit, Mr. Speaker, that our

colleagues and the American people need to be reminded on what prompted

our President, as Commander in Chief, and this Congress, what actions

our Nation took after our country was attacked on September 11, 2001.

Our government leaders properly identified al Qaeda and Osama bin

Laden as the perpetrators of the attacks on September 11, 2001, and our

President and the Congress acted accordingly to summon our military

forces to wage war against Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda

organization that was under the protection of the Taliban in

Afghanistan.

Well, we got rid of the Taliban, and we were successful in

establishing a democratic government for the people and the leaders of

Afghanistan, but we did not, and I repeat we did not, complete our

mission of either killing or capturing the leader who was responsible

for the attack against our country on September 11, 2001.

The terrorist leader's name is Osama bin Laden, and after almost 6

years now, the most powerful country in the world militarily, Osama bin

Laden still has not been killed or captured, let alone the fact that we

did not complete our commitment in resources and force structure to

sustain Afghanistan's newly established democratic government.

Now, there is a new escalation of Taliban presence in Afghanistan and

its ability to wage military operations against us and our NATO allies,

and the situation in Afghanistan is now becoming more like Iraq,

needing more troops and resources to fight the Taliban again.

The critical question of why our country decided to wage war against

Saddam Hussein is one that will be a matter of public debate for years

to come, but suffice it to say, one, Saddam Hussein did not attack us

on September 11, 2001. It was Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda

organization that was based in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan.

Two, our President and his top officials had misled the American

people and the Congress to state that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons

of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. I honestly believe

that this issue alone was the catalyst and what prompted Congress to

give the President military authority to force Saddam Hussein to comply

with U.N. resolutions and to also locate and destroy his alleged supply

of nuclear weapons.

Three, we may have won the war in Iraq by eventually capturing Saddam

Hussein, but we have caused more tension and conflict among the rival

factions between the Shiites, comprised of 60 percent of this country's

population of 26 million, and the Sunnis, which make up some 20 percent

of the population, and the remainder the Kurds which, for the most

part, is not involved in this conflict at this point in time.

I must include, Mr. Speaker, the name of former Army Chief of Staff

General Eric Shinseki as part of the debate and discussion, if you

will. General Shinseki, in my mind, was among the first of our military

leaders who, for making an honest statement as a professional soldier

concerning the situation in Iraq, was publicly criticized and

humiliated by civilian superiors within the Department of Defense.

In response to questions by members of the Senate Armed Services

Committee, General Shinseki was asked how many troops it would require

to take control of Iraq, and his response was something in the order of

several hundred thousand soldiers. Here was a soldier who fought and

was wounded while engaged in combat in Vietnam, a most respected

officer who served with honor and distinction for some 35 years in

defense of our Nation. Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, I must say,

General Shinseki's professional assessment of the mismanagement and

ill-planning of this war in Iraq could not have been more accurate,

given the sad state of affairs we find our country is in now when

dealing with Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us is plain and simple. It is a

clear statement to the American people and to the world that Congress

absolutely supports the efforts of all the men and women who proudly

serve in the Armed Forces of the United States. It also sends a very

simple message to President Bush that his recent decision to send an

additional number of some 20,000 troops to the war effort in Iraq is

not going to change the serious security problems and the civil war

that is now in place between the Sunni and the Shiite factions.

Mr. Speaker, we have fulfilled our mission, our military mission, by

capturing Saddam Hussein who, of course, now recently was hung by the

authorities with the new Iraq Government. It is up to the Iraq people

and their leaders now to determine for themselves a political solution

to the rights and privileges of the three major factions: the Sunnis,

the Shiites and the Kurds.

It is a fact that 60 percent of the population in Iraq is Shiite.

Prime Minister Maliki is a Shiite, and interestingly enough, the

President is a Kurd.

Now the question is how and in what way the Sunnis are going to be

part of this newly established government. And there is no denial, Mr.

Speaker, that for the future the new government will be dominated by

Shiites, an unintended consequence of our decision to wage war against

Saddam Hussein, who was a member of the Sunni faction, which made up

only 20 percent of the population of Iraq. But Saudi Arabia, Jordan,

Syria, Egypt and the rest of the Muslim world is Sunni. Eighty-five

percent of the Muslim world is Sunni, we have to understand that, and

Iran and the Shiite factions in Iraq make up only 15 percent.

I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, and I want to quote again my good

friend's quotation from Daniel Webster: God grants liberty to those who

love it, but I say they must also be willing to die for it.

The civil war now taking place between the Sunnis and the Shiites is

a war not for seeking liberty and freedom, but it is a religious war

that has been going on for the past 1,400 years. There are never

winners in religious wars, Mr. Speaker. And no force, not even the most

powerful nation of this

world is going to change the hearts and minds of the Sunnis and the

Shiites unless they themselves do so willingly and do it in a political

way.

Mr. Speaker, I honestly believe that our troops now there and an

additional number of 20,000 more soldiers that President Bush has

ordered for deployment in Iraq are going to get caught in the crossfire

of the civil war that is now going on between the Sunnis and the

Shiites, a war that can only be resolved only among the Iraqi factions

themselves and not with our military presence there.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.