Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in support of the

resolution.

I wrote to the President on May 24 of last year and told the

President in this letter: Mr. President, I voted for the use of force

resolution based upon what later proved to be flawed intelligence about

the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

I am glad Saddam Hussein is gone. He was a vicious dictator who

killed thousands and thousands of innocent people. At that time, in May

of last year, there were 2,400 dead Americans as a result of our

intervention in Iraq. Now there are more than 3,100 dead Americans, 700

more than just 9 months ago.

We have done militarily all we can do in Iraq. We need to ask and

tell the Iraqi Government, this new Iraqi Government, to step up to the

plate and assume responsibility for the protection of their people and

their country, Iraq. We need to give them incentive, powerful incentive

to step up to the plate and assume responsibility.

Sometimes new governments are like some people. If you tell them you

will do something for them, they stand back and let you do it and do it

and do it and never, never assume responsibility.

We saved the Iraqi people from Saddam Hussein, but we can't save the

Iraqi people from the Iraqi people if they won't put aside centuries of

religious differences and support their new government. I am talking

about the Shia and the Sunnis for more than 1,000 years have been

fighting.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read an e-mail I received from a constituent

last week. This is from a young lady who is serving presently in Iraq.

``I am a soldier currently deployed to Iraq. Our company is on the

verge of an extension. Although we all are proud to serve our country,

we also want to go home. Most of us have been gone from home for over a

year. If or when we get extended, we wouldn't have seen our families

for almost 2 years.

``With the news of the possible extension, the soldiers' morale went

down. The families at home are stressed and that can and will stress a

soldier out. Some soldiers had to go home on emergency leave because

their families are falling apart.

``We watch the news here all the time and most of the time we can't

believe what we hear and see. We see soldiers dying left and right, but

what are they dying for? Most of us don't even know what we are over

here fighting for anymore.

``I guess I just wanted to tell the side of a soldier because no one

else will do it.''

And I say to Mr. President, please listen to Congress. Please listen

to the American people, and please listen to these soldiers.