I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for being

generous with his time. I also want to sincerely thank the gentleman

from North Carolina for his effort to resolve the issue successfully

and for bringing those of us who are speaking here this morning

together and for organizing this time.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote for this resolution for many reasons

that I will explain, but this resolution is not a retreat from Iraq.

This resolution is understanding the new phase that we find ourselves

in with the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism. So it is a step

forward in the right direction.

I want to begin by commending our American troops and the

intelligence community for their bravery, their professionalism and

their stunning competence in Iraq and Afghanistan under very difficult

circumstances. Those young men and women have eliminated terrorist

training camps and gotten rid of Saddam Hussein and his band of

terrorists, who for years have brutalized the Iraqi people and many

people, many thousands of people in the region.

They have eliminated the potential for weapons of mass destruction,

these young men and women, and we are proud of that. The Taliban is

disbanded and al Qaeda is on the run. These are our troops and the

intelligence community.

Where are we now? We find ourselves now, the war on Iraq, and the

global war on terrorism, in a new phase, the President understands that

phase. The Congress is grasping with that phase. We now know the war in

Iraq is in a new phase, and a global war on terror continues, so how do

we respond?

How do we approach this new phase? Let's look at the recent past.

Let's go back to the 1950s. President Eisenhower said, for the United

States to be safe and secure we need a strong military, the best

intelligence, and consensus and dialogue.

President Eisenhower implemented all of those practices, especially

after Nikita Khrushchev pounded his shoe at the podium of the United

Nations and pointed to the Western diplomats and said, ``we will bury

you.''

Eisenhower's response? He invited Khrushchev to the United States for

a dialogue.

President Kennedy was told there were armed nuclear warheads in Cuba.

What did President Kennedy do? Proceed with dialogue and talking with

the Soviets. We did not go to war. Nixon went to China.

Who during that period of time did we not have a dialogue with? It

was Ho Chi Minh; 53,000 Americans died in the Ten Thousand Day War.

Hundreds of thousands were wounded, and millions of Vietnamese were

killed. What if we had a dialogue with Ho Chi Minh about ending the

French colonial period and encouraging Vietnam to have self-

determination, that which we fought for in World War II? What would

have happened?

Fifty-three years of dialogue with North Korea just now may be

yielding results, 53 years of dialogue. Ask yourself this question. Is

a century of dialogue without resolution better than one day on the

battlefield? Don't be quick to answer that, but ask that question to

yourself.

The world, rich and poor, the people of the world, are intimately

familiar with American history, especially with the following man. They

know the words of Thomas Jefferson. ``We hold these truths to be self-

evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their

Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life,

liberty, the pursuit of happiness.''

They know Lincoln's words, ``with malice toward none and charity for

all.'' They know Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, words, ``You should be

judged by the content of your character.''

America is the race of races. The melting pot has become a common

heritage with the world's people. Our enemies are ignorance, arrogance

and dogma. Monstrous certainty has been and is the tragedy of mankind.

The new phase of the war in Iraq and the global war on terror not only

includes the military, it not only includes the intelligence community,

but in this instance it must include a surge of diplomacy, to integrate

the Middle Eastern countries in a diplomatic dialogue about the

stability of the region, including reconciliation, economics, trade

issues, medical and educational exchanges, et cetera, et cetera. This

must be and is a necessary part of that complete strategy to make

America safe and secure. The blueprint, the starting point, is to vote

``yes'' today on today's resolution.

The second phase of that is to understand the words which is the

blueprint for this new phase, the Iraq Study Group. What do we do with

U.S. troops in the Middle East? There are strong recommendations for

that. What do we do about training and equipping the Iraqi Army and

making them prepared? That is in the Iraq Study Group.

What is the framework for cooperation with the Iraq people, the Iraq

Government, and the problems with sectarian violence? That is in the

Iraq Study Group.

What about a new diplomatic initiative with all of Iraq's neighbors,

including Iran and Syria? How about consultation with Congress? Vote

for this resolution, and we can move on to end the violence, the

sectarian chaos, the foolish, bitter electronic exchanges between

countries, electronic exchanges, instead of face-to-face conversations.

That effort, fully implemented, will bring our troops home sooner.

They will have a brighter future, and the generations to come for the

people in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We as Members of Congress are at the controls. We are able to control

the policy. How? With our vote. Do we know how to use the military? Do

we know how to use the intelligence community? Do we know the

possibilities of consensus and dialogue with all the countries of the

region? If our young men and women are brave enough to go into Iraq and

Afghanistan, then we as Members of Congress must be brave enough and

informed to start a dialogue in Damascus, in Tehran, in the entire

region, to hasten peace.

The first step is an ``aye'' vote on this resolution.