Mr. Speaker, it is a very dark time for the Nation. The

President is at an unpopularly low rating, unprecedented in our

history. We are involved in an unpopular war. Elected officials on both

sides are calling for us to get out of the war. I am not talking about

this war, I am talking about the civil war, when President Lincoln had

the courage and the vision to hold onto that concept that we must

let liberty triumph. And because of his courage, we have a Nation that

has set the course for liberty for the entire world.

Exactly what are we involved in here? This is far broader than a war

in Iraq. This is a war with radical Islam. It is not the first time we

have engaged with radical Islam. The first time that comes to my

attention was 1786.

Thomas Jefferson goes to find out about the Barbary Coast. He comes

back and he reads the letter about why the Barbary pirates were

fighting everyone in that region. He buys his own book of the Koran to

understand, but that letter that he had and brought back says that it

was founded, he is talking about Islam, it was founded on the laws of

their prophet, that it was written in their Koran that all nations who

should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners; that it was

their right and duty to make war upon them wherever they could be

found. That same principle is holding today. We read it on all the Web

pages of the radical Islamists.

Now, we can wish that it weren't true. We can wish that the attacks

on the Cole did not happen. We can wish that 9/11 did not happen. But

they did. And now we are involved in a very difficult, unpopular war

with the President, again, at historic low ratings.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, in opposition to this dangerously

misguided resolution which will only embolden our enemies and

demoralize our troops.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle claim to support our

troops, and I do not discount that. I do not question their sincerity.

I question their judgment.

I will tell you that the political gymnastics that are required to

come this soon after they campaigned against stay the course, to

present a resolution that supports our troops who are in Iraq, and yet

says that we will not change the tactic, we will not increase, if we

are not going to get out, if they have turned down those resolutions

which would bring us home, and if they do not want to declare to defund

the war, if they do not want the surge, then we are involved in a

resolution today that is nonbinding, but says stay the course.

Do tell. Stay the course is what they had to campaign so hard against

in the last elections.

I served in Vietnam when elected officials were on the floor of this

House having these same conversations, and I will tell you it is

extraordinarily distressing from the point of someone serving in harm's

way to have the elected officials playing games.

My friends, if you don't want to support the effort in Iraq, you have

the majority, call the troops home. It is within your capability. Have

the courage of your convictions. Stand for what you believe. Do not put

this resolution in front of us that simply encourages our enemies and

distresses our troops.

There are those who claim that General Abizaid has said we can't win

the war. President Lincoln was faced with the same thing, generals who

listened too much to the public. He had to fire General McClellan and

replace him with General Grant.

Many recall those words of President Lincoln saying, if you will not

use the troops, sir, can I borrow them?

We have replaced the general who was in charge of Iraq with a new

general. I am sorry, but he is a troop. He is a commander. He is the

commander, he is the supreme troop in Iraq, and he says, I could use

more troops. Please, don't leave me dangling.

And yet, this Congress, with this leadership, is going to say, we

support the troops but we are not going to support the troops. The

mental gymnastics, the political gymnastics are to appease the very

shrillest of their proponents, the very shrillest of their supporters.

But everyone knows they will not be content with this nonbinding

resolution. Those supporters will be like the tiger at the door, eating

their own if it does not escalate from here.

Have the courage to bring the troops home, my friends, if you are not

going to let the generals run the war. Let the military run the war.

The greatest mistake we made in this House in Vietnam was trying to

manage it with people who are elected rather than military leaders, and

it was an abysmal failure.