I thank the gentleman from California, my friend, Ranking

Member Duncan Hunter.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to vigorously oppose and to speak against

the resolution at hand; a resolution that is being watched by friend

and foe alike; a resolution that I feel will serve to embolden those

who promote and use violence in Iraq, and across the world for that

matter; a resolution that sends a message to our troops at home and

deployed that we are not supporting the mission that we are conducting.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know of a single Member in this Chamber who is

satisfied with the existing situation in Iraq. In fact, with the

escalating violence and an increase in terrorist activity, we shouldn't

be satisfied with the situation in Afghanistan either. But Iraq has

become intensely political, and that is unfortunate. Make no mistake

about it, this is the beginning of defunding our military and our

national security.

Mr. Speaker, in this age when the Internet and global newscast are an

integral part of warfare and propaganda, it is naive to think that the

resolution is not being watched and its outcome won't be used to

further embolden the resolve of those who use indiscriminate violence

to advance their radical agenda.

When you recruit homicide bombers, they need to feel that their

ultimate sacrifice is meaningful, and I fear this resolution will be

used as an additional recruiting tool to show that our resolve is

wavering in the face of their acts.

In some instances, Members have made no secret of their desire to

defund the military. Mr. Speaker, it wasn't that long ago that our

Nation faced another global war for freedom, it was a different type of

war, but a war that was won because we held firm. There were a lot of

people who said we couldn't win; they said that pragmatism dictated we

would compromise our values and our beliefs. President Ronald Reagan

told our Nation that we needed to hold firm because ultimately our

values and beliefs would prevail in cold war then, and ``hot war'' now.

President Reagan said, ``The ultimate determinant in the struggle now

going on for the world will not be bombs and rockets but a test of

wills and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the

beliefs we cherish and the ideals to which we are dedicated.'' This

quote was in context of the cold war, but it is applicable today in our

present hot war against terrorists. This resolution shows a lack of

will to win. This resolution hurts our troops and it helps our enemies.

Mr. Speaker, similar to debates from years ago during the cold war, I

have heard speakers on the other side say, all we need is a strategy

based on diplomacy. Mr. Speaker, I am all for peace and for diplomacy

and for cooperation and for working things out, but al Qaeda is not,

suicide bombers are not, terrorist executioners are not. That is

reality, and our foreign policy has to be based on reality.

Terrorists thrive on poverty, despair, violence and fear. And the

bottom line is they cannot afford for freedom and justice to succeed.

Conversely, we cannot afford to allow freedom and justice to fail. That

is reality, and one-sided diplomacy is not a strategy. Where is the

other side's strategy for victory? There is none in this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have concerns with the situation in Iraq. No one wants

to see the Iraqis stabilize the security of their nation more than I

do. The reality is we have troops over there in harm's way. Troops from

the 82nd Airborne, stationed at Fort Bragg in my district, are part of

this surge deployment.

Mr. Speaker, they are watching. I have received their e-mails letting

me know in no uncertain terms that they are paying attention to what we

are doing today. One soldier wrote to me using this quote from the

ancient Athenians, which he thought was appropriate to this debate.

This soldier said, ``I will not disgrace the soldier's arms nor abandon

the comrade who stands at my side, but whether alone or with many, I

will fight to defend things sacred and profane. I will hand down my

country not lessened, but larger and better than I have received it.''

As my colleague from South Carolina quoted a soldier in his district

yesterday, he said, ``This is my war.'' That is a soldier's attitude

and should be our attitude. It is our war against brutal, ruthless

terrorists.

I will not support a resolution that tells our soldiers that the

United

States Congress is not supporting what they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that everyone pray for our troops, for their

safety and for their victory. May God continue to bless America and the

magnificent men and women in uniform who protect her.