Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may

consume.

In this debate on Iraq, we must always be aware that the remarks are

not to be confined only to the American people. Our words will be heard

not just by our friends but by our enemies also. They are watching to

see what America will do. No weakness of ours, no internal political

struggle will go unnoticed.

The suicide bombers, the leaders of al Qaeda, the rulers of Iran,

many others are listening, seeking encouragement for their fellow

extremists, listening for signs of our defeat.

We know from many sources that al Qaeda, the terrorists in Iraq, and

our enemies planning further attacks on us closely follow what is said

and what is done in the United States and use that knowledge to help

them calculate their next steps against us. They routinely cite

statements by U.S. sources as validation of their strategy to defeat

America.

Let me quote Muhammad Saadi, a senior leader of the Islamic jihad,

who said that talk of withdrawal from Iraq makes him feel ``proud.'' He

said: ``As Arabs and Muslims we feel proud, very proud from the great

successes of the Iraqi resistance, this success that brought the big

superpower of the world to discuss a possible withdrawal.''

They are looking for concessions of defeat, signs of weakness, and it

is within this context that we embark on this debate today.

The question before us concerns not the past but the future. Where

should our country go from here? We are not merely debating a

resolution, but we are deliberating on our Nation's future.

The war in Iraq is but a part of a far larger struggle, a global

struggle, the struggle against Islamic extremist militants. As in the

Cold War, our current struggle is one of survival. The enemy does not

mean merely to chase us away. The goal of the Islamic extremist

radicals is to destroy us. If we run, they will pursue. If we cower,

they will strike.

The choice before us is this: Do we fight and defeat the enemy, or do

we retreat and surrender? We must not fool ourselves into believing

that we can accommodate our enemies and thereby secure their

cooperation. We should not believe that the enemies' demands are

limited and reasonable and thus easily satisfied or that we can find

safety by withdrawing from the world. This strategy has been tried in

the past with catastrophic consequences.

Neville Chamberlain genuinely believed that he had brought ``peace in

our time'' by washing his hands of what he believed to be an isolated

dispute in what he termed ``a far-away country between people of whom

we know nothing.'' That country was Czechoslovakia, and Chamberlain's

well-intentioned efforts to withdraw Britain from the problems in that

far-away region only ensured that an immensely larger threat was

thereby unleashed.

The threat of Hitler did not appear suddenly out of a vacuum. The

challenges that we face today thus have been building for many years.

We experienced the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993.

The destruction of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the bombing of

the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1998, the attack on the USS Cole

in 2000, and then most dramatically the attack on our Nation on 9/11.

As these attacks built over the years, we did little in response. Our

enemies came to believe that they could strike us with impunity and

that we would shrink from our responsibilities, from defending our

interests, that we would not stand up for our very own survival. They

felt safe in planning for larger attacks.

Now our fight is truly one of global proportions. Some may not want

to believe it. The terrorists, however, are certain to believe it. As

stated by senior al Qaeda leader al Zawahiri, `` . . . Jihad in Iraq

requires several incremental goals. The first stage: expel the

Americans from Iraq. The second stage: establish an Islamic authority

or emirate, then develop it and support it until it achieves the level

of a caliphate, over as much territory as you can, to spread its power

in Iraq.''

He continues: ``The third stage: extend the jihad wave to the secular

countries neighboring Iraq. The fourth stage: It may coincide with what

came before, the clash with Israel, because Israel was established only

to challenge any new Islamic entity.''

These are the words of al Zawahiri, not my words. And this al Qaeda

leader went on to say: ``The whole world is an open field for us.''

What then are the consequences of a U.S. withdrawal and surrender?

The terrorists, our mortal enemies, will have demonstrated that they

have defeated us, the strongest power on Earth. They will have proven

that our enemies only have to make the cost too high for us and that we

will give up. The result would be an extraordinary boost to their

morale and standing in the world, resulting from such a historic and

momentous accomplishment on their part. They will become heroes in the

minds of millions. They will be inundated with recruits, with

financing, with support of all types.

And they will be eager to go after us.

A leader of the terrorist organization Islamic Jihad recently said of

an American withdrawal from Iraq, ``There is no chance that the

resistance will stop.'' He said an American withdrawal from Iraq would

``prove that resistance is the most important tool and that this tool

works. The victory of the Iraqi revolution will mark an important step

in the history of the region and in the attitude regarding the United

States.''

These are his words, not mine.

We know that the terrorists would draw these conclusions because they

have done so before when we recoiled in the face of terrorist attacks.

In bin Laden's 1996 Declaration of Jihad and other statements, bin

Laden repeatedly pointed to America's weakness being its low threshold

for pain. As evidence, he pointed to the U.S. withdrawal from Somalia

in 1993 because of casualties from attacks by al Qaeda and its allies.

Bin Laden said, ``When tens of your soldiers were killed in minor

battles and one American pilot was dragged in the streets of Mogadishu,

you left the area carrying disappointment, humiliation, defeat and your

dead with you. The extent of your impotence and your weakness became

very clear.''

These are bin Laden's words, not mine.

We witnessed the consequences of Somalia and the ensuing inaction.

However, the implications for withdrawal and surrender in Iraq could be

even greater. There would be an intensification of the violence.

As the National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq recently affirmed, ``If

Coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly during the term of this

estimate, we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a

significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in

Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi Government, and have

adverse consequences for national reconciliation.''

Iraq would become, as one of my Democratic colleagues said in

December of 2005, a ``snakepit for terrorists.''

Sunni Arabs throughout the Middle East would certainly view the

resulting situation as a Shiite victory in Iraq and, in turn, as a win

for the regime in Iran. Neighboring countries would likely seek to

prevent Iranian domination of Iraq and the region by providing

financial and other support, including potentially troops, to anti-

Iranian factions.

It would be interpreted as a defeat of the U.S. and would thus

strengthen rogue regimes in Syria and Iran. Iran would be free to

expand its influence throughout the Middle East, including its long-

term effort to dominate the Persian Gulf and the world's oil supply.

Iran's sponsorship of terrorist organizations such as Hamas and

Hezbollah would likely increase, thereby ensuring the murder of

countless civilians and a further destabilization of countries in the

region and indeed beyond.

Let us not forget that Iran's proxy, Hezbollah, twice attacked in our

own hemisphere, in Argentina, in the mid-1990s. Let us not forget that

in 2002 a court case in the United States found that one of two men

were convicted of financing Hezbollah of $2 million in illegal activity

here in the United States and that last year an individual from Detroit

was charged with supporting Hezbollah financially and was described by

the United States Attorney in the case as a ``fighter, recruiter and a

fundraiser.''

Let us not forget that Iran is a nation believed to be pursuing

nuclear weapons, and thus leaving the region vulnerable to Iranian

domination, and that would have grave consequences for the U.S.

security priorities.

Surrendering Iraq over to the terrorists would erode the trust of the

U.S. in that region and affect our critical regional interests in the

entire neighborhood. Our allies, such as Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain and

Egypt may become reluctant to continue their cooperation with us, which

currently includes providing access to their facilities, logistical

support that we need to protect our interests in the region.

The damage would not be confined, however, to the Middle East. Our

enemies would be encouraged to join forces in a coalition to directly

challenge the United States and expand their efforts to undermine us

and our allies.

It is already happening. Venezuela's strongman Hugo Chavez is openly

forming an alliance with Iran, and recently called on Iran and

Venezuela to join forces to ``finish off the U.S. empire,'' quoting

him.

Let us consider the consequences of withdrawing and surrendering Iraq

to Islamic militant extremists. As James Woolsey, the former Director

of the Central Intelligence Agency, has emphasized, ``We have to do our

damndest to win this thing, in spite of the history of mistakes in

tactics and strategy. The stakes are too high to do otherwise. The

whirlwind we will reap if we lose means that we owe it to the world and

to future generations to do everything humanly possible to avoid giving

the Islamists the encouragement they will certainly obtain if they

win.''

Mr. Speaker, this is not just an abstract policy discussion for me.

This is a subject close to my heart. My stepson Doug and his wife

Lindsay are both marine pilots who served in Iraq alongside many other

brave Americans. They understand the consequences of defeat. They

recognize the deadly enemy that we are facing.

Lindsay will soon be deployed to Afghanistan, in just a few weeks,

where, depending on our actions in this Chamber this week, she could

face a more deadly enemy. All of us, all of us long for a world in

which the mortal challenge of Islamic militant extremism does not

exist. But that world is a fantasy, and that is the world that this

resolution seems to address.

Many times in our history we have met with great challenges, and many

of them seemed insurmountable. And yet every time we rose to face them,

and we prevailed. We are faced once again with an overwhelming

challenge, that of Islamic militant extremists focused on our

destruction and on world domination. There is no path backward, there

is no retreat, because that will only bring disaster.

I am saddened that some in this Chamber have felt the need on this

floor to characterize the decision of our young men and women to join

the military as being motivated by money, by bonuses and by other

financial benefits, rather than their patriotism.

My stepson Doug and my daughter-in-law Lindsay are both college

graduates. Doug is a graduate of the University of Miami. Lindsay is a

graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and has a master's in English. They

have many, many opportunities they could have pursued. They chose to

serve their country, because they and many others are patriots. They

did not do it for bonuses. They did not do it for money.

Let us not just support our troops. Let us support their mission. And

their mission is to defeat the Islamic extremists.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.