Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for

yielding, and Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

I want to say this, that if the troops in Baghdad watched what

Congress was doing today, they would be outraged. Fortunately for us in

the Free World, they do not sit around and watch C-SPAN and what silly

politicians do. They live in a real world where there are real bullets.

This resolution, on the other hand, is not real. It is a political

whip check designed for press releases. It is nonbinding.

The Democrat National Chairman, Howard Dean, famously said: ``The

idea that we are going to win the war in Iraq is an idea which is just

plain wrong.''

Speaker Pelosi called the war ``a grotesque mistake.''

So if the situation in Iraq is so hopeless, and unwinnable, why are

we messing around with nonbinding resolutions? If the war is a lost

cause and there is no longer an American interest, why do we not just

go ahead and get out of there now? It is not worth another life or

another dime.

Conversely, if the cause is worthwhile, should we not fight to win?

Nonbinding resolutions, Mr. Speaker, are great for the Democrat club

back home, but for those of us who serve in Congress, we are the law of

the land. We are elected to pass laws, fund wars and influence

policies. Our opinions, as expressed in nonbinding resolutions about

what should happen in Sudan or Israel or Cuba, they are appropriate,

but when it comes to American soil, our job is to pass real legislation

and make real laws. We do not have to vent our frustration. We can

change policy.

This week's resolution is just a cover-your-rear-end political design

to give the legislative branch a chance to say I told you so. But, Mr.

Speaker, as you know, like it or not, a real vote is coming.

It is coming in the form of the fiscal year 2008 supplemental bill.

In that supplemental resolution, $5.6 billion is designed to pay for

21,500 new troops in Iraq. All Members will have a chance to vote on

that supplemental bill; and as you know, an amendment can be offered to

delete the $5.6 billion. A ``no'' vote would be against it, and a

``yes'' vote would be to say we are against having the troops there and

we are not going to pay for it. That is what is real.

I think in November the electorate made an adjustment. They did not

like what the Republican House was doing, and I certainly understand

that. I think we did fail on many levels to deliver the products which

we promised we would deliver to the people. But the Democrats are in

the same situation. It was an anti-war fever that swept so many of them

into office, but here we are with a nonbinding resolution.

Now, I understand that it is frustrating. I serve, as you do, on the

Defense Committee; and as you know, many times we do not get all the

information that we want. We have heard, as Mr. Boyd said, general

after general after admirals after captains telling us we do not need

more troops in Iraq, and now they are saying that they do. We have also

heard the President say the decisions for military changes in Iraq will

be made in Baghdad, not in Washington, DC, and I hope that is the case

with this situation.

I am very frustrated about it, but one thing we have been told

unequivocally by those same generals and admirals and Secretaries of

the Navy and Army and Secretary of Defense and today from the

ambassadors from Jordan and Egypt is that if America withdraws from

Iraq at this time, it is sure to bring chaos and destruction. That will

lead to a full-scale sectarian war which could lead to a division. It

could be so chaotic that the United States of America would have to

return to Iraq in larger force numbers than we have now. It could lead

to Iraq becoming a nation state controlled by terrorists or terrorist

sympathizers and that would be in control of the third largest oil

reserve in the world.

Now, we have seen what Mr. Putin and Hugo Chavez down in Venezuela

are doing with their petro-dollars and all the anti-American ill will

they are spreading around the globe. Would you really want to empower a

bunch of terrorists with those kinds of oil revenues?

Then the other thing we are told is if you pull out immediately or

quickly what happens to U.S. credibility abroad? As we are dealing with

China, who very recently shot down a satellite, we are very concerned

about that. North Korea, we are at the negotiating table with them

right now. And Russia seems to be slipping away from democracy and

going back to some of its older ways that we are worried about. As I

have just said, Hugo Chavez is spreading bad street money all over

South America, which is not a good sign.

And then finally, Mr. Speaker, if we pull out, what does it say to

the American servicemen who have already lost their lives? Hey, sorry,

we did not mean it; your sacrifice was not worth us gutting it out, if

you will.

You know, it is interesting, the President has been criticized for

``staying the course,'' and he is no longer staying the course. Who is

supporting staying the course by a ``yes'' vote to this nonbinding

resolution, but the Democrat leadership and the Democrat Party.

If you are saying it is a lost cause but we support you, how are you

saying, no, we are not going to send recruits? It doesn't make sense.

You just can't have it both ways. This is staying the course. The

President no longer wants to stay the course. He is saying let's plus-

up the numbers, let's divide Baghdad nine different ways. And that is

something the RAND Corporation has called for as it has studied the

history of nations that have insurgencies. Subdividing the areas is an

effective way to fight insurgencies. The President has said let's go

into al Anbar province; let's go into Sadr city. Those are changing of

the course.

Mr. Speaker, a ``yes'' vote is a vote to stay the course; a

nonbinding resolution is an insult to those who are in harm's way. If

you truly believe that the war is a lost cause, why mess around with a

nonbinding resolution? A ``no'' vote to this is a vote for change, and

I believe it sends a stronger signal to the troops that we support you

and we are sending new recruits to help you finish and complete this

job.