Madam Speaker, I raise today to voice my support for this

resolution. For too long now, under a Republican-controlled Congress

and a Republican-controlled Senate, the President has been given a free

hand and a blank check to conduct this war in Iraq, for far too long

without any oversight, for far too long without any accountability from

this the equal branch of government, this U.S. Congress. Madam Speaker,

and because of the Republicans' unwillingness and the Democrats'

inability to question the President or his administration about the

conduct of this war, we now find ourselves embroiled in a civil war on

a foreign soil.

We are not seen as liberators. We are seen as an occupying force on a

foreign land. We are seen as an occupying army by the Iraqi people.

Madam Speaker, we are trapped in a deadly situation where American

soldiers and Iraqi citizens are targeted for murder, mayhem and

maiming.

Many of our top generals and experts in this field have testified

that the American troop presence is the biggest, largest, most

provocative catalyst to the violence in Iraq. The Iraqi people are very

suspicious of this administration and the motives of this President.

And they do not view foreign soldiers in their cities, in their towns,

in their homes as something that they desire.

So if the Iraqi people no longer want us in their country, and if the

military objective, which was supposed to be the toppling of Saddam

Hussein has been achieved, then why do we still have hundreds of

thousands of our troops there?

Why on Earth are we sending more troops to this unstable and volatile

area when it is obvious that the solution to this problem is not a

military one, but a political one?

Madam Speaker, if we want to get out of this hole, then we must first

stop digging. It is well past time for this President to finally

understand that he cannot solve the world's problems with brute force,

the American military, and our boys' and girls' lives. We must begin a

serious and political and diplomatic effort in this region to hold the

Iraq Government responsible for protecting its own people and to

solicit comments from Iraq's neighbors as well as our friends and

allies around the world to help stabilize Iraq and to rebuild that

devastated country.

The Iraqi people do not want to see more American troops coming into

their homes and into their cities. They want their chosen, duly elected

leaders to step up to the plate and to protect them as they were

elected to do. And they want their foreign occupiers to leave their

homeland.

Madam Speaker, this is not hard to comprehend. Would we not want the

same thing if a foreign military came and occupied our cities, our

States, our Nation, our homes?

This war is draining American resources and stretching our military

to the point where we will be unable to protect ourselves against any

real threat to our national security. We know that to date over 3,000

American soldiers have lost their lives in Iraq, and more than $500

billion has been appropriated for this unjust and this misguided war.

Yet dispute these costs, neither the American people nor this

Congress has been given a reasonable explanation or reasonable grounds

for keeping American troops in Iraq to do the job that Iraqi soldiers

should be doing for themselves.

Madam Speaker, because of our grave missteps, our enormous

miscalculation, the situation in Iraq has steadily declined. And there

is no evidence that increasing the number of American soldiers at this

point will do anything other than provide more targets to the Iraqi

insurgents and make the situation in Iraq even more volatile.

Madam Speaker, after being wrong on so many counts time and time

again, I believe the stakes in this war are too high for us to continue

to put blind trust in this administration. The world in which we live

deserves more

Madam Speaker, I am against this troop surge because the American

people and the Iraqi people want truth surge. They want strategy, not

more of the same.

It is the job and the responsibility of this Congress to reflect the

will of the people who have put us here, and demand that the

Administration bring an end to this ill-fated war, not escalate it.

Believe me, Madam Speaker, it brings me no pleasure to have this

debate and publicly disagree with the President, but my solemn oath to

my constituents, as well as my conscience and integrity prevent me from

doing anything less.

It is time for us to end our occupation in Iraq. I urge all of my

colleagues to join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 63.