Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank

Speaker Pelosi for providing what we never had in the last session, and

that is ample opportunity to fully discuss Iraq, where we are and what

we ought to be doing about it.

I have always been told that when you start with a faulty premise,

you will inevitably reach a faulty conclusion. And the rationale given

for entering the war was faulty. There were no weapons of mass

destruction, no connection to 9/11. Therefore, we never should have

invaded Iraq in the first place.

But then after the invasion, the occupation of Iraq has been

tragically mismanaged. Civilian military leadership ignored the advice

of senior commanders on requirements for preventing chaos in the

aftermath of the invasion. As a result, our extended presence in Iraq

continues to worsen the situation, not only in Iraq, but in the entire

region.

Terrorist incidents continue to flare up around the world, from

England to Spain, from Indonesia to Jordan. Chaos and intolerance in

the form of civil war now has secured a deadly grip on Iraq. The policy

of escalation has failed, and failed again, to loosen that horrendous

grip. The Iraqi people want us to leave, and so do the American people,

especially those in my congressional district, and especially those

that I encounter at churches, schools, synagogues, town hall meetings

and on the street.

Madam Speaker, democracy and self-government cannot be imposed on

Iraq by any foreign power, including us, the United States of America.

Our troops have done everything we have asked of them, even when we

have failed to equip and protect them. The problem does not lie with

our troops, but with the distorted world view of this administration

and the military and diplomatic doctrine of preemptive war as a

solution to global political problems.

We must do everything possible to protect our troops and we must do

everything in our power to take care of them when they return home.

It is impossible, Madam Speaker, to build a coalition against

terrorism by attempting to unilaterally impose these doctrines on the

international community. We cannot undo the many mistakes which have

been made in Iraq. And when our national interests have been so

distorted, when we have so lost our direction, it is the historical,

moral, and constitutional responsibility of this Congress to set us

back on course and on the right track.

It is time to recognize that we are enmeshed in an unending, vicious

circle of escalating violence, rather than a force for peace, and that

is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 508, which would bring the force of law

to end this war.

Today we have before us a nonbinding resolution, most likely

insufficient to end the occupation. But it can help to move us in the

right direction and set us on the right path. Therefore, I support this

resolution, because it reflects the will and interests of the American

people, and I trust that this administration will abandon demagogic

calls for constantly changing notions of success and victory and awaken

to the world of reality.

Madam Speaker, it is time, it is past time, to bring our troops home.

I am told that insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over

again and expecting different results. This resolution sets us on the

right course, gives us the right direction. I urge its passage.