Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this

time.

Mr. Speaker, I will support this resolution. I will support it as an

expression of our Nation's gratitude and pride in our men and women in

uniform who have performed with brilliance and valor in Operation Iraqi

Freedom. To date, 565 Americans have given the ultimate measure of

devotion to our country in Iraq, including a young soldier from my

district, Jason C. Ford who was killed just a few days ago by a

roadside bomb, 2 weeks after arriving in Iraq.

We mourn the loss of Jason and all other fallen patriots, and extend

our most profound sympathies to their loved ones. We also pray for the

full recovery of the more than 3,200 servicemen and -women who have

been wounded there.

And to the approximately 110,000 Americans still in Iraq, we must

offer this pledge: we will do everything within our power to ensure

your success and safe return home.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution should have simply expressed the support

of this House for our Armed Forces now in harm's way. Regrettably,

however, the majority has handled this resolution in a manner which

inevitably led to division. Our troops and the American people expect

and deserve better. On a matter of the highest national importance, the

majority has undermined the democratic process in this House, treated

those who hold different views with disdain, and created a bludgeon

where it should have built a bridge. This is the same approach that has

guided the current administration's foreign policy and which has

undermined our Nation's credibility and driven many allies away from

us. This is a time to bring together, to consult, to be unanimous.

Mr. Speaker, I share the view that the Middle East and the world are

better off with Hussein in custody and his Baathist regime on the run.

But our mission in Iraq has not been accomplished. Even as we speak

here, a car bomb has rocked Baghdad and killed more than 20 people.

This comes on the heels of attacks on our troops, civilians and even

innocent worshipers. Success must be our only exit strategy. And only

when our objectives are accomplished can we say with certainty and

conviction that the world has been made safer. As today's events in

Baghdad and last week's horrific attacks in Spain make clear, this war

has not been won. Yet. But we send an unequivocal message to those who

perpetrate such madness: we will not retreat from our objective to

eliminate the source of terrorism and those who perpetrate it. The

legacy of the men and women who have committed the ultimate sacrifice

in Iraq demands that we do no less. It should also demand that we do so

united, united by common resolve and not divided by efforts to achieve

political advantage.