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

Mr. Speaker, this is the opportunity for Members of the Committee on

Armed Services to talk about our piece of this important resolution,

and that is, I think, the most gratifying part of this resolution,

which I think we can all join together on and that is commending our

great troops who have been carrying out this effort in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, from the time when they spearheaded this drive up from

Kuwait up through the choke points in Nasarea with the Marines out to

the east and the Army, the 101st Airborne and the 3rd Infantry Division

further to the west and worked up to those choke points at some places

where RPGs were coming like volleys of high-tech arrows at those

convoys of Humvees and trucks and tanks, to where they got up and went

past the bridges before they could be blown, took the positions in the

dams before the electronics could be executed to blow those places, and

launched one of the most rapid-moving attacks in the history of

warfare, with great heroism and great accomplishment, from those days

to today when our troops are in this AO, this area of operation, not as

much as attackers but in this case defenders of the new freedom of the

Iraqi people, and hooking up pipelines and sanitary systems and getting

children to school and opening up medical clinics, our people in

uniform have performed heroically.

The most important message we can send from the United States House

of Representatives is, you did a great job, America's people in

uniform. You did a wonderful job for our country. And what you are

doing has great value and

will ensure to our freedom over the coming decades as well as the

freedom of the world.

So, Mr. Speaker, we stand together and even united in commending our

troops. I am glad that my colleague, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr.

Skelton), is here as my partner on this committee to also commend the

troops for the great job that they have done.

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

let my colleagues know that all Humvees are manufactured unarmored.

They are basically big Jeeps, and this Congress has been rushing to

armor Humvees in the wake of the new threat known as the IED, the

remotely detonated device. We put some $400 million in the last

supplemental to pay for that armor.

I just would say to my colleagues, it would have been great if they

could have voted with us on that one because that is the funding

supplemental that paid for the arming of the Humvees.

Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the idea that you do not

armor vehicles because it is not done already at the factory makes no

logic to me.

I would urge the gentleman to work with me to continue to armor them,

because we are shipping steel in there now.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would just remind my colleagues if I am reading the

same resolution they are, this resolution and I quote, commends the

Members of the United States Armed Forces and Coalition forces for

liberating Iraq and expresses its gratitude for their valiant service

to our country. That is not a political statement, that is a

commendation, and it should be from all of us, Democrats and

Republicans.

I do not read politics into that, and nobody else should.

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

Let me just make a point to the gentleman who just spoke, that every

Member in this House received a personal invitation from me for

classified briefings dealing directly with our intelligence agencies

with the opportunity to ask any question they wanted to ask so that

when they made the vote on whether or not we should go into Iraq, they

could make an informed vote. I presume that the gentleman accepted that

opportunity and made an informed vote based on his own understanding of

what the situation was. Let me just reiterate that every person in

uniform in Iraq has full body armor, as does every civil servant.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

This is a picture that Mr. Stavenas of our staff took of a

reenlistment ceremony at Saddam Hussein's spider hole in Iraq. It

symbolizes the willingness of our military, our soldiers, our people in

uniform, to come back under very difficult circumstances and reenlist

and continue to fight this wonderful fight for the United States and

for freedom. And our soldiers have done a great job for us, and this

resolution is commending those soldiers. All those people who wore the

uniform of the United States supported our country at a time of need

and are continuing to undertake the biggest deployment right now,

redeployment, since World War II.

Let us all stand behind them, Republicans and Democrats, cast off the

partisan positions that have been taken today on the House floor, and

let them know that we support them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

time.

I just have to remind the distinguished minority leader that, in

fact, every troop who is in country now and every civil servant has

body armor in the fight, in the fight. Every frontline troop moving up

to Baghdad had body armor, and I would say further to the gentlewoman

that the Humvees, the jeeps that we have, have never been manufactured

with body armor until very recently to meet the new challenge of the

IEDs, and we are armoring them in rapid fashion, and many Members on

her side voted against the supplemental appropriation that provided

both body armor and armor for the Humvees.

Mr. Speaker, it was a frontline troop that moved into the

major assault, going up through, leaving Kuwait, last year starting on

this anniversary, moving up through Iraq.

Every frontline troop. That meant every troop that was in

the front line had both types of body armor; that is, the old type of

body armor and the new.

Every one. When they moved across the line, every

frontline troop had it. Then what we did was we gave body armor over

the last several months not only to the troops that were the frontline

troops but every single troop.

Every frontline troop had it when they moved across the

line.

When they moved across the line from Kuwait.