Mr. Speaker, the measure before us contains many

consentaneous American thoughts: Recognition that Saddam was a despot

of tyrannical proportions; support for a process of democratic self-

governance in Iraq; and, profoundly, appreciation for the sacrifice and

commitment of Americans serving in our armed forces in these very

troubling, indeed dangerous, times.

But as widely accepted as these notions are, care must be taken in

this debate to underscore what this resolution is not. It cannot be

read either as a Gulf of Tonkin-like resolution giving the Executive a

blank check for future actions or considered an indication of

Congressional approval of executive action to date.

Many in Congress, perhaps a majority, would be willing to vote for a

more expansive resolution, but such is not before us today.

Nonetheless, the subject matter of this resolution necessitates a

review of what has transpired since the Congress, without my support,

authorized military intervention in Iraq a year and a half ago.

All of us recognize that Iraq is a judgmental quagmire. Thoughtful

Americans are conflicted. The President has a case for the actions he

has taken. But I feel obliged to make clear why I continue not to find

it compelling and indicate, in as constructive a way as I am able, the

problems that a lengthy occupation may yield and present a theoretical

framework and the case for timely disengagement.

Perspective is difficult to apply to current events or for that

matter life itself. But it is important to attempt to frame the

discussion of the war in which we are engaged in relation to our

history, to the development of knowledge (particularly science), and to

our relations with other countries.

First our history. In the broadest sense the political history of

America has encompassed four great debates. The first was the question

of whether a country could be established based on the rights of man.

The second was about definitions: whether the concept of ``man''

included individuals who were neither male nor pale. It took over a

century, a civil war and suffrage and civil rights movements to bring

full meaning to the universal language of the Declaration of

Independence. With courage and sacrifice Americans finally came

together to embrace the democratic notion that consent of the governed

lacked legitimacy unless all individuals of all backgrounds had rights

of citizenship.

The third debate is about opportunity, whether individual rights can

be protected if every citizen doesn't have a fair crack at the American

dream. There are many on-going elements of the opportunity debate,

which in the 20th century was symbolized by the New Deal initiatives of

Franklin Roosevelt and the counter-weight of the Reagan revolution. But

I would like to emphasize an aspect of this debate which gets little

attention because it is taken for granted, and that is the role of

public education. All young Americans not only have access to public

education, they are required by law to attend public schools or

comparable alternatives. As society becomes more complicated,

educational opportunity becomes increasingly central to advancing

social opportunity. And as we look at the narrow schooling provided by

madrasses abroad it becomes apparent that how and what others teach has

relevance to the security of Americans at home.

The fourth debate is symbolized by Hiroshima and Nagasaki and

revolves around the question of whether any right can be valid if it is

not underpinned by a right to peace.

In these debates the role of foreign policy is critical, and even

when we've looked inward it has been with an eye to establishing a

shining city-state on a hill, a beacon for all.

The greatest legislated act in American and perhaps human history is

the Declaration of Independence. The universality of its principles

constitutes the cornerstone of historic American idealism in foreign as

well as domestic policy.

As architect of the Declaration, Jefferson--while never a member of

Congress--was our greatest legislator. And as the architect of the

Louisiana Purchase, he stands as our greatest

diplomat-president. The precept implicit in the Declaration and the

Louisiana Purchase is the notion of individual rights and collective

decision-making by a people entrusted with the capacity to make

sovereign decisions.

Jefferson was the philosophical godson of John Locke, who borrowed

from Thomas Hobbes the 17th century paradigm of a state of Nature

where, according to Hobbes, life was nasty, brutish and short.

Hobbes had a pessimistic view of human nature. Self-centered man

could not escape from the jungle of human relations. Locke, on the

other hand, was an optimist. He also assumed that man was self-

centered, but, unlike Hobbes, he believed that individuals were

rational enough to recognize the necessity of accommodating the self-

interest of others. Civil society--the condition where rules would

govern disputes and third-party arbitration would exist--was thus

possible as well as necessary.

Whether or not the theoretical constructs that political philosophers

relied on three centuries ago have relevance to real life on the

planet, then or now, the progress of science has made man's efforts to

protect the rights of individuals and society more difficult today. In

one of the most profound social observations of the 20th century,

Einstein noted that splitting the atom changed everything save our mode

of thinking.

Physics has brought us nuclear energy and perhaps a way to help live

a modern life without reliance on fossil fuels. Biology has brought us

the capacity to extend the life of man by several and perhaps many

decades. But just as splitting the atom has a dark side--nuclear

weapons--splitting genes has ominous implications, too--the ability to

manufacture diseases for which there may be no antidote. Hence the

obvious: at no time in human history is there a greater obligation for

people in public life to appeal to the higher rather than lower angels

of our nature.

This is particularly the case as the world has smallened and friction

between peoples has increased in economics, politics and, most

profoundly, religion.

Perhaps the most thoughtful speech ever given in Iowa was delivered

four decades ago by the Oxford historian, Arnold Toynbee. A decade

earlier, Winston Churchill chose a small Midwestern college in Fulton,

Missouri, to warn of the dangers of Soviet expansionism; an ``Iron

Curtain,'' he said, had descended on Eastern Europe. Toynbee picked

Grinnell College to chastise Marxists for shallowly looking at history

through the lens of economic determinism and Americans for assuming, in

part because of the civil rights movement then underway, that the most

contentious issues in the world related to race. Toynbee argued that at

this stage in history conflict would more likely erupt because of

religious differentiations than economic or racial ones. As we look at

the Middle East, at Northern Ireland, at the Balkans, at the divisions

between Pakistan and India, Toynbee's observation appears to be

vindicated.

Expanding on Toynbee, Samuel Huntington of Harvard has propounded a

theory of international relations over the past several decades that

suggests that the next great wars are less likely to represent battles

between countries than clashes between various civilizations.

Given Toynbee's predictions and Huntington's civilization-clash

paradigm, it is appropriate to return to Jefferson, who at the public

level strove assiduously to protect individual freedom of religion and

at the private level believed that what mattered most was not nuanced

differences between religions or denominations, but the moral threads

common to all creeds. In terms of guides to individual behavior, it is

impressive, for instance, that the Ten Commandments underpin Islam as

well as Judaism and Christianity. And the Confucian doctrine of

``shu,'' which asserts that moral behavior should be premised on not

doing unto others what one would not have done to oneself, is an

inverted kind of Golden Rule.

Despite the fact that history is rife with examples where religious

differentiations have caused and intensified conflicts, there is no

credible substitute for the constructive role of faith-based

convictions. Conflict may be envisioned, but it can be constrained if

individuals are taught the most esoteric of precepts: loving, or at

least not hating, one's neighbor.

Ironically, genocide, which is disproportionately a 20th century

phenomenon, is about weapons of lesser lethality: machetes, bullets,

poisonous gas.

But if mankind can't prevent killing up close, the question must be

pondered whether there can be any optimism that the world can avoid a

cataclysmic exchange from afar of weapons of mass destruction, which

would make the greatest crime of mankind to date, genocide, the second-

to-last crime in human history. It is simply a short stop from

genocide--the killing one at a time of millions--to ``global-cide''--

the end in a single stroke of all life on the planet.

In recognition of the 20th century's experience with Holocaust and

other brutal genocides, from Cambodia to Rwanda, we have no choice

except to change our mode of thinking. Man's instinct to hate must be

curbed and social wisdom applied to the new challenges science has

thrown at man.

In this context, I want to stress a second challenge of science that

has nothing to do with war and arms making but is clearly the largest

foreign policy issue of our day. It is the problem of disease. In Iraq

more than 500 Americans and perhaps as many as 20,000 Iraqis have been

killed in the past year. But over the last two decades 20 million

people have died of AIDS and 40 million are infected with HIV. In

Africa, Southeast Asia, and Southern Russia, AIDS has hurdled well

beyond the groups considered most vulnerable in the U.S. In many

countries children are infected through mothers at birth and in several

countries a 15-year-old girl is far more likely to have the disease

than a 15-year-old boy. We simply must expand resources to stop this

disease abroad before it stops our families at home.

Not that everything in the world is dark or unraveling. Promising

political breakthroughs are occurring between India and Pakistan; in

the civil war in Sri Lanka; in Libya, where Muammar Khaddafi may be

giving up a quest for nuclear weapons; and even with North Korea, as

six-party talks unfold. Several of these bits of good international

news are developing without a central U.S. role; several will require

our leadership. My only advice to the Executive is to meet every

positive step of others with at least two steps of our own. Progressive

change from suspect leaders cannot be sustained if peoples of various

societies are not convinced that America prefers extending carrots to

applying bullying tactics. We simply can't wait for tomorrow to respond

to good omens today. This is especially true of a country like Libya

where backsliding is so easy. It may be more difficult with the hermit

country--North Korea--simply because paranoia and anti-Americanism run

so irrationally deep in the people as well as the government. But

constructive steps, especially of a humanitarian dimension, can be

taken.

Iowa also has brought some good news to the world. In January I

attended the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, and a

Conference on the Prevention of Genocide in Stockholm, Sweden. In

conversations with Europeans the depth of anti-American sentiment

becomes quickly evident. But when asked what state I represent, I was

impressed with the sincerity of the positive responses when I indicated

I was from Iowa. Everyone knew of Iowa because of the caucuses. In Iowa

the caucus process seems a bit mysterious. In other states it is very

mysterious, and in Europe it is a full blown mystery. But people in

Europe were deeply impressed that individuals seeking the most

important political position in the world had to come to the homes and

schools and offices of private citizens who, with real care, reviewed

their credentials and platforms.

For many years I have had reservations about the caucus system

because the ballot is not secret and because participation is not as

large as in a traditional primary. But I feel obligated to reconsider

and, as a Republican, must tip my hat to the Iowa Democrats for the

thoughtfulness with which they advanced American democracy and

spotlighted our values for the world. Abroad, people followed but did

not necessarily identify with the individual candidates, but everyone

was impressed with the process and the care with which citizens carried

out their duties.

It is instructive to put the current tension in transatlantic

relations in historical perspective. With regard to the profoundest

issue--war and peace--attitudes on each side of the ocean have come

full circle over the five centuries of interaction.

The U.S. was founded by immigrants seeking refuge from religious

persecution and a spate of seemingly senseless wars among European

countries and principalities. The new Americans sought to distance

themselves from the violence and religious intolerance of the

Continent. It was with the greatest reluctance that in 1917 a pioneer

country, which had been convulsed with the magnitude of a westward

moving Manifest Destiny, determined that blocking a Kaiser's ambitions

called for intervention in European affairs.

In the wake of a war trumpeted to end all wars, America retreated

into political isolation in the 1920's. After inspiring its creation,

we refused to join the League of Nations; and after expanding trade in

industrial and agricultural products, we succumbed to economic

protectionism in the 1930's. Only a direct attack on our territory

caused us to enter World War II.

Today, it is Europe which is looking inward, pre-occupied with its

manifest destiny, political integration made feasible by a growing

economic union. Increasingly secular Europeans desire to separate

themselves from an America that appears to them to be too unilateralist

and quick to go to war, too fundamentalist and

thus blind to tolerance, and too simplistic to realize that conflicts

with religious overtones are the most traumatic to manage.

When speaking to constituents of the rationale for and against the

Iraq War, I have over the past couple of years referenced a set of

books that held particular currency in the 1960's: the Alexandria

Quartet by Lawrence Durrell. Each of the four books describes the same

set of events in inter-war Egypt from the perspective of a different

character. While the events are the same, the stories that unfold are

profoundly different, causing the reader to recognize that one person's

perspective is at best a snapshot of reality. A clear picture cannot be

pieced together without looking through the lens of a multiplicity of

eyes and experiences.

The Moslem experience gives substantially less weight than the

Western experience to the two cataclysmic wars of the 20th century.

Despite Lawrence's involvement in Arabia and the battles between Allied

forces and Rommel's tanks, the engagements in the Middle East and North

Africa were skirmishes compared with the struggles in Europe and the

Far East. Not only do Moslems see the 20th century differently from

Westerners, but Europeans and Americans have drawn different strategic

parallels in the application of common experience to current challenges

in the Middle East.

In the immediate aftermath of the First World War, historians and

political strategists in Europe rightly concluded that the European

alliance system had been too rigid and the assassination of a

relatively minor figure, an archduke, should not have precipitated a

war of such devastating consequences. Hence European leaders in the

1930's falsely concluded that historical wisdom necessitated initial

accommodation with Hitler's adventurism. Too little flexibility caused

one war; too little spine led to Munich. In the current context,

President Bush sees himself as Churchill rather than Chamberlain, but

Europeans see 9/11 as more analogous to the shots fired at Archduke

Ferdinand than as a cause for a doctrine of preemption or war with

Iraq, a war that could too easily spring into a clash of civilizations.

Second guessing is always conjectural because history gives few second

chances. Unlike football, downs aren't repeated.

Accordingly, the challenge today on both sides of the Atlantic is to

put debate about going to war behind and work together to figure out

how we proceed from here. A lot of polite observations have been made

that European leaders seem less angry about American decisions related

to Iraq this year compared to the differences expressed during the pre-

war buildup. This may appear that way on the surface, but my sense is

that European judgment, if anything, is more solidified and definitive

today. Europeans may have become resigned that events have unfolded

without their concurrence. By the same token, frustration that their

advice has been discounted has caused anti-American anger to

metastasize into anti-American smugness. Europeans believe that their

skepticism has been vindicated by events. The stark good-versus-evil

clarity that Washington policy makers seek appears to Europeans to be

un-nuanced, unsophisticated, and unappreciative of differing judgments.

Americans countenance criticism of our President and his policies by

fellow Americans, but we are not so tolerant of foreign dissent. The

assumption in Washington is that Continental leaders deliberately

sought to undercut U.S. leadership in the world community and that, in

particular, the refusal of the French and Germans to support the

President's position in the Security Council and NATO has made matters

more dangerous for our troops and reconciliation more difficult in the

current post-war setting.

On our side of the Atlantic, the sense exists that French and German

political judgment has not only been at variance with American ideas

but that a concerted effort was made on the Continent to triangulate

the terrorist challenge and take advantage of America's dilemma. By

distancing themselves from Washington, Paris and Bonn are seen to be

encouraging the re-direction of Moslem discord. Whereas the rhetoric of

Osama Bin Laden and other extremists was initially anti-Western, it is

now more exclusively anti-U.S. The opportunity to transplant America's

commercial as well as political position in parts of the world consumed

with anti-Americanism appears not to have been lost on the European

political-industrial elite.

With all of the attention given to the new transatlantic tensions,

the implications of the Iraq war on Russia have received short shrift.

But the new European antagonism to America has not gone unnoticed in

Moscow. The cleavage between Washington and Europe and the

preoccupation of America with the Middle East clearly give Putin a

freer hand to advance a less democratic and more nationalistic set of

policies at home. This is one reason why it is so important that

America and NATO demonstrate then can work together in such areas as

Afghanistan, where strategic common ground exists.

Likewise, the priority we have given to Iraq as well as North Korea,

two charter members of the so-called ``Axis of Evil,'' means that we

have been implicitly forced to subordinate trade and human rights

issues with China. China's support, or at least not opposition, in

international strategic affairs, has become so central to

Administration policy makers that Beijing has been able to downgrade

U.S. concerns about the historic shifts taking place in trade terms. A

Chinese trade surplus with the U.S. that now exceeds $10 billion a

month and an undervalued currency pegged to the dollar that makes

flexible trade adjustments impossible are simply not being given the

attention they deserve.

Economics and politics have seldom been more intertwined. Yet

underappreciated is the prospect that a protectionist backlash of

1930's dimensions could develop if our political policies fail and our

government loses respect in the world. Analogously, a political

backlash could sweep the country if Washington doesn't develop

institutional reforms to protect the political system from

vulnerabilities to single-issue and special-interest constituencies. At

a time when our foreign policy appears too attentive to ideological

forces and too prone to rely on proxy empowered corporations to advance

the national interest, Congress has an obligation to aggressively

provide oversight of the contracting as well as intelligence judgments

advanced by the Executive. Just as committees to review a new

intelligence inadequacies are in order, so is a new committee to

oversee government contracting related to operations in Iraq and

Afghanistan. The professionalism and integrity of government decision-

making about issues of war and peace must be above reproach. The

country can afford neither ideological posturing nor war profiteering.

As for the dilemma of the moment, policy makers have been caught

philosophically short. As mistaken as the overestimation of Saddam's

WMD capacities was, the greater judgmental error may relate to the

political pressure applied to the intelligence community on the issue

of Iraqi complicity in the plane strikes on 9/11. Initially, the CIA

straightforwardly noted that there was no credible evidence of Iraqi

involvement. Then, under obvious pressure, it changed its stance and in

presentation after presentation to Congress ominously suggested they

had an ``evolving'' view of the role of Iraq, despite, to date,

producing nothing of a definitive nature to show why the community

changed its initial representation. Hence, the decision to go to war

was against the backdrop of public opinion polls showing 60 percent of

the American people believed significant Iraqi involvement existed in

the 9/11 attack.

Compounding this lack of forthrightness, where the intelligence

community knew the situation but refused publicly to differ with the

political decision makers, was a judgment showing doubtful

understanding of Moslem attitudes. The notion that American forces

would be welcomed in Iraq as a liberating force with the well-

intentioned option to reshape over time Iraqi political institutions

was a mistake of profound proportions. Now, given the anarchy that has

mushroomed in the country, Washington is swept by occupation analogies

of World War II. Japan and Germany, it is noted, were occupied for more

than five years after hostilities ceased. Hence, many are suggesting,

we must be prepared to stay at least this long in Iraq.

I have seldom been more apprehensive about an historical analogy.

Japan and Germany were the instigators of war; their citizens

understood this. Iraqis don't see it this way. They see the U.S. as the

aggressor. Images form Al-Jazeera portray a country under siege. In the

Moslem world Iraq looks more like a police-cordoned West Bank than a

great and ancient society on the move to a better life. Outsiders are

viewed as unwanted intruders acting out of great power self-interest,

unrespectful of the culture and values of the country being occupied.

The irony that it is Shi'a clerics, not American statesmen, who are

pushing for democratic elections at this time is not lost on the Iraqis

or the Moslem world.

More profoundly, I am amazed that pundits haven't caught on to the

possibility that the only thing worse than being wrong in our

intelligence assessments of Iraqi WMD would have been if we had been

right and thereby taken the risk of precipitating a retaliatory BW

attack against Israel or possibly an American city. Biological weapons

in the control of petty potentates is mad science in the hands of mad

men. To go to war against a country with BW weapons, especially if the

initiator has no knowledge where they are, is to hazard more than a

clash of civilizations; it is to instigate a potential challenge to the

maintenance of civilization itself.

In any regard, if a WMD rationale for intervention can't be

established, we must not allow the democracy case to founder. To

authorize an additional $80 billion for Iraq and

not be able to find the means to conduct timely elections is

preposterous.

Legitimacy is critical for all countries. There may be times and

circumstances in which the U.S. national interest requires action

without a U.N. sanction. But the U.N. is ignored at great risk,

especially when the international community is at odds with a nation

state's policies. The U.N.'s help, for instance, could be significant

at this point in facilitating elections and helping legitimize new

governing structures. If a commitment to a time frame for democratic

elections isn't soon forthcoming, the Administration may see an

escalation of violence in Iraq led by the Shi'a in the South, thus

adding to the traumas precipitated by Saddam's old henchmen and foreign

trouble makers in the Sunni triangle to the north, where disorder is so

prevalent today.

The judgment call Washington must make is whether to employ something

closer to a ``get in/get out'' strategy or one of prolonged occupation.

Each approach caries risk, with the likelihood of a certain amount of

disorder developing whenever the American presence is reduced. Whether

that disorder becomes less deep with time or whether time allows

anarchist forces to organize more vigorously and lay claim to a

legitimizing nationalist mantle is conjectural.

In the realm of policy timing can often be as important as substance.

Just as Senator Dirksen once noted that a billion dollars here and a

billion dollars there and pretty soon you're talking about real money,

in foreign affairs a week here and a week there can soon add up to a

policy dilemma.

The difficulty of timing was underscored this week when some in

Washington charged the newly elected Spanish Government with

``appeasement'' for its announced intention to withdraw its forces from

Iraq in the wake of last week's bombings in Madrid unless the U.N. role

in Iraq is broadened. The language of appeasement may appropriately

describe the lack of resolve of Western leaders when they refused to

stand up to Hitler's growing power in the 1930s, but it may not be as

fair to apply such a term to Spanish policy today. Indeed, doing so may

carry irresponsible implications because fear of its connotations may

make disengagement more difficult if the country or forces of an

occupying power are ever under attack. For instance, if ``appeasement''

is considered the dominant potential issue, U.S. policy makers

relinquish their sovereign discretion and instead could give terrorists

the determinative say when we will disengage from Iraq. A few radicals

could with relative ease launch a steady dose of terrorist attacks on

our civilian and armed services personnel and ``force'' us to stay or

then be in a position to argue when we eventually leave that they

forced us out. That is why it is so critical that we lay out a basis

for withdrawal that has nothing to do with the terrorist behavior of

Iraqi radicals and everything to do with the establishment of a freely

elected leadership.

On the issue of the timing of the hand-over of civil authority I give

less judgmental weight in the Iraqi circumstance to historical

analogies to the post-war occupation of Japan and Germany and more to a

personal anecdote about the manner the Vietnam war came to be

concluded. Early in my career in Congress, I was invited to the Library

of Congress to join a small group of historians to listen to a lecture

by Henry Kissinger about the negotiations that led to the end of that

war. The night before the lecture, I perused one of Secretary

Kissinger's autobiographic tomes and came across a paragraph that so

startled me that I asked him about it in the seminar that followed the

lecture. Kissinger wrote that in December 1968, shortly after Richard

Nixon had asked him to be his National Security Council director, he

met with the President-elect to discuss the direction of the new

administration's foreign policy. They determined together, he noted,

that their policy would be to get out of Vietnam. So I asked him why

they didn't just proceed to do that. Kissinger looked at me for a

moment and then uttered words I will never forget. ``Young man,'' he

said, ``we meant with honor.'' I then asked him if ``honor'' required

escalation. ``Absolutely,'' he responded.

In governance, judgment to be good must be timely. The course of

history and attitudes toward America would be very different today if

the Nixon administration had acted forthrightly on its own judgment. In

Iraq, where we are fast becoming a magnet of instability rather than a

force of stability, we must not hesitate. If the issue is democracy,

let's hold elections with dispatch and use the democratic transition as

the rationalization for deep troop reductions.

If we maintain a heavy presence much longer our president could find

himself in a dilemma of the kind Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon came

to know too well. There are circumstances in life where the small can

humble the powerful. This has the makings of one. Despite the

overwhelming nature of our military victory and the courageous

commitment and sacrifice of our armed forces, policies can fail if the

timing of disengagement is wrong.

This is why clarity of purpose and flexibility of response are so

crucial. And why the neo-con mantra--``we must see this through''--

deserves review. Hasty withdrawal is problemsome; orderly,

philosophically cogent decisions to wind down the military dimension of

our presence in Iraq should, however, be our highest national

interest priority. Democratic elections are the key. They can be held

in relatively short order (at least by year's end; preferably earlier)

if there is a will and commitment to do so. But the longer we heed the

advice of those who want to hold onto power in Iraq, the harder it will

be to avert increased terrorism here and abroad.

Here I would like to return to what in most contexts must be

considered a rather esoteric paradigm: the Hobbesian notion of a state

of nature. Terrorism is a military or, more precisely, militant tool of

anarchy. It is the desire of terrorists to make Iraqi society a social

jungle, a state of nature where anarchy rather than law rules.

Legitimacy of government in this setting can perhaps be precipitated

but it cannot be imposed from the outside. Outside pressure is less

convincing when it appears to be presented by a singular authority--

i.e., the United States. One of the reasons so many countries prefer a

strong U.N. role is that such a role not only provides greater

legitimization of intervention but greater legitimization of processes

leading to a new government. U.S. slighting of the U.N. undercuts

governmental legitimizing efforts and causes the entirety of the Moslem

world to become more antagonistic to our country.

For our part, we have gotten caught in a web of events we can

influence but not control. In the end, legitimacy of any new government

in Iraq will depend on consent of the governed. The only wise U.S.

policy is to steamroll ahead with a constitutional framework of

democratic elections with a pre-announced strategy of large-scale troop

withdrawals commencing somewhat before or just after elections are

held.

In conclusion, let me suggest a corollary to Lord Acton's maxim that

power corrupts and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely. The

Leach corollary is that military power tempts and excessive power tends

to tempt excessively. America's enormous military strength is critical

at this stage in history. But while we are obligated to recognize that

its maintenance is imperative, we must also realize that its

utilization may not fit, and may indeed be counter-productive, in

certain strategic settings. We have to use more than just our own eyes

and rely on more that just our own expertise if in turbulent times we

are to manage prudently the affairs of state.

Analogies between all wars exist, but comparisons between Iraq and

Vietnam are frail. What must be understood is not that Iraq could be as

bad as Vietnam; rather, that it could be far worse. Vietnam, after all,

involved no WMD issues; and while the North was predominantly Buddhist

and the South Catholic, there were no implications of a world-wide

religious struggle; nor of a conflict that might last many decades, if

not centuries. The issue at the time was Communism and fear that if

Vietnam fell, neighboring governments would topple like dominoes. In

retrospect, the real domino lesson of Vietnam was about political

decision-making. Once the patriotic flag was raised, stands taken,

words uttered, one doubtful decision precipitated another, and the

pride of politicians did not allow a change of course until the people

demanded common sense reconsideration.

In this context, there is an aspect of this resolution that deserves

reflective review. It is true, as the resolution asserts, that Iraq and

the world are better off without Saddam Hussein ensconced in power. But

it is not necessarily true that our country and the world are safer if

the overthrow of one thug leads to the creation of millions of rebels

with a cause.

It would be a mistake of historical proportions if respectful

relations not only between America and the Moslem world but between

America and its traditional allies were to rupture. We are obligated to

see that they don't.