I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

As we near the 1-year anniversary of the commencement of hostilities

in Iraq, now is an appropriate time to examine how we got into the war

in Iraq in the first place. The resolution before us contains many

``whereas'' clauses about how brutally Saddam Hussein treated his own

people. I agree with those clauses. But let us not fool ourselves about

the reason the American people were told that we needed to launch a

preemptive war against Iraq. Over and over again, President Bush and

his senior advisers told us that we needed to go to war to protect

America from weapons of mass destruction.

Several months ago I asked my staff to prepare a comprehensive

analysis of the statements made by the top administration officials

most responsible for making the case for war. Yesterday, I released the

results of this work in a report entitled ``Iraq on the Record.''

Members can find the report, and a searchable database of

administration statements, at [www.reform.house.gov/min](http://www.reform.house.gov/min). What we found

was that the President, the Vice President, and other top

administration officials repeatedly and systematically misled the

public about the threats posed by Iraq. They made claims that Iraq

posed an urgent threat; they exaggerated Iraq's nuclear capabilities;

statements that overstated Iraq's chemical and biological weapons; and

statements that misrepresented Iraq's relationship with al Qaeda. We

judge whether a statement was misleading based on what intelligence

officials knew at the time the statement was made, not what we know

now.

If Congress really wanted to show respect for the troops, it would

enact legislation calling for an independent commission, a real

independent commission to examine how the President and his top

advisers made hundreds of misleading statements to the American public.

The resolution before us is reminiscent of these statements. Vice

President Cheney said: ``We do know with

absolute certainty that he, Saddam Hussein, is using his procurement

system to acquire the weapons he needs to build a nuclear weapon,''

when this resolution says the same thing so unequivocally, quote, ``the

world has been made safer with the removal of Saddam Hussein.'' I hope

that is true, but we do not know it yet. Ask the hundreds who have died

since Saddam Hussein was captured.

The purpose of this resolution is an attempt by the Republican

leadership to divide us, not to unite us behind our troops. They are

using the sacrifice of the lives of our young men and women for their

own political gain. I will not vote for this resolution or against it.

I will vote ``present'' as an act of disdain for those who want to play

politics with the lives of Americans and the credibility of this great

Nation as the world's leader.