Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I came here to talk about how we can improve this

resolution, but I would like to say to the able gentleman from Florida

(Chairman Goss), the chairman of our committee, that some of the things

he just said in his opening remarks might deserve amplification. It is

true that during the 1990s, overwhelming bipartisan majorities in both

Houses of Congress approved cuts in funding for intelligence. So strong

was this bipartisan position that often no one called for a recorded

vote; Intelligence budgets were approved on a simple voice vote. The

gentleman from Florida (Mr. Goss) is correct that overseas intelligence

operations were canceled and that the core of our overseas intelligence

operations declined by about 25 percent. But what he failed to mention

is that those cuts were ordered by the 41st President, President Bush.

They were supported by more than 95 percent of Republicans in Congress,

including the gentleman from Florida (Chairman Goss).

What I am here to say today, however, is that this resolution could

be improved if it called for steps now on a bipartisan basis to fix

what are obvious intelligence problems. In addition to commending our

troops, we should be calling for action to make them safer.

Had I been consulted on this resolution, I would have suggested

adding a clause calling on the President to acknowledge the obvious

problems with our intelligence and to take steps to fix those problems

now. Had I been consulted, I would have insisted on adding language

applauding the brave and

dedicated cadre of people serving in Iraq and around the world as

intelligence officers. They work in the shadows with little thanks and

recognition.

Mr. Speaker, the terrorists are clearly not waiting for us to fix our

intelligence, witness today's tragic bombing in Iraq and last week's

bigger tragedy in Madrid. The insurgents in Iraq are not waiting for us

to fix our intelligence. Ask the young men and women at Walter Reed

Hospital.

The North Koreans and Iranians are not waiting for us to fix our

intelligence. Their nuclear weapons programs are far more advanced than

Iraq's ever were. As the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Goss), the

chairman of our committee, acknowledged this morning, the world is not

safe just because we removed a brutal dictator. We all know this. It

will not be safer until we fix our intelligence.

After deep study on the Select Committee on Intelligence, it is clear

to me that our senior leaders remain in a deep state of denial. There

are no discernible signs from the President or the Vice President

acknowledging the obvious flaws in our intelligence systems and

committing our country to fix the problems now. Force protection in

Iraq depends on accurate, timely, and actionable intelligence to

counter terrorism and insurgency. We must do better.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

and I want to say first off that I am sure that is what the last

speaker intended. He is a good friend, a member

of our Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and I am certain he

did not have me in mind when he was suggesting that there is excessive

partisanship about our intelligence budget.

I call myself a passionate bipartisan on intelligence and security

matters, and I take a back seat to no one for my efforts to try to work

out agreements on a bipartisan basis to fix our intelligence.

As I said earlier, in my view, the proposed resolution does some good

things, but it also should be calling for action to keep our troops and

other personnel serving in Iraq safe.

Just a few hours ago, Mr. Speaker, a devastating car bomb destroyed a

hotel in Baghdad. The casualty reports are still coming in, but at

least two dozen people have died. Better intelligence is essential to

protecting our troops in Iraq and ensuring that we ultimately succeed

there. It is the first line of defense in the war on terrorism.

There are good ideas from both sides of the aisle that should be

discussed and debated this year. What should we be doing? In my view,

let us try six things:

First, the President should direct intelligence agencies to scrub

weapons of mass destruction intelligence on all major targets and

release updates on areas of concern. Now.

Second, the President should direct intelligence agencies to improve

collection and vetting of information. Now.

Third, the President should require intelligence agencies to improve

the way they analyze intelligence and convey information to

policymakers. Now.

Fourth, the President should direct a review of the activities of

various DOD offices, particularly the Office of Special Plans, to see

whether they fed unreliable and unvetted intelligence to him, the Vice

President, or his senior national security team.

Fifth, the President should take immediate steps to strengthen and

reinvigorate international inspections.

And, finally, the President should consider longer term changes to

the leadership organization and business methods of the intelligence

community.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution should have been a call to action in

support of our troops, in addition to an expression of our heartfelt

gratitude.

We could have done much, much better.

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