Mr. Speaker, I will support this resolution as an

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

uniform who were ordered to war in Iraq by their Commander in Chief.

Whether you are for or against the war, the fact is we are there now

and we need to support our troops.

These military service members are working around the clock to make

Iraq a better place for the Iraqi people. Many of them have left their

young families behind to serve their country,

and they deserve our thanks here on the floor of Congress.

I recently returned from Iraq as part of a bipartisan group of

Members from the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. I

truly believe that good intelligence is the best way to prevent

terrorist attacks in our country, as well as Iraq. The members of our

intelligence community who are also working on the dangerous front

lines of this war deserve our gratitude. They serve in silence with

little thanks.

I was proud to join with my Republican colleagues and visit the Iraqi

police training academy and honor 23 Iraqi police officers killed in a

recent bombing. Even in the face of tragedy, the resolve of the Iraqi

people to take back their country and start governing themselves was

strong.

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

for our Armed Forces working and living in harm's way. Regrettably,

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

to divide us, not unite us.

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

better off without Saddam Hussein and his brutal regime; but success

must be our only exit strategy. When those goals are accomplished, we

can say with certainty that the world is a safer place. We owe our

military men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their

country in Iraq nothing less.