Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 557,

recognizing American and coalition forces in Iraq and the liberation of

the Iraqi people.

The American people should know and believe that the President

brought the U.S. into this war to oust Saddam Hussein and bring freedom

in that part of the world with 34 coalition partners, and that was a

good decision. Many of us supported the President and voted to provide

emergency supplemental funding for military operations in Iraq. These

were the resources that financed the capture of additional Saddam

regime loyalists and Saddam himself and provided funding to protect our

troops.

As a matter of fact, the lion's share of the money went to the troops

and the other went to rebuilding the country, opening schools, opening

hospitals, putting electricity on line, opening businesses. The people

of Iraq love America because of their newfound freedom, their newfound

hope, and their newfound opportunities.

Many of us voted for the war resolution because we believed it was

the right thing to do, and many of us voted for the supplemental

funding because we believed it was the right thing to do.

We have heard all the claims that the intelligence community's

analysis was politicized and analytical judgments were made to advance

the administration's policy. The same judgment and analysis was given

to President Clinton who used that analysis to take limited action

against Saddam. The point is that both Presidents received the same

intelligence. The only difference is that President Bush took serious

and meaningful action against Saddam Hussein.

In my opinion, critics have not given the intelligence community a

fair shake, and it is obvious from some of those who do not even serve

on the committee come down here and criticize when they have not had

the benefit that many of us have had of serving on the committee. That

is unfortunate. They have failed to highlight those judgments on UAVs,

ballistic missiles, illicit procurement networks that have been found

and confirmed in Iraq. They have failed to highlight those judgments

about the presence in Iraq of terrorist elements associated with al

Qaeda.

It is fine to highlight real problems and propose real solutions to

fix them, but we have yet to hear that from the critics. Telling

analysts not to make tough judgments is not a viable solution.

Rebuilding our intelligence community and providing them with the

resources needed to fight the global war on terrorism seems more

appropriate.

I support our troops and our intelligence community, people who work

in dark places in the world but never get any credit for the work that

they do. The credit goes in some cases to politicians and government

officials, but those people in dark places who are doing the hard work

deserve the credit. No politician can take credit for capturing Saddam.

That credit goes to the intelligence community and the military, and

those of us that have supported them with our votes on this floor to

give them the money to do it. Also I think they deserve the credit, and

the critics need to really, I think, examine what they are saying.

Congratulations to those in the intelligence community and the

military community for liberating Iraq, freeing the people and giving

them hope and opportunity, and for that reason, I support I think a

very well-worded and -constructed resolution.