Mr. Speaker, on March 20, 2003, we were

debating a similar resolution--then to express support for the

President and the U.S. military (H. Con. Res. 104). I said on that

occasion: ``I want to make it clear that our young men and women, who

are putting their lives on the line in Iraq, have my unequivocal

support. I will do everything in my power as a member of Congress to

see to it that they have everything they need to win this war and

return home safe and sound to their families. We can only hope and pray

that this war will end quickly, and a minimum number of American,

British, and Iraqi civilian and military lives are lost, destroyed or

maimed for the rest of their lives.''

Unfortunately, my worst fears have come true. Our troops, and the few

other nations whose troops are involved, are not home. Families and

many good Americans are volunteering to raise money to buy for our

soldiers the kind of protective vests they need to be as safe as

possible in the middle of a war. Many Americans and thousands of Iraqi

fighters, but mostly innocent Iraqi civilians, have died and been

wounded. The wounded will spend a life-time of disability and

suffering. They will spend the rest of their lives knowing that they

will never be able to accomplish the highest and best of what God had

intended for their lives.

I said a year ago, ``While the troops have 100 percent of my support,

when appropriate, I will continue to articulate the grave concerns I

have about the policies that sent them there.'' Today I am keeping the

promise relative to the President's policies in Iraq.

This Congress did not vote to go to war in Iraq because Saddam

Hussein was a bad guy. Everybody knew he was a bad guy. There are lots

of bad guys in the world, and we are not even trying to remove them.

Unfortunately, the fundamental lesson that President Bush has taught

our children with his pre-emptive war strategy is that ``the end

justifies the means.''

We were told we had to go to war because Iraq had weapons of mass

destruction. Americans would not have supported going to war just

because Saddam was a bad guy. One year later, we have found no weapons

of mass destruction, and have little evidence that we will ever find

them. Why? Because, mostly likely, U.N. inspections had contained his

ability to make or use weapons of mass destruction.

President Bush has destroyed the unity, support and moral authority

that the world gave to the United States after September 11. The latest

evidence of that erosion of support was the Spanish election on March

14.

I said on March 20, 2003, ``There is no convincing evidence that Iraq

was involved or connected to Osama bin Laden, Al Qaeda or the events of

September 11, 2001--despite President Bush's many failed attempts to

morph the two, in order to convince the American people that there is

such a connection.'' The attempt to weld 9/11, Iraq and the war on

terror continues as we speak. The truth is we have virtually abandoned

the real war on terrorism in Afghanistan. The truth is, Al Qaeda was

not in Iraq a year ago, but they are today. As a result, the world has

not been made safer, as the resolution suggests, but has become more

unsafe and unstable.

I said on March 20, 2003, ``Most Americans think that when our young

men and women are risking their lives on the battlefield that

Democrats, Republicans and Independents in this House would come

together in a non-partisan manner to support our troops--because

everyone does support them. . . . But the Republican extremists in the

House have no shame and no limits. They will politicize the blood of

our soldiers if they think they can gain a political advantage. They

have never met an issue they were unwilling to `wedge'.'' This

resolution is a continuation of that same strategy in an election year.

I said one year ago, ``Many Democrats, myself included, separate

support for the troops from support for the President's policy. But the

Republicans deliberately joined the two so they could make it a

political wedge issue. Therefore, if you vote `for' the resolution it

appears that you support the President's policy. But if you vote

`against' the resolution, the Republicans intend to paint you as

against our troops and unpatriotic in future elections. In other words,

the Republicans have deliberately tried to set a `Catch 22' trap.''

Well, I support our troops, but I continue to oppose the President's

policy in Iraq. I will

vote ``no'' on this resolution because the world has not been made

safer because of the removal of Saddam Hussein. If you doubt me, ask

the families of the over 200 people in Spain who lost loved ones in the

recent explosions on the train there, and the hundreds who were

wounded.

I filed a Federal lawsuit to try to stop the President from going to

war in Iraq without a declaration of war from Congress. I believe the

President's actions in Iraq were unconstitutional and in violation of

international law.

The Bush policy of ignoring the United Nations and the lack of decent

respect for the opinion of mankind; the U.S.-led preemptive policy has

weakened the United Nations, weakened the structures of ``collective

security,'' weakened the rule of international law and has not made the

world safer, but more dangerous and unstable.

Again I repeat what I said on March 20, 2003: As the wealthiest and

only superpower in the world, the U.S. has the most economic and

military interests in the world. The United Nations, collective

security, and the rule of international law have well-served those U.S.

interests. Weakening any of them increases the threat to U.S. interests

at home and abroad.

So today, even as I give our young men and women in Iraq my

unconditional support, I also renew my dedication to strengthening the

United Nations, collective security, and the rule of international law.

They help guarantee peace and security in the world and, when fully

utilized, make it less likely that American service men and women may

have to be sent to possibly make the ultimate sacrifice in defense of

our country in the future.