Mr. Speaker, I will vote for this resolution,

although I do not approve of the manner in which it is being debated.

The fact that the House is not permitted even to consider amendments

means that our debate will be incomplete because the resolution covers

only some of the issues that are relevant to understanding where we are

one year after the beginning of military action by coalition troops in

Iraq.

On this one-year anniversary, there is no question but that the House

should commend the Iraqi people ``for their courage in the face of

unspeakable oppression and brutality inflicted on them by Saddam

Hussein's regime.''

The resolution also very appropriately commends the Iraqi people on

the adoption of Iraq's interim constitution, a key step toward what all

Americans hope will be the Iraqi people's creation of a new, free, and

democratic Iraq.

And there is no question but that the members of the U.S. Armed

Forces and the Coalition forces should be commended for serving in

Iraq. For me, this is the most important clause in this resolution.

We may not all agree on whether going to war a year ago was the right

course for the U.S. to take--indeed, I was not persuaded that it was,

and so I voted against the war resolution in 2002. But we can all agree

that our brave men and women in uniform deserve our support, our

respect, our gratitude for their service--and in the cases of over 550

servicemen and women, their giving what Lincoln rightly called the last

full measure of devotion by sacrificing their lives.

But I must qualify my support for one clause in this resolution--the

clause that asserts ``the United States and the world have been made

safer with the removal of Saddam Hussein and his regime from power in

Iraq.''

I believe that Saddam out of power is infinitely better than Saddam

in power. Saddam can no longer terrorize his people and his neighbors

in the region. The Iraqi people are now able to move into an era of

freedom--an incredible step forward for a country that has been

brutalized for so long.

And it's true that the U.S. and the world are now living free of fear

from Saddam's possible use of weapons of mass destruction or his

possible assistance to terrorists.

But, while the removal of Saddam Hussein and his regime has liberated

the Iraqis and freed us from some worries, I think there are still some

things to fear.

I still fear the consequences of the Bush Administration's ``you're

either with us or you're against us'' approach. This approach rushed

the diplomatic process at the United Nations and dismissed a strategy

of ``coercive inspections.'' This same approach caused Pentagon leaders

to exaggerate intelligence claims and mangle the planning for the post-

war occupation and rebuilding of Iraq. And by going in without broader

support and without an adequate post-war plan, the Administration made

long-term success in Iraq much more difficult to achieve.

So I'm afraid we're stuck with a heavy burden for years to come. I'm

afraid that America won't be safer if it continues to have to focus so

much of our attention and resources on our mission in Iraq. I'm afraid

America won't be safer if we continue to spend so much in Iraq--$120

billion and rising--because it will mean we have that much less money

to

spend on ways to keep us safe from the proliferation of weapons of mass

destruction, from terrorists in other areas of the world, or from

potential threats right here at home. That would be troublesome enough

if we were paying for it ourselves, through taxes--it is even more

worrisome that the Administration is insisting on putting the burden on

our children, who will have to repay with interest the massive amounts

we are borrowing to cover the budget deficit.

I'm afraid that unless we return to a foreign policy that reflects

American priorities--putting a priority on promoting political and

economic freedom and human rights; more closely cooperating with allies

and friends; and more truly respecting international law and

institutions--we risk fueling the very terror that we ultimately hope

to prevent.

I don't believe that the answer to these fears is to cut and run by

prematurely pulling our troops out of Iraq. On the contrary, I believe

we have to work that much harder to work with the international

community to win the peace and to assist the Iraqi people to establish

a new, free, and democratic Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is important to take this moment to reflect

on this one-year anniversary. We can look back at the last year with

pride at the service and sacrifices of our troops and with admiration

for the Iraqi people, who are working hard to find their way in this

new post-Saddam world. And we can look back at this last year to learn

lessons from what we did right. But we also need to understand our

mistakes and what we did wrong in Iraq so that we can move forward with

a better understanding and greater confidence in our mission in the

months and perhaps years to come.