Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.

Res 861, the global war on terrorism resolution. I am opposed to the

resolution because it is terribly flawed, nonbinding, and does not

provide a viable plan that protects our soldiers or serves our country.

The general assumption is that the debate on the global war on

terrorism, GWOT, will be a full and honest debate. In fact, the process

we are engaged in represents nothing more than an exercise in rhetoric.

H. Res. 861 is flawed because it does not reflect bipartisanship.

Democrats were not allowed to offer our substitute or amend the

Republican resolution. Further, I strenuously disagree with the

language contained in the resolution.

I want to strongly emphasize that the failed Republican policy in

Iraq includes poor planning that left troops without critical

equipment, and provided no plan for success. The war in Iraq

exemplifies gross mismanagement, as evidenced by $9 billion that is

either lost or stolen and cannot be accounted for. There has been no

oversight of spending to date. The Republican controlled Congress has

refused to oversee military conduct and the policy that contributed to

the war. There has been a complete lack of accountability regarding

this war. No investigating committee has ensured taxpayer dollars were

legally and well spent. This administration is guilty of entering into

no-bid contracts, totaling $17 billion to Halliburton alone.

Let me be clear, Democrats want and demand a new direction in Iraq.

We want a responsible redeployment of U.S. troops to take place

immediately. We must redeploy and be ready.

I disagree with the resolution premise that the U.S. will prevail in

the Global War on Terrorism due to the fact that the ``terrorist

adversary'' cannot be identified or quantified. The misguided

perpetrators of terrorism consist of disparate and loosely confederated

groups, some of whom are religious zealots that justify their terrorist

actions based on their Islamic beliefs; others are mercenaries seeking

to retaliate against the U.S. for our invasion of Iraq. The terrorists

identified as members of AI Qaeda led by Osama bin Laden do not adhere

to a traditional command and control military structure, thereby making

it impossible for our military forces to engage in traditional

battlefield strategies.

H. Res. 861 presents the proposition that Saddam Hussein's regime

supported terrorists and posed a threat to global peace. There is no

documentation to support this premise. These allegations have been

wholly disproved, yet supporters of the war and the architects of the

resolution continue to propagate these mistruths. This is why today I

reaffirm my steadfast opposition to another in a long list of

resolutions that seek to delude Americans into believing that we are

debating legislation that provides a clear direction to winning the so-

called global war on terrorism. This resolution does not.

I oppose this resolution because it does not address the fact that to

date we have spent in excess of $368 billion, mainly in the form of

supplemental spending bills that are off-budget and contribute mightily

to the Federal deficit. The resolution does not address that our

President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the

National Security Agency, NSA, all provided the American public with

undeniably wrong information and allegations contrived to seduce them

and Members of Congress to support an act of aggression against Saddam

Hussein. We engaged in a war without broad international support.

America, through its actions in Iraq, reinforced the perception

throughout the Middle East that the global war on terrorism is an

attack on the religion of Islam, and in some measure that the interests

of the U.S. related more to controlling oil in Iraq than promoting

democracy. This war has united our enemies and divided our friends.

I reject this resolution because it does not acknowledge that we

hastily entered this war and unnecessarily placed our soldiers in

harm's way, resulting in 2,500 deaths.

My ongoing assessments of the situation in Iraq have caused me to

conclude that it is critical for the House and our nation to develop a

strategy that will ensure the redeployment of our forces from Iraq and

return them home. I support my colleague Representative Murtha and his

calls for a reevaluation of our military strategy and a return of our

troops as soon as practicable. As our troops redeploy, they will be

ready to respond to whatever challenges our Nation may be forced to

confront.

Finally, I oppose H. Res. 861 because it will not deliver any

tangible solutions to the quagmire that engulfs our soldiers and places

them in perpetual danger. H. Res. 861 provides the appearance of

substantive and honest debate. In reality, it is merely an exercise

designed to appease the emotional and intellectual appetite of

Americans seeking to justify what they believe and have been told is a

real global war on terrorism. It is not.

I urge my colleagues to vote ``no'' on H. Res. 861.