Mr. Speaker, a soldier in the service of

his nation never dies in vain. But that soldier's sacrifice should

affirm the fact that criticism, diverse opinion, and the right to

challenge government is precious and privileged and protected by the

Constitution.

Might I add my appreciation to the gentleman from California (Mr.

Lantos), the ranking member, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Hyde)

for the collegiality and the respect given to Members in this debate

and the language of this legislation.

I oppose this war with every fiber in my body, but I believe today is

a time to be able to emphasize elements of unity that will say to the

world that we do want success. I believe there is failure; and so for

that reason, for the record, I will indicate that I will not support

pages 1 to 5, at the top; but I am going to support this resolution on

the basis of the resolution, how we resolve.

What are we resolving? We recognize the people of Iraq, the most

innocent. We are offering our support to them that they might survive

and experience democracy. We are expressing gratitude to the Armed

Forces and to the families, families who I had to sit with as they

buried their young. And, as well, we are giving condolences to them for

the soldiers who died on the frontline. No matter whether we have won

or lost, their sacrifice will never be in vain.

I offer to the families in Houston my appreciation. But as I do that,

Mr. Speaker, let me emphasize that our job is not yet done. I can

assure my colleagues that I do not speak from the well of the House. I

have been to Afghanistan. I have been to Iraq. I have sat with

soldiers, and in so doing I have heard them say this is a frustrating

job, but we are here in order to have the opportunity to press American

principles.

But, Mr. Speaker, we did not press American principles by having an

unconstitutional war, a unilateral and preemptive strike. We did not

observe constitutional principles by allowing the U.N. inspections or

not fulfilling our responsibility in Abu Ghraib, or have an exit

strategy, or the intelligence failure when we went into the war on the

basis of weapons of mass destruction.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand in the well of the House so that everyone

will know I do not step away from my opposition to this war, but I

stand alongside families, those who lost their young loved ones, those

who still fight, and, yes, the Iraqi people, who, I hope, with a new

strategy and a new opportunity, will face democracy in the 21st

century.