Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the leadership

he is providing on this very important, I would say, issue, but it is

not an issue, it is the question of the day, the question of our time.

Will the people of the United States stand tall in this time of crisis?

Will we meet our responsibility? Will we overcome those who hate our

way of life? Will we remain the last best hope for all of humankind for

a better world.

Let us look back and make sure we understand it. The American people

have a heavy responsibility, because we do represent every race and

every religion. We are a mixture of all the people of the world who

have come here to live in freedom and show the world that there is a

better way.

That is why groups like the Nazis and the Japanese Imperialists back

in the last century knew they had to deal with us. We were attacked at

Pearl Harbor because the Japanese knew that we were the only thing that

stood in their way to the domination of Asia. The Nazis knew we were

the only thing that was going to thwart them from creating a black evil

empire over Europe, and much of Asia. Americans of that day stood tall

and strong and did what was necessary to make sure that we saved the

world from that evil threat.

After the war, after that war, when our fathers and mothers, my

father in particular, and I know the fathers of many of the people here

in Congress today, fought so hard and risked so much, and saw their

loved ones lose their lives, they thought they deserved a break.

Instead, what we saw was the rise of another menace, another evil force

that would have conquered the world, would have turned the world into a

Marxist-Leninist dictatorship, the proletariat. They would have imposed

on all of humankind their dream, their proletarian dictatorship, and

they would have snuffed out the freedom our people had just fought so

hard to maintain.

Yet, during those days of the Cold War, Americans stood firm. And it

was difficult to stand firm during the Cold War. In Vietnam and in

Korea, we lost well over 100,000 people, together in those two

conflicts, not to mention hundreds of thousands who were wounded, but

it was also a matter of hundreds of small conflicts that were going on.

Yet our people stood firm. It was difficult, but we had the leadership

that we needed there at the end.

We just heard last week how Ronald Reagan saved the world from

communism. But do not think that that was done without a great cost to

him personally. There was no bipartisanship that I saw that helped end

the Cold War. Ronald Reagan was ridiculed, he was undermined, he was

back-bitten, and there was partisan politics played throughout his

administration. Because no one predicted that the Cold War would be

over and that our enemy would collapse. But Ronald Reagan stuck to his

guns. He was tenacious, he was unrelenting, he was strong, he stood for

principle, and he reached out to those other people in the world and

put them on our side of the battles against communism.

Well, today, we know that communism, yes, collapsed and we thought we

were due for a break. There will never be a break for those people who

are the champions of liberty and freedom and justice, because there

will be evil forces in the future. We face another one today. It is not

terror. People say the war on terror. They are trying to be a little

bit diplomatic. It is a war with radical Islam which has declared war

on the American way of life.

Radical Islam believes that we are a sinful group of people because

we permit people the freedom to make decisions on their own lives.

Radical Islam would make chattel out of our women, out of women

everywhere. Radical Islam does not believe in those things that we hold

dear in terms of personal freedom. And radical Islam has declared war

on us. And let us not make a mistake about it, 3,000 of our people are

dead today in those towers in New York and here in the Pentagon because

we did not recognize that they were at war with us.

Well, we have recognized that, and there is no escaping it. Today, we

have the same challenge as our forefathers and mothers did in the war

against the Nazis and the Japanese Imperialists, and as we did in the

Cold War against the Communists. We have to win this fight or it will

be a far worse world. It will be a dark world of chaos and despotism

and fanaticism if we do not. Nowhere is that battle more important

today than what is going on in Iraq.

I say, thank God that we have a President who was willing to take

this stand. What we are seeing in Iraq is an historic strategic move to

outflank the radical Islamists. We are turning a dictatorship in the

Muslim world into a democracy. And we are, thus, pointing to this so

that the young people of the Muslim world will have an alternative to

radical Islam. We are doing what Ronald Reagan did. We are cutting our

enemy off from its source of strength. If we do what is right and we

stick to this, our enemy will collapse, just as communism collapsed,

just as that other evil force collapsed.

Again, we are having to go through the pangs of partisan politics,

the back-biting, the nitpicking, the let us cut and run. The people who

ask, why should we risk anything; why are we losing these lives, they

know if we would leave Iraq as it is today and the radical Islamists,

especially the Iranians, then become a dominant force in Iraq, it would

be a disaster for the future, not only of that region but for the

people of the United States. We would have a future filled with fear, a

future of knowing that the radical Islamic creed would have been

gathering strength because we had demonstrated weakness.

No, we have a President who is just as unrelenting as Ronald Reagan.

We have a President who is a visionary, who is taking a positive

approach, trying to establish a positive alternative to radical Islam.

We have a President who has courage and is moving forward, but we also

have a generation of young people who understand that strength and

courage and commitment is the way to a better world.

Those people who are giving their lives for us in Iraq know they are

doing it to build a better world. They deserve solid support from this

Congress. We support them because they are risking their lives for

us. They are building a better world, just like those people who

stormed ashore on D-Day over a half century ago. And just like those

young men and women throughout the Cold War, who gave their lives,

these are the heroes of our age.

We have a President every bit as important to the future of mankind

as was FDR when he provided the political leadership necessary to win

the Second World War; and Ronald Reagan, who provided the leadership to

help us win the struggle against communist tyranny. And now, with

President Bush, he is a man who will not retreat, will not cower, will

not turn his back and run. We have a man who has drawn the line in the

sand and said we are going to win because the whole world depends on

us.

This is what is happening in Iraq. There is no option in terms of

defeat. Defeat is not an option. If we walk away, it will only mean

further bloodshed and further aggression, and not only terrorism here,

but attacks on our friends throughout the world if we would retreat

from Iraq today. We should never dream of emboldening our worst

enemies. We should, instead, stand tall.

That is what this is about tonight. That is what many of us are

committed to here in the House. I hope the American people listen and

take a look at the long run, take a look at what happened in the past,

take a look at what will happen in the long run unless we

have that same sense of purpose and courage that those who came before

us had in these same type of challenges.

We are building the world of tomorrow and it will be a world where we

will be friends with the people of the Muslim faith because we will

have helped them defeat the radical Muslims who hate our way of life.

We will have a world that does have peace between the religions,

whether they are Christians, Jews or Muslims, because we will have a

world in which we have not permitted the fanatics of one faith, the

Islamic faith, to superimpose their will on the rest of the world by

force.

We will not be cowards. We will do our duty. And God bless President

Bush for the stand that he has made, and God bless the United States of

America and those who defend it.