

**Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:** Mr. Speaker, before we respond to the President's call for an additional 20,000 troops in Iraq, we must put his call in the context of the history of the war, beginning with the discussion of what the current 130,000 troops are doing there now.

The original reasons we were provided with the rationale for going to war, that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, that Iraqi leaders were connected with the 9/11 attacks, and that Iraq posed an imminent threat to the United States, all turned out not to be true. Saddam Hussein was captured and recently hanged, al-Zarqawi is dead, and Iraq held democratic elections over a year ago, and yet we are still in Iraq.

Throughout the war, the President has attempted to associate our presence in Iraq with a so-called war on terrorism. The truth is that our presence in Iraq has actually increased our risk to terrorism.

Furthermore, the term "war on terrorism" is a rhetorical term without any relationship to reality. Terrorism is not an enemy. It is a tactic. The enemy is al Qaeda. We attacked Afghanistan because al Qaeda was there, not in Iraq.

The President is now saying he is laying out a new mission in Iraq, thereby clearly acknowledging that, whatever the old mission was, it was not working. But there is still no clearly defined end goal and no clearly defined explanation of how failure or success can be measured.

If our mission now is to stabilize Baghdad, many military experts

have already said that an additional force of 20,000 troops is woefully insufficient to accomplish that goal. The fact is that the administration has already increased troop levels on several occasions during this war. None of the previous surges in troop levels have had any lasting effect on the war, and there is no credible evidence to believe that this surge will be any different.

And how can we have confidence in predictions of success? Before our invasion in Iraq, Secretary Rumsfeld predicted that the war in Iraq would last "6 days, 6 weeks. I doubt 6 months." Vice President *Cheney* predicted we would be greeted as liberators.

Almost 4 years ago, the President stood before a sign that said "Mission Accomplished" and proclaimed major combat operations in Iraq have ended.

A year and a half ago Vice President *Cheney* said the Iraqis were "in the last throes" of the insurgency. And yet here we are discussing an increase, not a decrease, in troop levels.

At the outset of this war, the administration predicted that the cost of the war would be so minuscule that it advised the House Committee on the Budget not even to include the cost of the war in the Federal budget. The administration official who suggested that the cost of the war might exceed \$100 billion was fired. To date we have appropriated nearly \$400 billion, and the President has already formally requested another \$200 billion more, with no end in sight.

Over 3,100 courageous Americans and countless Iraqis have already lost their lives. How many more will die if this strategy falls as far from the predicted result as the original length of time and

cost estimates of the war?

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, as part of developing a mission and strategy, it is imperative that we ask where these additional troops are going to come from. Many will undoubtedly come from the National Guard and Reserves, but they have already been in Iraq for longer-than-average deployments and many have already completed multiple tours of duty. Other troops must be redeployed from other assignments; so we must ask what moving these troops will mean to our global national security.

Last November the American people sent a powerful message. They want a change in Iraq, not more of the same. They expect an honest explanation of why we entered Iraq in the first place, what the present situation is, what goal do we expect to achieve, and what the strategy will be to accomplish it. Only then can we intelligently discuss the troop levels necessary to accomplish that goal. Unfortunately, all we have gotten from this administration is essentially ``Don't worry, be happy, success is around the corner; and if you don't believe that, then you are not patriotic and you are not supporting the troops.''

For my colleagues who say that failure is not an option, I ask what will happen if the President's so-called ``New Way Forward'' fails, as many experts predict it will? Are we then required to further escalate the war, further strain our military, sending thousands more of our troops to Iraq? How many more of our young men and women must die before the administration acknowledges what was in the National Intelligence Estimate? And I quote, ``The term `civil war' accurately describes key elements of the Iraqi conflict.' ''

Mr. Speaker, although the resolution before us is technically

nonbinding, it gives the House an opportunity to call upon the President to work cooperatively with Congress to develop an effective strategy to bring our troops home. The American people and our courageous men and women on the front lines deserve a clearly articulated and sensible approach to ending the war. This resolution puts the House on record as saying that an escalation of military forces is a step in the wrong direction.

I therefore urge my colleagues to support the resolution.