Mr. Speaker, the President of Iran has just addressed the

United Nations General Assembly. He well could have declared victory.

Hezbollah, a creature of Iran, created and funded by Iran, attacked Israel.

The resulting conflict diverted attention from Iran’s nuclear program and

bolstered Iran’s position in the Middle

East. Our invasion of Iraq has removed from the chess board what was once a

bloody rival of Iran for power in its own region, and now Iraq saps America’s strength.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad came to New

York with a stamp of approval for his country’s nuclear program from the 100-plus members of the nonaligned

movement, where he led a festival of America-bashing.

Most importantly, Ahmadinejad has

brazenly ignored the August 31 deadline from the United Nations Security

Council to cease enrichment of nuclear fuel.

A nuclear Iran would be a catastrophe. That regime has already been

listed as number one on the list of

state sponsors of terrorism year after year by our own State Department.

With nuclear weapons, Iran could blatantly sponsor the most horrific terrorist events,

feeling itself immune from retaliation.

The Iranian regime could terrify its Muslim neighbors and interrupt their

oil exports. Conversely, it could inspire Middle East States to develop their

own nuclear weapons. If the Tehran regime got just a little bit crazier than

they are, it could smuggle a weapon

into the United States and then threaten to explode it if we did not change our policies.

Finally, if that regime were about to be overthrown, and many of us look

forward to that day, it could use its nuclear weapons against its own people,

or it could use them against Israel as a final parting act.

Ahmadinejad declared in one of his recent famous diatribes that the

United States should bow down and surrender. Mr. Amadinijad, we already have.

Our unilateral concessions began in 1999 when we opened our markets to

Iranian exports, not oil which we could

use, but only the stuff Iran cannot sell elsewhere like caviar.

Since then we have acquiesced in

World Bank loans to the Iranian Government. We allow corporations to do

business in Iran through their foreign

subsidiaries. And last year we opened

the door to Iran’s membership in the WTO. For 6 years, the Bush administration has violated U.S. law by refusing to apply the Iran-Libya Sanctions Acts to billions of dollars of investments in the Iranian oil sector. All this

while energy sanctions were effective in changing Libya’s behavior.

Most recently, Condoleezza Rice and President Bush personally approved a

visa for a five-city U.S. propaganda tour by Amadinijad’s predecessor,

former Iranian President Khatami.

Amazingly, the U.S. taxpayer picked up part of the tab for Khatami’s terrorism promotion tour. We paid for the

security. As you remember, the last

time there were American officials in Iran, there wasn’t much security and

they were taken hostage and held for 44 days. There is a certain symmetry to all

this, Mr. Speaker. According to the 9/11

Commission, during the administration

of Khatami, Iran used its taxpayer dollars to provide safe harbor and protection to al Qaeda terrorists. Now U.S.

tax dollars are used to provide safe harbor and protection for Khatami.

The failure of this administration to

persuade the U.N. Security Council,

particularly Russia and China, to impose sanctions on Iran for developing

nuclear weapons is the greatest diplomatic failure of our time. Why have

they failed? Because they refuse the

concept of linkage. We seek Russia’s help on Iran while refusing to make the

slightest concession on issues Russia

cares about like Moldavia, Chechnya, Obkazia, any reasonable U.S. policy

which subordinates these issues that

are minor to us to the goal of preventing a nuclear Iran.

Likewise, we refuse to link how

China deals with Iran with how we deal with China on trade issues, such as how

we choose to respond to their legally

questionable currency manipulations. Mr. Speaker, the options are clear.

We can use all our economic and diplomatic power, including linkage, to stop

Amadinijad’s nuclear weapon program, or we can bow down and surrender.

Actually, the Bush administration

has embraced a third option. Talk

tough, avoid effective action, especially linkage, and take solace in the

fact that the policy failure will not become manifest and Iran will not develop and test a nuclear weapon until

after 2008. Bush refuses linkage. We are doomed to a nuclear Iran.