Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Defending America against all enemies, foreign and domestic, is the first

and fundamental purpose of the Federal Government. Once, it took countries of great economic wealth to field

a powerful military, to threaten the

United States, and to place our people in fear. The threat of this new century

has now changed, because we have individuals that truly hate us and can use

something as simple as box cutters to place our people in fear and terror.

With regard to the threat of Saddam Hussein, it must be recognized for what

it is: a deliberate and patient campaign

by Saddam to terrorize free people and

undermine the very foundations of liberty. I am sufficiently convinced without

hesitation that Saddam represents a

clear and present danger. As a Gulf War veteran, I am filled with emotion

to contemplate that my comrades will once again be upon the desert floor. I

submit that it is easier to be ordered to

war than to vote that someone else may go in my place. However, now is

the time for our Nation to in fact be vigilant and to authorize the President

to preserve freedom through military action, if necessary, and to take our

foreign policy as defense in depth.

In many respects, this resolution represents a continuation of the Gulf War.

Saddam Hussein agreed to provisions of

the cease-fire. He has violated his cease-fire, he has been flagrant in his violations, and the hostility is now

open and notorious. After a decade of denial, deception, and hostility toward the world, it is time to

seek Iraq’s compliance and, if necessary, remove this despotic dictator, his weapons of mass

destruction, and the terrorists he supports and harbors.

Saddam Hussein and the Ba’ath Party rule Iraq through terror and

fear. I will share some personalized stories.

Through interrogations at the enemy prisoner of war camp during the Gulf

War, having done these interviews with

Iraqi high command conscripts, I learned several things: number one, the

Iraqi people do not like Saddam because he, in fact, keeps the great

wealth to himself, keeps different tribes in ignorance, to the pleasure of

his own tribe. In fact, one of the conscripts that I interrogated was

scared to death of an American soldier. Why? Because they had been told that

if you are captured by Americans, that you, in fact, would be quartered, your body would be quartered. Over 90,000

Iraqis that were held in two prisoner of war camps, I say to my colleagues,

have had the opportunity to tell the stories of how well they were treated

by Americans and, in fact, they called

the prisoner of war camps ‘‘the hotel.’’ Let me tell about their leadership.

Before the interrogation of a two-star Iraqi general, he was sitting with his

legs crossed on the desert floor with his hands in his face weeping like a child.

I had an interpreter with me. When I walked up, I kicked the bottom of his

boot and, through the interpreter, I

asked him to stand at attention. He stood up and I asked him if he was an

Iraqi general. He responded and said yes, he was. Here I am, an American

captain in the Army, and I told him, then if you are an Iraqi general, then

act like one. Mr. Speaker, why would an Iraqi general be weeping upon the desert floor?

Because Saddam hand-selects his general officers. They do not earn it. The

men who serve in their military have not earned the trust and confidence.

Also, what will be told is the lethality of American combat troops.

They know exactly what happened in

the short war of the gulf. The operations with regard to any military ac-

tion that may occur in the Gulf War, I say to my colleagues, is so completely

different than the operations of 10 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I have faith in the Iraqi people because I also remember them.

Do my colleagues know what their request was at the prisoner of war camp

to bring calm? They just wanted to listen to Madonna. So that is what we

did. We piped in Madonna. They wanted

to listen to ‘‘The Material Girl.’’ Their culture is far more Westernized than

we could ever imagine, and they like Americans.

This is not against the Iraqi people.

This is any action to get Saddam Hussein to comply with the cease-fire to

disarm; and if, in fact, he does not, then force is the means of last resort.

And the soldiers, while they prepare to fight and win the Nation’s wars, they

are the ones who have taken the oath to lay down their life for the Constitution, and they do not want to fight. In

fact, they want peace. But if called upon, they, in fact, will serve.

So I will vote for this resolution, and I will think about my comrades who may be placed in harm’s way, and I

also will think of the children that are left behind and the spouses who will keep the watch fires burning for their

loved ones. Support the resolution.