Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise in strong support of this most

balanced resolution. Like most of my

colleagues who support the President

in this important matter, I am not voting for this resolution because I have

any wish to speed to war; I am voting

for this resolution because I hold out

hope for peace, a peace that can still

come, but only if the United Nations

will apply decisive pressure to Iraq to

open itself to unconditional, unfettered weapons inspection.

Unfortunately, the last decade has

shown that without the use of force as

a threat, Saddam Hussein will continue

to stonewall and ignore every resolution issued by the United Nations, all

the while amassing weapons of terror.

The resolution before us today does not

send us to war, but it does provide a

powerful incentive for Hussein to finally comply with the dictates of the

United Nations. With the threat of

force, the United Nations and President Bush will be able to negotiate

from a position of strength.

Nobody, no legislator, Republican or

Democrat, takes this responsibility of

sending our children off to war lightly,

but nor can we stand by as Saddam

Hussein and his regime continue to

work to amass stockpiles of the world’s

most deadly weapons. My deepest fears

lay in the thought that he could soon

supply terrorists with nuclear weapons.

We simply cannot ignore our responsibility to protect our country, democracy, and our lone democratic ally in

the Middle East, the State of Israel.

Mr. Speaker, again, I hold out my

hope for peace; but to rely upon a dictatorial madman with little respect for

the life of even his own people, let

alone American life, to bring about a

peaceful resolution to this crisis would

be foolhardy. It is for that reason I

strongly believe that we must

strengthen the President’s hand. With

a hopeful heart, but realistic concern

over this threat, I will cast my vote in

support of this resolution as a last

chance for peace.