Mr. Speaker, I rise in

strong opposition to the Lee amendment.

This amendment is another abdication

of the United States’ leadership

in the world. It is tantamount to saying

that Congress should contract out

decisions on national security to foreign

governments: Paris, Beijing, Damascus.

The United Nations is not an autonomous

authority. It is a place to conduct

diplomacy between nations. Our

Nation’s security and sovereignty are

inextricably intertwined. We do not

subrogate our sovereignty to the

United Nations. The United States, as

the sole remaining superpower, must

have a policy of restraint to international

conflict management, but we

never give up our ability to act unilaterally

in the world if we must move

into a region to bring stability.

This amendment ties the hands of

the Commander-in-Chief. We should

never, ever do that. The President has

spoken prudently, talking about bilateral

action, meaning bringing other nations

with us. Those who have been

speaking here for the last hour in support

of this amendment have been talking

as if the United States is somehow

wanting to unilaterally march off to

war. They use the phrase ‘‘give peace a

chance.’’

Mr. Speaker, we are the peaceful Nation.

We want to work cooperatively

with other nations around the world,

and that is what the President is going

to do. So when my colleagues say ‘‘give

peace a chance,’’ it has been 10 years.

We have these 16 U.N. resolutions. Let

us go back into this regime of the

United Nations and weapons inspections.

When we look at that, the U.N.

was and is hesitant to back up the violations

of these 16 U.N. resolutions.

Their response has been tepid.

Also, I would ask my colleagues to

look with regard to how the inspectors

were undermined, as Iraq would appeal

directly to the sympathetic Council

members and to the Secretary General.

Iraq worked consistently to erode the

credibility and the positions of these

U.N. inspectors over the last 10 years.

They would complain to the Security

Council, and then the challenges of the

claims of the weapons inspectors would

suffice. Unfettered access was strictly

a myth. Respect for Iraqi concerns relating

to national security, sovereignty

and dignity took precedence over the

findings and destroying of Saddam’s

weapons of mass destruction programs.

Effectively, the actions of the Secretary

General, when he intervened,

made the Iraqis and the inspectors

equal in presenting their case before

the Security Council.

With regard to Saddam Hussein’s motive

for having weapons of mass destruction,

he believes that they are

vital to his power. The regime has two

experiences in which it feels its very

survival is linked to the possession of

weapons of mass destruction. Deputy

Prime Minister Tariq Aziz pointed out

that hitting cities deep in Iran during

the Iran-Iraq war with long-range missiles

and countering human wave attacks

with the massive use of chemical

munitions saved Iraq in the Iran-Iraq

war. Moreover, Baghdad believes that

its possession of biological and chemical

weapons during the 1991 Gulf War

helped deter the United States from

marching on to Baghdad.

Now, that is their dimension. That is

their understanding. So Saddam will do

everything he possibly can to maintain

a stockpile of weapons of mass destruction.

So this thing about give peace a

chance, well, we have given peace a

chance. The President has also used

words of saying that military force will

be the means of last resort.

So I think the President has been

very clear. We will show the United

States has the resolve and power to

stand up against Iraq, seek their compliance,

force their word in their violations

of the cease-fire; but if they do

not, then the world will act and disarm

Saddam Hussein and change the regime,

if necessary, to bring peace and

stability to the Middle East as a region.

We should vote down the Lee amendment

and support the sovereignty and

national dignity of this country.