Mr. Speaker, I rise in

support of the Lee amendment.

I am particularly supportive of this amendment

because it would place the emphasis

where it ought to be—which is in multinational

diplomacy and within the context of a strong

commitment to the U.N. inspection process—

in this important campaign to disarm Iraq and

protect our allies national security.

Questions have been raised about our ability

to do unfettered and complete inspections,

and whether or not we were able to find anything

that Sadaam Hussein did not want us to

find the first time around.

Mr. Speaker, I would say, that if we have

not learned from past experience with Iraq,

and if we do not have the technology to

search out, find and destroy biological or

chemical weapons, or weapons of mass destruction,

then we are also not prepared to go

to war with Iraq.

Many of us have spoken over the past week

about the dangerous precedent that would be

set by the United States employing a unilateral

first strike against Iraq. The other grave concern

of many which was supported by the recently

released CIA report, is that whatever

weapons Sadaam had would be deployed in

desperate retaliation bringing unimaginable

death and destruction to us and our allies.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues. We must not

set such a dangerous precedent, or commit

our young men and women to an unjustified

conflict. We must use our resources to

strengthen our economy, and to invest in the

needs of people here at home, and devote

more effort to creating the kind of society that

will increase U.S. moral authority and the respect

of our world. And we must not weaken

our democracy by ceding our authority to the

executive branch.

Vote against H.J. Res. 114, and vote aye on

the Lee amendment.