Mr. Speaker, I thank

the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise with some concern

in my opposition to this resolution,

because I have such high regard

for my friend, the gentleman from Missouri

(Mr. SKELTON), who just spoke in

favor of the resolution. But I have read

the resolution carefully, and I think

this is a step backward in all of our actions.

It really restricts, rather than

broadens, the use of force against Iraq

that already is authorized under current

law.

Section 3 is even narrower than Public

Law 102–1, which already authorizes

the United States to use force to restore

international peace and security.

We are already authorized to stop Iraq

from supporting terrorism. We are already

authorized to prevent Iraq from

threatening its neighbors. We have already

authorized the United States to

protect Iraq’s own civilian population.

I believe you can read this resolution

clearly. All of those things would no

longer be authorized. I think you cannot

even continue to enforce the no-fly

zone under this resolution.

Section 3 would require the United

States to wait for the United Nations

Security Council to act before the

President could take action to protect

our national security interests against

the dangers of weapons of mass destruction

posed by Iraq. Even the

United Nations Security Council approval

of section 3 would not authorize

the United States to act. We would

have to have United Nations action,

and then we would have to have a second

vote in this Congress.

The vote in the Congress is restricted

by the substitute.

This is a step backward. It sends a

muddy signal about our resolve. It

completely replaces the Gephardt-

Hastert resolution that is before us,

and really postpones a critical question

to another day.

We have put this question off too

long already. This resolution asks us to

put it off yet longer. I encourage my

colleagues to join me in rejecting this

Spratt substitute resolution and moving

forward to pass the Hastert-Gephardt

resolution later today.