Mr. Speaker, I thank the

gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise this morning in strong support

of this substitute. As I said yesterday,

many of us know that there is a better

way, and the gentleman from South

Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has focused our

efforts with his leadership and with his

guidance. He has led the way to a carefully

constructed and well thought out

resolution, one that takes into account

the dynamic and the potentially dangerous

situation in which we find ourselves

today.

Unilateral action, Mr. Speaker,

would cost billions of dollars and possibly

thousands of lives. Carelessly

stepping into a conflict is not something

that should be undertaken lightly.

I do not think that the administration,

as I said yesterday, has made the

case for this type of action. This appropriate

resolution supports the President’s

request of the Security Council

for arms inspections that is backed by

force. This resolution authorizes President

Bush to use the same Armed

Forces of the United States as his father

did in the Persian Gulf War in

military action that is sanctioned by

the Security Council. If the Iraqis defy

the inspectors and the U.N. will not authorize

force, this Congress will expedite

a vote for a new resolution to authorize

that force.

Saddam Hussein and his regime are a

menace to our security, and I agree

with the President that the Security

Council should enforce resolutions and

put a stop to his system of ‘‘cheat and

retreat.’’ The Security Council should

compel Iraq to destroy its weapons of

mass destruction and its means of producing

such weapons, and if armed

force is necessary, it should be with

their concurrence as well.

This bill sets the stage for a prudent

process to accomplish these objectives.

More importantly, it emphasizes the

tenet that war should be a last resort

and not a first resort.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to

support this resolution.