Mr. Speaker, America

is a great Nation because it always at

times of toil and tumble has followed

great principles.

We have always matched the might

of our Armed Forces with the force of

our great principles, and it is a great

American principle that at times of

international trouble, we work with

the international community, not

without it. It is a great American principle

that we do not launch unilateral

first strikes without the support of the

international community and the vote

of the U.S. Congress.

The Spratt resolution follows and upholds

those great American principles,

and the underlying resolution violates

them. No Congress should give any

President a blank check to start a unilateral

first strike for any reason, anytime,

with or without any allies.

This Nation gave the world the great

principles of freedom of speech and

freedom of religion and ought to lead

the Nation in the concept of going forward

on the arc of human history

which is working together for mutual

security rather than backwards to the

law of the jungle.

I do not want to vote to make it the

legacy of this generation of American

leaders to send us backwards where a

strong nation devours the weak, and

we do not work with the international

community.

There is a practical reason for doing

this. As General Hoar, or Zinni, I cannot

remember which one, said, why

would we supercharge Osama bin

Laden’s recruiting efforts with a unilateral

first strike?

The Spratt resolution imbues great

American principles. We should follow

it is the American way.