Mr. Speaker, I thank

the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE)

for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, as we reach the conclusion

of this historic and dignified debate,

now is the appropriate time to review

the facts that compel the United

States to act in self-defense and in defense

of the civilized world.

The fact, Mr. Speaker, is that the

Iraqi regime is employing the vast

wealth of his country to develop biological,

chemical and nuclear weapons

in direct violations of the 1991 ceasefire

agreement and in violation of numerous

United Nations Security Council

resolutions.

The fact is that the Iraqi regime is

responsible for two wars against its

neighbors resulting in the deaths of

hundreds of thousands.

The fact is that the regime’s abuse of

the U.N. administered Oil For Food

Program is creating catastrophic

shortages of food and medicine for

thousands of Iraqi women and children.

The fact is that the regime’s association

with terrorists undermines stability

in the Middle East and threatens

the security of the United States of

America.

The fact is that weapons of mass destruction

in the hands of someone who

sanctions the wholesale murder, starvation,

rape and mutilation of ethnic

Kurds, Shiite Muslims and other opponents

is a clear and present danger to

the security of the world.

Does the discovery by U.N. inspectors

of detailed drawings for constructing a

small nuclear device in Saddam’s three

as-yet-undismantled uranium enrichment

facilities not sufficiently reveal

the dangerous ambitions of this dictator?

Time and time again over the course

of this debate, Mr. Speaker, these facts

have been acknowledged by all of those

who have spoken. And yet opponents of

this resolution continue to resist what

I believe is the obvious conclusion.

Yes, the President should continue

the diplomacy, should work with the

United Nations to fashion stronger

sanctions and a regime of coercive inspections.

That work is under way as I

speak. But what incentive does the

Iraqi regime have to honor its international

obligations if Congress fails to

give the President the tools he needs to

compel them to do so? What incentive

is there for the United Nations to act

with courage and conviction if Congress

fails to do so?

Mr. Speaker, we cannot wish this

problem away. We must save ourselves.

We must act. I support the resolution.