Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to

thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr.

HYDE) for his tremendous leadership in

bringing this resolution to the floor. In

addition, I would like to commend

President Bush for providing courageous

leadership during this time of national crisis.

As America continues to wage a

world war against terrorism, the time

has come to weigh the dangers of confrontation

against the risks of inaction. A year ago on September 11, the

United States, our people, and our institutions

were attacked. That day the war began. I respond to those of my

colleagues posing the question: Where

is the imminent threat? Why must we

confront Iraq now? I ask simply: How

many more innocent Americans must

die in order for the threat to be imminent?

We face an enemy that will stop at nothing to kill Americans, including

taking their own lives. This enemy

could not survive without the state

sponsorship it receives from Saddam

Hussein, an oppressive dictator who is

a sworn enemy of the United States. In

order to win the war on terror, we must

effect a regime change in Baghdad.

As we consider the resolution before

us, we must consider two fundamental

questions: Does Saddam Hussein have

the desire to harm the United States of

America? And does Saddam Hussein

have the ability to carry out that objective?

In answering the first question, we

must be mindful that he has aligned

his regime with the world’s most unsavory

characters who continue to seek the destruction of freedom and democracy

around the world. He has openly

praised the attacks of September 11,

attempted to assassinate a former U.S.

President, and directly ordered acts of

terror against innocent civilians. Our

national security requires us to conclude

that he aims to threaten the lives of American citizens.

Saddam Hussein is an oppressive tyrant

who, with each passing day, increases

his ability to terrorize the world with the most destructive weapons

known to man. He currently has

chemical and biological weapons and is

actively pursuing a nuclear capability.

The accumulation of these weapons is

transforming Saddam Hussein from a

regional threat into a global menace.

Whether we act to prevent him from

acquiring such weapons, or act to prevent

him from using them once he has them, action is required.

Although the United States is a

peace-loving Nation, there will never

be peace and security so long as Saddam

Hussein is in power. Effecting a

regime change and liberating the people

of Iraq is the official policy of the

United States Government. President

Bush has demonstrated a willingness to

pursue peace, yet he must also have

the authority to present Saddam Hussein with the absolute certainty that

the full force of the United States military is ready to act.

This resolution gives the President

this necessary authority, and I wholeheartedly urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.