Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution to give the

President of the United States the authority

to exercise his sworn duty to protect the people of this Nation.

There is no question that Saddam

Hussein is a threat to the United

States and other parts of the world. He

has used weapons of mass destruction

against his own people, killing and

maiming thousands upon thousands of

innocents, including women and children.

He has deceived weapons inspectors

and violated the conditions of the

1991 cease-fire agreement with the

United Nations. He has continued to

stockpile chemical and biological

weapons, and recent intelligence tells

us he is much closer than we previously

thought possible to developing and constructing a usable nuclear weapon.

Over the past few years, we have

learned many painful lessons regarding

the Middle East and terrorism: the Marine

barracks in Beirut; the airmen we

lost in the bombing of the Khobar Towers

in Saudi; the foreign service personnel

we lost in Tanzania and Kenya;

and then the sailors weapon lost in

Yemen; and, finally, Mr. Speaker, the

people we lost in New York and in D.C. Intelligence tells us that Saddam

Hussein has massive stockpiles of

weapons and he has missiles, the capability of delivering those weapons.

Our President does not easily want to

go to war. He has even stated this repeatedly on many occasions, but it is a

difficult situation that he is in and we

are in, Mr. Speaker. But this resolution

demonstrates the resolve of the American

people to force Saddam Hussein to

comply with U.N. regulations which,

until now, he has flagrantly abused.

This resolution will send a clear message

to the Middle East, to the oppressive

dictator, the Butcher of Baghdad,

and to the rest of the world that we

will not live in fear; that we will not

tolerate terrorism; and that we will use

the force necessary to protect our people,

our freedoms and our way of life

from those who seek only to destroy such.

It goes without saying this President

has sworn to do a duty. We must give

him the power and the necessary authorization to do so.

I strongly support this resolution and ask my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, today we are debating whether

or not to support the President of the United

States in his efforts to exercise his sworn duty to protect the nation.

That there is a gathering threat to America

from the dictator Saddam Hussein goes without

saying, but let me reiterate some of the

past actions that demonstrate that threat.

Saddam Hussein invaded neighboring Kuwait

without provocation. He has used weapons

of mass destruction against his own people,

killing and maiming thousands upon thousands

of innocents, including women and children. In 1993. Saddam sent a Land Cruiser

loaded with 400 pounds of explosives into Kuwait

to attempt to assassinate former President

George Bush. He has deceived weapons

inspectors and violated the conditions of the

1991 Cease-fire agreement with the United

Nations. He has continued to stockpile chemical

and biological weapons, and recent intelligence

tells us, is much closer than we previously thought possible to developing and

constructing a usable nuclear weapon.

Over the past 12 years we have learned

many painful lessons regarding the Middle

East and terrorism. Our citizens have been attacked

and killed repeatedly. The 1996 bombing

of the Khobar Towers by Saudi dissidents

funded and organized by Iranian Leadership

killed 19 of our servicemen and women. In

1998, the coordinated bombing of American

embassies in Tanzania and Kenya killed 224

people, including 12 Americans. In 2000, 17

American Sailors were killed in the Port of

Yemen when terrorists bombed the USS *Cole.*

And our nation still reels from the effects of

September 11, 2001 when thousands of our

countrymen were tragically lost to us in devastating attacks.

And yet, as painful as each of these incidents

has been, nothing can compare to the

destructive and deadly capability of Saddam

Hussein’s arsenal of terror. Imagine for a moment

the complete destruction of a city the

size of Atlanta, with its entire population of 4.1

million people suddenly silenced in a nuclear

blast. Imagine New York City and its 19 million

residents dead from the effects of Sarin or VX

Nerve gas. Imagine Washington, DC and its

half million residents, sick or dying from Anthrax,

Botulism, or one of the other deadly biological

agents in Saddam’s arsenal. And can there be any doubt that he would

fully use such weapons in American if given

the chance. If you doubt it, I ask you to consider

the Kurds who opposed Saddam and the

horrid fate they met at his bloody hands.

Our President does not eagerly anticipate

war. He is not bent on sending young men

and women into harm’s way. He has even

stated repeatedly his desire to avoid a conflict.

But this resolution demonstrates the resolve of

the American people to force Saddam Hussein

to comply with UN Resolutions which, until

now he has flagrantly disregarded. Without the

teeth provided by this resolution, nothing will

change. This resolution will send a clear message

to the Middle East; to the oppressive dictator—

the Butcher of Baghdad; and to the rest

of the world that we will not live in fear, that

we will not tolerate terrorism, and that we will

use the force necessary to protect our people,

our freedoms, and our way of life from those who seek only to destroy.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution before us today

is not about whether we will go to war against

Iraq, it is about whether we will take the necessary

precautions to protect American citizens

from a cruel dictator, and while doing so,

remove the yoke of oppression from the necks

of the people of Iraq. It is about empowering

the President to do the job he has sworn to

do. It is about enforcing the United Nations

mandates against a nation that has repeatedly

disregarded them. It is about assuring our

safety, security, and freedom. And it is a necessary

tool to ensure the disarmament of Iraq

and the removal of Saddam Hussein and his regime of terror.

I support this resolution and urge my colleagues to pass it.