Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution.

No person of common sense wants

war. Rational people agree that war

should be the last resort. But there is a

real, dangerous, and deadly threat

posed by Iraq; and we must face this

challenge head on or suffer the consequences of inaction.

Saddam Hussein ignores repeated demands

to stop accumulating weapons

of mass destruction. These are not our

demands, they are the demands of the world.

In an ideal world, Saddam Hussein

would disarm immediately. In an ideal

world, Saddam Hussein would stop

manufacturing, stockpiling, and pursuing

weapons of mass destruction. In

an ideal world, Saddam Hussein would

tell us what happened to Captain Scott

Speicher, a young man, a Navy pilot

from my hometown of Jacksonville,

who was the first man shot down behind

enemy lines during the Gulf War.

In an ideal world, Iraq would honor the

16 United Nations resolutions that he

has thumbed his nose at for the last 11 years.

But we do not live in an ideal world.

The reality demands that we act. We

must act because the danger is grave

and growing. We must act because Saddam

Hussein is a man with no moral

limits. He is uniquely evil, and the

only ruler in power today, and the only

one since Hitler, to commit a campaign

of chemical genocide against his own people.

We must act because the worst thing

we could do is turn our heads and pretend

that Saddam Hussein does not

exist. We must not allow this dictator

to arm himself with nuclear capabilities

and position himself further as the

world’s bully, blackmailing those within

his nuclear grasp, blindsiding regional

stability, and threatening our

national security through his dealings

with terrorists.

There is nothing desirable about

breaching the bounds of civility to

forge peace. Even so, I believe there are

situations that cause a nation to rise

with certainty and defend itself.

I urge my colleagues to send a clear

message to Saddam Hussein: disarm, or

face the consequences. There is no middle ground.