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

Americans are a peace-loving people.

While we desire a diplomatic resolution

to the Iraqi crisis, we must be prepared

to support the President if military

force becomes necessary.

Saddam Hussein is a dangerous and

unpredictable despot who has committed

genocide, including the use of

chemical weapons to slaughter his own

people. It is estimated that Saddam

has butchered over 200,000 of his own

citizens in the past decade. He led his

country into an 8-year war with Iran, a

disastrous conflict with the U.S.-led

coalition in 1991, and is open about his

financial and technical support for

Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Saddam has always overestimated

his military capabilities and underestimated

the resolve of the civilized

world. He surrounds himself with ‘‘yes

men’’ who reinforce his ego and ambition

and fail to warn him of the consequences

of his actions. This makes

Saddam an immediate threat to America

who can neither be trusted nor

dealt with rationally, in spite of the

testimonials provided by two Members

of Congress who recently visited Iraq.

We cannot wait for Saddam to develop

a nuclear device and the missiles

to threaten our troops, allies, and our own territory.

We cannot ask what will happen if we

act, but, rather, what will happen if we

do not. We must not only remove

Saddam’s weapons of mass destruction,

but Saddam himself.

We cannot wait for Saddam to arm

terrorist groups with weapons of mass

destruction, nor can we allow him to

use these weapons to blackmail his

neighbors. He has proven himself to be

a menace to the stability of the entire Gulf region.

In Afghanistan, U.S. forces worked

with the anti-Taliban opposition to

free the country. We also reversed an

impending famine in that country. The

U.S. is working with the new Afghan

government to build the foundation for

a civilized society that respects human

rights and international law. No less

should be expected for the people of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow the

world to be tormented by terrorists or

tyrants. The problem is the regime.

The problem is Saddam. We know who

the enemy is, we know what he does,

and we know what we must now do.