Mr. Speaker,

the September 11 attack claimed the

lives of thousands of Americans, and

dozens more have perished in our war

against terrorism. Just yesterday, a

U.S. Marine was killed in Kuwait by al

Qaeda-trained terrorists. According to

press reports, our Marine was killed in

a supposedly secure area, and Kuwaiti

authorities are baffled over how the

terrorists were able to carry out their murder.

I bring up the death of this Marine

because it should serve as a reminder

that there are no guarantees in war.

We must think through the consequences

of a war in Iraq and get answers

to our questions. Because if we

do not ask the tough questions now, in

a few short weeks, while Americans are

comfortably at home doing their lastminute

holiday shopping, hundreds of

thousands of our troops are going to be

deployed to another combat zone.

That, in turn, makes each and every

one of us taking part in this debate responsible

for our national security and

the welfare of our troops.

This vote is undoubtedly one of the

most important that many of us will

ever cast. This is not a vote on whether

the President of the United States

should be able to broaden our war

against terrorism to include Saddam

Hussein. It is a vote on whether now is

the best time to attack, given that we

do not yet have a new U.N. Security

Council resolution or the support of

our closest friends and allies in the

international community. It is a vote

on whether now is the best time to attack

given that we have not used the

full weight of our economic and diplomatic

might to avert a war. It is a vote

on whether we proceed with war when

we have not determined what its objectives

are, how long it will last, how

much it will cost, or what kind of a regime

will be set up afterwards.

This is not Desert Storm, where Iraq

invaded Kuwait, where we had clear

goals and the support of the international

community, and we only paid

about 10 percent of the cost of that war.

Mr. Speaker, I would not raise any of

these questions if Congress had been

informed that Iraq posed an imminent

threat to the security of the United

States. We have not received that information.

And I have many more unanswered

questions, such as: How will

the war affect our economy? How will

the war affect our homeland security?

What happens to international cooperation

in our hunt for terrorists?

What happens if Iraq lashes out at

Israel? Are we prepared to recast our

military as an army of occupation for

the entire Middle East?

I am raising these questions because

they are the same ones posed to me

every weekend back in Oregon. While

there has been a lively debate on this

resolution, it has been far from persuasive.

Nobody seems to have the answers.

And, trust me, I have tried,

through briefings, through talking to

experts, through going through classified

materials. At this time, I cannot

go home with a clear conscience and

explain why I voted to broaden this

war with so many questions left unanswered.

So I will oppose the resolution. And

for those who have committed themselves

to voting for this measure,

please consider asking these tough

questions. It is easier to ask questions

before we go to war, not after we commit

ourselves and our young people to

battle. When we have received answers

to our questions, and when we have received

assurances that we have tried

everything, and that the only way left

to nullify Iraq’s threat to our national

security is military action, only then

would I vote to use force.

We do not have the answers to the

questions. We do not have those assurances,

and so I will vote ‘‘no’’ and urge

my colleagues to do the same.