Mr. Speaker, this

debate is occurring at an auspicious

anniversary in our Nation’s history.

Forty years ago this month, our Nation

stood at the brink of nuclear annihilation.

Offensive nuclear weapons were

being placed 90 miles from Miami. A

dictator stood ready to launch a missile

strike against this Nation. And the

United States, while supported by the

world community, stood alone in confronting the menace.

Mr. Speaker, there are ominous parallels

to the missiles of October 1962

and the Iraqi threat of 2002. While we

debate this resolution, I believe it is illuminating

to go remember what President

Kennedy faced 40 Octobers ago.

President Kennedy did not want to go

to war. He knew what war meant. But

he also knew the dangers of inaction

far outweighed the risk of action.

We are faced with a similar situation

today. A tyrant is building a nuclear,

chemical, and biological weapons capability

designed only for offensive use.

International mediation is preferred,

but not an absolute method of engagement.

The threat is real, and inaction

on our part today will put us at greater risk tomorrow.

This resolution is not a blank check

to go to war. It is not defiant of the

world community to pass this resolution.

No one wants to go to war and see

lives lost. No one wants our blood and

treasures spent in far-off lands. But

just as President Kennedy acted with

threat of force of our military to end a

threat 40 years ago, we must not remove

this option from President Bush

today. I urge support of this bipartisan

resolution.