Mr. Speaker, September 11, 2001, brought to light a horror that

the American people and the world had up

until then only seen in movies. On that day,

we learned, as a nation, what it means to be

terrorized. The nineteen men who hijacked airliners

and used them as guided missiles

showed us that even on our home soil Americans

are not shielded from the reach of terrorism.

Bearing in mind, we must continue to

defend against these forces of evil and those

who support them. We cannot spend the rest

of our lives in fear. I support this resolution in

order to protect the life of every American, at

home and abroad, I also believe it offers the

best chance for peace because it clearly communicates

U.S. resolve to Saddam Hussein

and makes clear that his continued refusal to

disarm will be his undoing.

Mr. Speaker, granting the authority to send

our brave men and women in uniform overseas

to fight in hostile territory is the most difficult

decision we make in Congress. That was

true last year and it remains true today. Since

the beginning of the first mission in Afghanistan

on October 7, 2001, our military men and

women have fought terrorists and disrupted

their networks, liberated a country, and

brought the prospect of peace and democracy

to a nation that had not seen either in decades.

While our military campaign in Afghanistan

is slowly coming to a close, we must not

lose sight of our primary objective, to rid the

world of terrorists and those who sustain

them. Saddam Hussein and his regime in Iraq

fit this description.

Mr. Speaker, after sifting through the evidence,

reviewing the facts, and probing the

Administration, I am convinced Saddam Hussein’s

regime is a clear and present threat to

the security of the United States and our allies.

Since he came to power in Iraq in 1979,

Hussein has waged war on his neighbors and

terrorized his own people with chemical weapons.

He has allowed terrorists groups, such as

al Qaeda, to operate safety in Iraq. He has

supported terrorist actions by compensating

the families of Palestinian suicide bombers for

their attacks on innocent Israeli citizens. He

orders his military to fire missiles and artillery

on U.S. and a coalition aircraft that patrol the

U.N.-imposed no-fly zones that protect Kurd

and Shi’a Muslims in Northern and Southern

Iraq, respectively. He has attempted to assassinate

a former U.S. President. Moreover, he

has violated the basic human rights of his

people, causing them to live in fear and poverty,

while he builds Presidential palaces and

lives of life of luxury. Currently, there is nothing

stopping him from using weapons of mass

destruction against the United States and our

allies, or from giving them to terrorists.

After the gulf war in 1991, Saddam Hussein

agreed to abide by United Nations Security

Council Resolutions 686, 687, and 688. By

agreeing to these resolutions, Hussein was required

to, among other things: allow international

weapons inspectors to oversee the

destruction of his weapons of mass destruction;

not develop new weapons of mass destruction;

destroy all of his ballistic missiles

with a range greater than 150 kilometers; stop

support for terrorism and prevent terrorist organizations

from operating within Iraq; help

account for missing Kuwaitis and other individuals;

return stolen Kuwaiti property and bear

the financial liability for damage from the gulf

war; and end his repression of the Iraqi people.

Mr. Speaker, he has taken none of these

required actions.

As a matter of fact, over the past decade,

Saddam Hussein has shown nothing but contempt

for the United Nations and its memberstates.

In all, Hussein has violated sixteen critical

U.N. resolutions. It became obvious that

Hussein had no intention of cooperating with

the U.N. when Iraq ceased cooperation with

weapons inspectors on October 31, 1998,

after several years of evading, deceiving, and

even harassing U.N. weapons inspectors. This

flagrant violation of U.N. Resolution 687

prompted the passage of U.N. Resolution

1205, which called on Iraq to continue ‘‘immediate,

complete and unconditional cooperation’’

with U.N. weapons inspectors. These

events led to the Clinton Administration signing

the Iraqi Liberation Act of 1998 into law,

which clarifies the official position of the

United States as promoting regime change in

Iraq. Regardless, it has been four years since

weapons inspectors last visited Iraq. There is

no doubt that within this time Hussein has reinvigorated

his weapons programs, and according

to the International Institute for Strategic

Studies, an independent research center

based in London, there is little doubt that Hussein’s

nuclear capabilities are within reach.

If Saddam Hussein persists in violating U.N.

Security Council resolutions and refuses to

disarm and the use of force becomes our only

option, then the goal of military action should

not just be to remove weapons of mass destruction

from Iraq. Military action must also

have the end result of removing Hussein from

power. In the end, nothing short of a regime

change will liberate the Iraqi people, whom

Saddam Hussein has repressed for more than

two decades. Since April of 1991, Hussein has

continued to ignore U.N. Resolution 688,

which requires him to allow immediate access

to international humanitarian organizations to

help those in need of assistance in Iraq. Furthermore,

Hussein punishes his people by diverting

funds from the U.N.’s ‘‘oil-for-food’’ program

to pay for his weapons programs. I believe

Saddam Hussein will continue to do what

he has done so effectively in the past: violate

the basic human rights of every Iraqi citizen.

I would now like to read to you the following

excerpt from the book The Threatening Storm:

The Case for Invading Iraq by Kenneth M.

Pollack. Mr. Pollack, a former analyst on Iraq

for the Central Intelligence Agency who served

on the National Security Council during the

Clinton Administration, is one of the foremost

experts on Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi regime.

This is a regime that will gouge out the

eyes of children to force confessions from

their parents and grandparents. This is a regime

that will crush all of the bones in the

feet of a two-year-old-girl to force her mother

to divulge her father’s whereabouts. This

is a regime that will hold a nursing baby at

arm’s length from its mother and allow the

child to starve to death to force the mother

to confess. This is a regime that will burn a

person’s limbs off to force him to confess or

comply. This is a regime that will slowly

lower its victims into huge vats of acid, either

to break their will or simply as a means

of execution. This is a regime that applies

electric shocks to the bodies of its victims,

particularly their genitals, with great creativity.

This is a regime that in [the year]

2000 decreed that the crime of criticizing the

regime (which can be as harmless as suggesting

that Saddam’s clothing does not

match) would be punished by cutting out the

offender’s tongue. This is a regime that practices

systematic rape against its female victims.

This is a regime that will drag in a

man’s wife, daughter, or other female relative

and repeatedly rape her in front of him.

This is a regime that will force a white-hot

metal rod into a person’s anus or other orifices.

This is a regime that employs thalium

poisoning, widely considered one of the most

excruciating ways to die. This is a regime

that will behead a young mother in the

street in front of her house and children because

her husband was suspected of opposing

the regime. This is a regime that used chemical

warfare on its own Kurdish citizens—not

just on the fifteen thousand killed and

maimed at Halabja but on scores of other villages

all across Kurdistan. This is a regime

that tested chemical and biological warfare

agents on Iranian prisoners of war, using the

POWs in controlled experiments to determine

the best ways to disperse the agents to

inflict the greatest damage.

This is the fate that awaits thousands of

Iraqis each year. The roughest estimates are

that over the last twenty years more than

two hundred thousand people have disappeared

into Saddam’s prison system, never

to be heard from again. Hundreds of thousands

of others were taken away and, after

unforgettable bouts of torture that left them

psychologically and often physically mangled,

eventually were released or escaped. To

give a sense of scale, just the numbers of

Iraqis never heard from again would be

equivalent to about 2.5 million Americans

suffering such a fate.

It is true that Iraq has said publicly that it

will allow weapons inspectors to return. While

some members of the United Nations believe

Iraq is taking the necessary steps to rectify its

past transgressions, Iraq has placed several

conditions that can only hamstring the U.N.’s

efforts. If the U.N. bows to Hussein’s demands,

the legitimacy of the entire organization

could be called into question.

The purpose of this resolution is to authorize

the President to use such force as may be

necessary to protect the national security of

the United States from threats posed by Iraq

and to enforce U.N. Resolutions. Yet even

more clear than this language is the message

it sends. This resolution sends the message of

resolve. It shows that we are resolved to protect

ourselves and our allies with whatever

means are necessary. And, it is precisely because

of this message that we open up the

possibility of a peaceful settlement to this

great threat. To be clear, after eleven years of

dealing with Iraq one thing is certain: Saddam

Hussein is motivated only when he finds he

has no other options. This resolution demonstrates

our unity behind action, should he

fail to meet the demands of the international

community. Without it, we can be assured that

Hussein’s Iraq will continue stockpiling and developing

weapons of mass death, providing

safe haven for terrorists, and tormenting his

own people. Meanwhile, the danger for American

and our allies will grow even worse.

Additionally, we seem to be experiencing

quite a logjam in the U.N. I believe that passage

of this resolution will help break that impasse

and secure a meaningful and direct resolution

from the U.N., which will help build a

larger multilateral coalition around this just

cause. If these last attempts at a peaceful solution

do fail, then we must show that we are

resolved to act to rid the world of this great threat.

Mr. Speaker, war should always take a

backseat to peace. I still hold out hope that a

peaceful solution can be reached. Unfortunately,

time and time again, Saddam Hussein

has forsaken his opportunities for peace. He is

aggressively seeking to acquire nuclear weapons

and build up his other weapons of mass

destruction. The longer he is allowed to make

progress on these deadly projects, the greater

the threat to us—including the threat that Iraq

could supply terrorists with weapons of mass

destruction. If Hussein refuses to comply, the

United States must take action, or risk the use

of biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons

against us on our own soil.