Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution

because I believe that the threat

of force is required if we are to have

any hope of disarming Saddam Hussein

and removing the threat that he presents

to our Nation and to the world.

Just about everybody agrees that

Saddam Hussein does in fact pose a

threat. The debate seems to be about

how large that threat is, how imminent

it is, and how much it is directed at us.

I think the evidence makes it clear

that we face a threat.

I am sympathetic to those who would

like to wish away that threat because

of the hard choice that we have to face

when we realize that we do have a

threat against us, but it does not

change the facts. Saddam Hussein has

a long history of trying to develop the

most deadly weapons possible: chemical,

biological, and nuclear. He was

first thwarted in 1981 by Israel, then in

1991 by the Gulf War, and now all evidence

points to the fact that he is trying

to develop those weapons again.

That makes him a threat right off the bat.

Plus he has a proven propensity for

violence, a proven propensity to use

those weapons. As bad as we think Iran

and North Korea are, and the Soviet

Union was, none of those countries

have ever used chemical weapons. They

drew the line; Saddam Hussein did not.

He crossed over it, and he used chemical

weapons against his own people.

He also has clearly expressed his disdain

for the United States of America

ever since the Gulf War, so clearly he is a threat to us.

The presence of international terrorism

changes the nature of this

threat. Many have said we have not

proven a link to 9–11, we have not proven

a link between Saddam Hussein and

al Qaeda, but there is ample evidence

that some degree of connection is

there. And there is certainly ample

reason that tells us that Saddam Hussein

coming together with the international

terrorists who oppose us is

quite likely and quite possible; and

that makes the threats both imminent

and to the U.S. because terrorism

would enable Saddam Hussein to deliver

these weapons through means

other than having to develop an intercontinental

missile. He could deliver

them in any manner of different ways

and has shown a certain willingness towards

violence against the U.S.

We face a threat. We cannot wish

away that threat because of consequences

of acknowledging it. We face

that threat, and we must stand up to

it, and the threat of force against him

is necessary to meet it.

Now, I want to deal with the preemptive

argument because many have said

we are becoming a rogue nation by

doing this. And I regret what the President

has said about a policy of preemptive

strike because I think it has muddied

the waters. We do not have to violate

international law to go to war

with Saddam Hussein. We are in an armistice

with Saddam Hussein and Iraq.

We went to war with them in 1991. That

war was only ended by an armistice, an

armistice which everyone knows Saddam

Hussein is in violation of. We are

clearly within the bounds of international

law to use force to enforce

that armistice. We do not have to get

into a debate about first strikes and

preemptive action. We are clearly

within the bounds of the international law.

It has also been said that we should

work multilaterally. I completely

agree that we should. Again, I regret

the approach the President took earlier

this year when stories were leaked

about how he could do it without congressional

approval. He did not want to

go to the U.N. He wanted to do it unilaterally.

I think that was a mistake. I

think he should have learned from his

father’s example when Iraq invaded Kuwait.

The first thing the first George

Bush did was to call the U.N. and say

let us work together. We should have

taken that approach, but now we are.

It has been said, How can we give

this power to the President who wants

to go right over our heads and totally

ignore Congress? We are here talking

about it. He is not going over our

heads. He is asking us for that support.

So that too is not an issue.

We should act multilaterally. We are.

It is my profound hope that we will not

go to war, that Saddam Hussein faced

with this threat will allow for the disarmament

to happen. But absent this

threat, rest assured he will not react in

the way that we want him to.

I also regret that politics has been

brought into this. During the time

when we were trying to deal with the

crises in Kosovo and Bosnia and even

Iraq in 1998, I was deeply angered by

Republican colleagues who attacked

the President’s character as he tried to

deal with this threat.

Mr. Speaker, the criticisms of President

Clinton were that in trying to deal

with Saddam Hussein, when he finally

so thwarted the U.N. inspectors that

they were forced to leave because they

could not do their job, criticism was

that the President was ‘‘wagging the

dog,’’ he was dealing with his personal

problems. We undercut our own President

at a time when he needed us most.

And now when I see Democrats doing

the same thing by questioning the

President’s motives at a time when we

need to come together as a country, I

similarly destain that partisanship.

There is plenty of room to disagree

here about whether or not we should go

to war. We do not need to question the

personal motives of our President now

any more than we should have back in

1998 when it was Republicans doing it

to Democrats instead of Democrats

doing it to Republicans.

Lastly, I would like to deal with the

issue of how this affects the people of

Iraq. There has been much criticism of

the sanctions regime on Iraq, much

criticism of the effect that has had on

the Iraqi people. Ironically, that criticism

has come from some of the same

people who now criticize our threat to

use force against Iraq. I think the criticism

was this is harming the Iraqi people

and doing nothing to Saddam Hussein.

So if we do not threaten to use force

and back it up if necessary to disarm

Saddam Hussein and remove that

threat, what are we left with? Do we

simply remove the economic sanctions

and say it is okay for Saddam Hussein

to make a mockery of international

law, to make a mockery of the same

multilateralism that we claim to support,

to continue to develop weapons of

mass destruction that threaten us and

the world and simply say we will do nothing?

I fully admit this is a hard choice.

Going to war is not easy, but we cannot

wish away the threat and pretend

somehow this is simply motivated by

personal motivations of the President.

There is a clear threat here we must

deal with. I hope the threat of force

deals with it; but if the threat does

not, we must follow through in order to

protect ourselves and protect the world.