Mr. Speaker, I yield myself

such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fateful moment

in our Nation’s history and in the history

of this Chamber. Once again, we

have been awakened to the reality that

we have mortal enemies. They do not

desire compromise. They are not interested

in negotiation. Our suffering does

not give them human pause. Indeed,

they celebrated. They do not seek our

mere defeat. They are intent on our destruction.

The demonic horror of these deliberate

attacks remains inconceivable,

but we have no choice except to accept

that it is real nonetheless. Our enemies’

message was stark and inescapable.

They will make war on all of us

wherever we exist for as long as we

exist.

The orchestrators would not have ordered

these actions if they did not believe

that they themselves would survive,

that they would celebrate in triumph.

I fear they have judged our failure

to render justice for their past

atrocities as weakness and as an invitation

to even greater assaults. We

must correct this misperception, not

with words but with acts.

No creed which revels in the slaughter

of innocents can be included in the

human community. No cause which

aligns itself with evil can be allowed to

exist among us. Toleration of such

things not only invites our own destruction,

it is a mortal sin.

Those who hate us believe that a free

people cannot defend themselves. They

assure themselves that we will falter in

the difficult task before us. Our self-proclaimed

enemies will seize upon any

weakness of resolve on our part. As

long as they believe that there are divisions

among us, as long as they expect

our course of action to be indecisive

and incomplete, they will have hope of

success.

We must deny them that hope. Our

forefathers, who won our liberty, bequeathed

it to us in the knowledge that

to keep it we would have to prove ourselves

worthy of it. They were confident

that we would not shrink from

the measures necessary to defend it.

All who have gone before us, all who

have given their lives for their country

are witnesses to us here today. That is

why I ask my colleagues to put aside

our differences and move beyond rhetoric

and now act.

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln

reminded his countrymen of their

responsibility with these words: ‘‘We

cannot escape history. The fiery trial

through which we pass will light us

down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest

generation.’’

It is a profound thing that a free people

go to war. That is why we, the Nation’s

elected representatives assemble

in Congress, meet today, for we share

with the President the responsibility

for ensuring that our country is protected,

that our people remain safe.

Therefore, we as Members of Congress

now have a duty to perform. We

must grant the President the fullest

authority to employ all of the resources

of the United States, to make

war on our enemy, to destroy their

ability to harm us and to defend our

beloved country.

In an earlier hour of trial for our Nation,

Julia Ward Howe was inspired to

write the words that became known as

the Battle Hymn of the Republic. We

ask God once again to ‘‘loose the faithful

lightning of his terrible swift

sword’’ against the enemies of our

country and of mankind.

America has always triumphed over

her enemies; and with God’s help, we

will do so again.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of

my time.