Mr. Speaker, I thank the

chairman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this

resolution. Sadly, we find ourselves

today dealing with a responsibility to

provide national security under the

most difficult of circumstances. To declare

war against a group that is not a

country makes the clear declaration of

war more complex.

The best tool the framers of the Constitution

provided under these circumstances

was the power of Congress

to grant letters of mark and reprisal in

order to narrow the retaliation to only

the guilty parties. The complexity of

the issue, the vagueness of the enemy,

and the political pressure to respond

immediately limits our choices. The

proposed resolution is the only option

we are offered, and doing nothing is unthinkable.

There are a couple of serious points I

would like to make. For the critics of

our policy of foreign intervention in

the affairs of others, the attack on New

York and Washington was not a surprise,

and many have warned of its inevitability.

It so far has been inappropriate

to ask why the U.S. was the target

and not some other Western country.

But for us to pursue a war against

our enemies, it is crucial to understand

why we were attacked, which will then

tell us by whom we were attacked.

Without this knowledge, striking out

at six or eight or 10 countries will not

help.

Without this knowledge, striking out at six or

eight or even ten different countries could well

expand this war of which we wanted no part.

Without defining the enemy there is no way to

know our precise goal nor to know when the

war is over. Inadvertent or casual acceptance

of civilian deaths as part of this war I’m certain

will prolong the agony and increase the

chances of even more American casualties.

We must guard against this if at all possible.

Too often over the last several decades we

have supported both sides of many wars only

to find ourselves needlessly entrenched in

conflicts unrelated to our national security. It is

not unheard of that the weapons and support

we send to foreign nations have ended up

being used against us. The current crisis may

well be another example of such a mishap.

Although we now must fight to preserve our

national security, we should not forget that the

founders of this great nation advised that for

our own sake we should stay out of entangling

alliances and the affairs of other nations.

We are placing tremendous trust in our

President to pursue our enemies as our commander-

in-chief but Congress must remain

vigilant as to not allow our civil liberties here

at home to be eroded. The temptation will be

great to sacrifice our freedoms for what may

seem to be more security. We must resist this

temptation.

Mr. Speaker we must rally behind our President,

pray for him to make wise decisions, and

hope that this crisis is resolved a lot sooner

than is now anticipated.