Mr. Speaker, this

time of great peril has brought forth

the best in our people, from those who

rescue and heal and protect at ground

zero, to those who across America raise

flags, collect donations and give blood.

But times of peril can also cause our

well-justified anger and desire for immediate

action to overwhelm democratic

safeguards erected over the last

2 centuries. The tension that we face

tonight is to provide the President

with enough authority to eradicate

wrongdoing without wronging the carefully

crafted systems of checks and balances

so essential to our democracy.

Neither should this body lightly yield

the power of the purse by granting unlimited

access to the public treasury to

the executive.

As we vote for this important resolution

with the lives of so many at stake

in this important endeavor against terrorism,

we cannot let the executive

branch become the exclusive branch.

Our approval must represent not the

end but the beginning of congressional

involvement. Today, we pledge to redouble

our efforts to assure the security

and the well-being of people in

America and in many other parts of

the world as we challenge terrorism.

But we do so, entering this difficult

course of national involvement, with

an eagerness to see that our most precious

democratic institutions are also

preserved.