Madam

Speaker, it has been a profoundly significant

day in the House of Representatives.

And I suppose one of the things

I would like to say first, Madam Speaker,

is that the world will go on. We

have made a decision today, I believe,

that will ultimately serve the United

States well. I believe the economic

challenges before us in this country are

significant. I also believe that we

should always prefer temporary failure

at that which will ultimately succeed

than temporary success at that which

will ultimately fail. And I believe that

market factors were put in place long

before this President came into office

that are ultimately responsible for the

challenges that we face today. However,

I also believe that we’re going in

the right direction.

Senator JOHN empowered House Republicans

in a very significant way a

few days ago. And we made tremendous

improvements, I believe, to move this

toward a market-based bill that will

call upon the private sector to capitalize

the recovery of this economy.

And I believe we’re going in the right

direction. And for those, Madam

Speaker, that would question the commitment

of this Government to make

sure that we stabilize our economy, I

would say to them, just wait. We will

come up with something that will be

far better than anything that we’ve

discussed heretofore. And I believe that

ultimately we will succeed and that

America will be stronger and better for

the fact that we have stepped back and

chosen to regroup and come together

to make an even better plan.

Madam Speaker, tonight I come really

not to talk about the economy. I

come to talk about something that in

my judgment can affect the economy,

the national security, and each one of

the citizens of this country, and even

the freedom of the world in a very significant

way. I would remind us that as

we talk about economic challenges, we

have to remember that we are talking

about a $700 billion bill today, and yet

remember that two airplanes hitting

two buildings cost this economy $2 trillion.

September 11 certainly was more

than just an attack on the Trade Center.

But the fact is that it had a profound

impact on our economy. And we need

to understand that as we deal with the

economic issues that plague this Nation,

they have always been there. But

so have issues of significant national

security.

And so tonight I want to address this

body on something that I have wanted

to address it for a long time. Because I

believe that a nuclear Iran represents

one of the greatest threats to peace

facing the human family.

So, Madam Speaker, let me begin

first by saying that there are millions

of innocent, freedom-loving citizens in

Iran who are truly good and gentle people

suffering under brutality and oppression.

They long for true freedom

and partnership with the international

community. To them, I first want to

say that America stands with you. To

them I first also want to say that we

long to see you become a true democratic

ally in the Middle East that rejects

the ideology of jihadist terrorism

and upholds the protection of the innocent

and equal human dignity. America

will do everything in our power to hasten

the day when Iran and its proxies

will no longer threaten the world with

nuclear jihad, and when we will have

the privilege of walking together, I

pray, Madam Speaker, in the sunlight

of human freedom.

And, Madam Speaker, almost exactly

3 years ago, I stood at this podium and

called upon the United States to clearly

define its position towards what is

now the world’s largest state sponsor of

terrorism, the Islamic Republic of Iran

is, in my judgment, the world’s largest

sponsor of state terrorism. And I called

upon the IAEA to refer Iran to the Security

Council at that time because I

believed then, and I believe now, that

Iran is systematically pursuing the development

of nuclear weapons.

At that time, while Iranian President

Ahmadinejad had made very clear his

intentions to pursue nuclear capability,

to eradicate the nation of Israel

and to offer material support to

Hezbollah and other nonstate terrorist

actors, the nation of Iran had not yet

been referred to the United Nations Security

Council.

Since then, Iran has been the object

of two American resolutions that ban

trade and freeze assets of Iran’s nuclear

and related entities. Beginning from

August, 2006, Iran has blatantly ignored

deadlines established by the

International Atomic Energy Agency,

or IAEA, and refused to comply with

repeated Security Council deadlines to

cease its uranium enrichment.

Meanwhile, the lack of regard by the

Government of Iran for innocent

human life has continued to be horribly

demonstrated in its own human

rights violations that currently plague

the entire nation that are causing the

Iranian people to suffer. Ahmadinejad’s

tyrannical regime continues its brutal

suppression of dissension by routinely

employing torture, executions,

kidnappings and arbitrary arrests and

detentions.

Despite claiming to desire peace, Iranian

President Ahmadinejad has undermined

every advancement toward

peace and emerging democracy in the

Middle East by actively supporting terrorist

groups such as Hezbollah,

Hamas, Shiite insurgents and militias

in Iraq that are responsible for killing

and maiming U.S. and Coalition forces

and countless innocent citizens.

Iran, Madam Speaker, has now catalyzed

a nuclear arms race in the Middle

East. Previously there was only one

nuclear aspirant in the Middle East.

That was Iran. Now there are ten.

Now, Madam Speaker, the coincidence

of jihadist terrorism and nuclear

proliferation represents the greatest

immediate threat to the peace of the

human family in the world today. Iran,

because of its ideology, represents a

significant danger. The past 2 years

have provided incontrovertible evidence

of the conclusion reached in the

March, 2006, ‘‘National Security Strategy’’

report. Let me quote it verbatim,

Madam Speaker.

‘‘The United States faces no greater

threat to our future security from a

single Nation than Iran.’’

Madam Speaker, let me for a moment

speak to Iran’s capacity to do

this Nation harm. Iran’s clandestine

nuclear program has been in the works

for nearly 20 years. As a member of the

Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty,

Iran’s radical regime has pursued a hidden

nuclear program in flagrant violation

of its treaty commitments and obligations.

Their actions over the past

18 years are clearly directed toward

building a nuclear weapons capability.

Today, Iran is enriching uranium

with approximately 3,000 centrifuges

operating at its Natanz uranium enrichment

facility. Madam Speaker, a

total of 3,000 centrifuges is the commonly

accepted figure for a nuclear enrichment

program that is past the experimental

stage and that can be used

as a platform for a full industrial scale

program capable of churning out

enough enriched uranium and materials

for the building of dozens of nuclear

weapons.

The Director of National Intelligence,

Mike McConnell, concurred

with Israeli intelligence reports earlier

this year when he testified before the

Senate Intelligence Committee. He

stated that 3,000 centrifuges operating

continuously would produce enough

fissile material for a nuclear weapon in

less than 2 years. In less than 2 years,

Madam Speaker. Iranian leadership has

now announced its intention of increasing

its number of operational centrifuges

from 3,000 to 9,000.

Moreover, Madam Speaker, Iran is

now beginning to manufacture its own

centrifuge, the IR–2, which improves on

the advanced P–2 centrifuge used to

build Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal and

that are capable of producing enriched

uranium two to three times faster than

the older models. Iran says that it

plans to move toward a large-scale uranium

enrichment program that will ultimately

involve 54,000 centrifuges.

Madam Speaker, a few days ago, in

comments prepared for delivery to the

IAEA board members, the European

Union warned the world that ‘‘Iran is

nearing the ability to arm a nuclear

warhead.’’

Iran’s President says its activities

are intended for domestic energy production

only. Let’s examine that for a

moment. Iran already possesses a

wealth of its own natural gas, and that

is the ideal fuel for generating electricity.

Here in the United States, for

instance, we have largely mastered nuclear

power plant technology, but natural

gas is still the overwhelmingly

preferred fuel for our own electric

power plants.

So, Madam Speaker, how can the

world believe that Iran is continuing

enrichment of uranium for only peaceful

purposes, when it would be far easier

to utilize the wealth of natural gas

it already has at its fingertips? It

makes no sense whatsoever that Iran

has gone to the expense of building a

facility of 3,000 centrifuges to ostensibly

enrich uranium for a nuclear

power plant, when they could easily

buy that fuel from Russia at a fraction

of the cost. This is like building an entire

factory to make a ham sandwich.

And this is from an oil rich country

that imports 40 percent of their gasoline,

rather than building the refining

capacity to refine it from their own oil.

Madam Speaker, if Iran’s uranium

enrichment program is only for producing

legal power plant fuel, why have

they hidden it for 18 years?

The IAEA had this to say: ‘‘Iran is

making an enormous investment in facilities

to mine, process and enrich

uranium, and it says it needs it to

make it for its own reactor fuel because

it cannot count on foreign supplies.

But for at least the next decade,

Iran will have at most one single nuclear

power reactor. In addition, Iran

does not have enough indigenous uranium

resources to fuel even one reactor

over its lifetime, though it has quite

enough to make several nuclear

bombs.’’

So we are being asked to believe that

Iran is building uranium enrichment

capacity to make fuel for reactors that

do not exist from uranium Iran does

not have.

Iran is also conducting covert research

on the technological requirements

to build and deliver a nuclear

weapon, including explosive tests and

the ability to modify its Shahab-3 ballistic

missile to accommodate a nuclear

payload.

The IAEA reports that Iran has already

manufactured enough uranium

hexafluoride to ultimately manufacture

at least 20 nuclear bombs. Media

reports suggest that Iran has built numerous

underground facilities, including

those at Natanz, and further it has

been reported that Iran now has experimented

with polonium.

Madam Speaker, polonium is a radioactive

isotope with only one principal