Mr. Speaker, I join my

colleague, the gentleman from Texas

(Mr. DOGGETT), to place on the record

this evening information important to

the American people.

One of the questions I have on this

resolution that President Bush has

sent up to the Congress, the joint resolution

to authorize the use of United

States Armed Forces against Iraq, is

the first question of why now, 7 weeks

before an election?

Just about a week ago, the President

properly appeared before the United

Nations, and he talked about the grave

and gathering danger of what was occurring

inside Iraq relative to Iraq’s

development of nuclear weapons and

biological and chemical weapons. But

the President did not say an imminent

danger. In other words, 7 weeks before

an election in this country, why does a

grave and gathering danger require us

to take precipitous action against another

nation state? I would ask the

President if action is not imminent,

why now? Why now are we faced with

this resolution, 7 weeks before congressional

elections? It is very, very curious

timing.

One of the other questions I would

ask the President is who is the enemy?

Now, we know who caused the carnage

over New York and Pennsylvania and

at the Pentagon, and we know al Qaeda

is a Middle Eastern-based terrorist network,

but their base is not Iraq. So I

would say, what is the connection between

al Qaeda, where our attention

should be focused, and Iraq?

I have gone to every single briefing

here in the Capitol this week trying to

get the evidence from the CIA, the Defense

Intelligence Agency, former ambassadors

from that region, weapons

inspectors that have gone into Iraq in

prior years. They have established no

connection between al Qaeda and Iraq.

So, who is the enemy? Who is the

enemy, Mr. President, and why are you

trying to pass this resolution at this

point?

Our forces are engaged in many

places on the globe, certainly keeping

order in the Balkans. But now we have

the Afghanistan situation facing us

with terrible, terrible disruption inside

that country, with terrorists coming

back, the Taliban, the leftovers, creating

difficulties in that region of the

world. And I think it is very important

to recognize that moving into Iraq will

be a significant military undertaking.

Who is the enemy? Who is the

enemy? We are not saying that Saddam

Hussein and that despotic regime functions

in a way that we consider acceptable

on the face of the Earth. But what

is the justification for now?

Let me mention also, is it just a coincidence

that in Iraq, which holds the

second largest supply of the world’s oil

reserves, is there any possibility that

in the resolution the President has

sent us where he talks about defending

the national security interests of the

United States and restoring international

peace and security in the region,

that it might have anything to do

with the oil that sits underground in

that particular country?

We know that about 2 years ago in

October one of our destroyers, the

U.S.S. Cole, was suicide-bombed in

Yemen Harbor, and we know that we

are extended in that part of the world

to protect the oil lanes that are supplying

this country every day.

I say to myself when I look at the

President’s plan for energy that he

sent up here earlier this year, what a

disappointment to me as an American,

a 21st-century American, that he has

us wed to oil as the future, a diminishing

resource.

We should be moving to a carbohydrate

future, not a hydrocarbon future

in this country. We should be

moving toward a hydrogen future, not

a petroleum future. We should be moving

to a photovoltaic future, to a fuel

cell future, not a petroleum future. So

both domestic policy and the flawed

energy document released and our foreign

policy are totally tied together in

this wedding of oil and politics that

has been the heritage of this country

for the last 70 years.

It is time to change. America wants

to move on. In fact, if we removed oil

as a proxy for our foreign policy, what

a different world this would be.

I think it is important to remind the

American people that the current recession

that we are in, causing significant

damage across this country, including

in districts like mine, was triggered

by rising oil prices. Lots has happened

since that occurred; but nonetheless,

look at what you spend at the gas

pump and watch international events

and how they are tied to oil.

I would just say that it is time for

America to change. I look forward to

future debates on this resolution and

the future direction for this country

that is domestically independent and

at peace in the world.