Mr. Speaker, I appreciate

this opportunity tonight. I want

to thank my friend from Illinois for his

compliment. It is truly appreciated,

and I know it is shared on my side that

I very much appreciate, Mr. Speaker,

my work with my colleague from Illinois.

I also want to point out that he is

one of the Members here who simply

does not talk about his patriotism but

he practices it.

He is active reservist. He serves his

country in uniform on a regular basis,

as do his brother and sister reservists.

I think he honors this institution and

this country by his service, and I thank

him for it.

I appreciate the work we have done

in our Iran Study Group. The emphasis

is on the word ‘‘study.’’ We think the

country faces a truly perilous situation

with the prospect of the mullahs who

run the Iranian government obtaining

a nuclear weapon. We have devoted

ourselves to analyzing how this problem

came about and to carefully analyzing

how we might solve it.

Our intention tonight is to have a

discussion of those solutions that

would be based on diplomacy, and I

look forward to having my friend from

Illinois lead that discussion, and I will

join it so I can complement his points

as to how we can solve this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I want

to explicate the nature of the regime of

which he speaks. This Congress and our

Presidents of both parties did not

choose the terrorists label lightly.

This is a regime which has its antecedent

roots in the holding of American

diplomats hostage for 444 days, an

image which we will not soon forget. It

is a regime where people are imprisoned

and tortured for dancing at wedding

celebrations. It is a regime in

which women who express their points

of view are brutalized, assaulted and

tortured in Iranian prisons. And perhaps

the most striking piece of evidence

as to the real nature of this regime

is found in the run-up to the elections

which are going to be held in Iran

on the 17th of June, in 9 days.

1,014 people registered to be part of

that election, to be on the ballot for

this election, and the ruling council

that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr.

KIRK) made reference to under the Iranian

system has the right to chose who

goes on the ballot and who does not.

I say this again. If you want to run

for office, you file your nominating petitions,

and then a ruling council decides

whether or not you are worthy to

be on the ballot. Of the 1,014 persons

who filed to be on the ballot on the

June 17 election in Iran, six of them

were permitted to be on the ballot by

the ruling council, six people out of

1,014 people.

This is not a regime that can have a

nuclear weapon. We have to start this

discussion from the proposition that it

is unacceptable for a regime of this

dark nature to have a nuclear weapon.

Mr. Speaker, I again

thank my friend. It is important to

note that we have nearly a quarter century

of active deception from the Iranian

regime on this point.

As recently as 4 years ago, 3 years

ago, in international forums, the representatives

of this government were

actively denying that they were in pursuit

of a nuclear weapon. For nearly a

quarter century, we were told by the

Iranian regime that activities which

appear to be nuclear in nature were for

a domestic energy program.

Now, one must find it curious that a

nation that is sitting on one of the

largest supplies of crude oil in the

world, that is an exporter to the

States, whose main export is crude,

would find the need for a nuclear energy

program. That alone is a rather

curious proposition; but putting that

aside, we had a quarter century of deception

until, as the gentleman from

Illinois (Mr. KIRK) says, in 2002 resistance

leaders blew the whistle about the

facilities at Arak and Natanz.

I want to be very clear, Mr. Speaker,

that there has been controversy in this

Chamber about the existence of weapons

of mass destruction and ideological

views coloring that discussion. There is

no ideological dispute here. There is

factual understanding by the French,

by the Germans, by the British, by the

EU, by the U.N., by every objective

party in this case. It is not in factual

dispute that there is a nuclear program

going on in Iran.

Since the disclosures that became

public in December of 2002, as the gentleman

from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) just

said, we had a 2-year process of inspections

under the jurisdiction of the

IAEA of the United Nations, and they

confirmed the existence of plutonium,

or rather of uranium, enrichment facilities.

They confirmed the equipment

and the infrastructure necessary to

make the other parts of a reactor, including

a centrifuge, that would lead

up to the construction of a nuclear

weapon.

So we want to be very clear tonight

that what is in controversy is what will

happen next with respect to development

of this Iranian program. What is

in controversy is what we ought to do

about it. What is not in controversy is

that the Iranians actively pursued a

nuclear weapons program and that

they actively deceived the rest of the

world about that pursuit for a quarter

of a century.

Mr. Speaker, I thank

the gentleman for yielding.

This is truly a toxic combination of a

dishonest regime that has actively deceived

the rest of the world for a quarter

century, the most lethal and deadly

weapons known to man, and the ability

to use those weapons both in a conventional

and unconventional sense.

As the gentleman from Illinois’ (Mr.

KIRK) map shows very clearly, Iran tonight

has the ballistic capability, has

the ability to fire a missile that could

cause nuclear havoc to U.S. troops in

Iraq, in Kuwait, could cause the destruction

of America’s great friend in

Israel. This is a real and present danger,

but beyond the conventional danger

is the asymmetric unconventional

danger of the unconventional use of a

nuclear weapon in an unconventional

way: in a suitcase, in a rental truck, on

a container being shipped into a port of

the United States.

The risk that we are discussing tonight

is not only the risk that one of

the missiles that the gentleman from

Illinois (Mr. KIRK) just described would

rain down on U.S. troops in the Middle

East or on our friends in Israel or in a

friendly Arab state; the risk is that

this risk could manifest itself in Times

Square or in the Nation’s capitol

through the use of a nuclear weapon in

an unconventional way. A toxic combination

of a Jihadist regime, a 25-year

record of deception, and the possession

of this lethal technology is something

we simply cannot countenance.

Now there have been efforts, intense

efforts over the last 18 months or so to

address this problem. I know that the

gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) is

going to outline them, and we are

going to talk about how we support the

intent of those efforts, how we are

working through our working group to

try to buttress the efforts, but how we

believe that our country must be prepared

both in the eventuality of the

success of the negotiations or the failure

of the negotiations in order to protect

ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, I thank

my colleague for yielding.

I certainly share the view that the

Israelis did peace-loving people around

the world a huge favor in 1981 when

they took out Saddam Hussein’s nuclear

reactor program. The first Gulf

War in 1991 and the recent hostilities

which endure to today would have

looked very different and much worse

had Saddam been able to proceed with

that program.

It is tempting to exercise the socalled

Israeli option this time, to condone

an action by the Israelis that

would solve this problem. It is tempting,

but it is illusory because the nature

of this program is literally subterranean.

Much of the developmental

activity of the Iranian nuclear program

is underneath the Earth.

They are not easily penetrated or

perhaps not penetrable at all by an air

assault. As the gentleman from Illinois

(Mr. KIRK) has pointed out, in addition

to the dubious prospects of success as a

military proposition, there would be

the unbelievable fallout of probably

unifying the Iranian population

against us and our Israeli allies and

forfeiting what I believe is the best

hope for a peaceful solution to this

problem which would be voluntary, indigenous

change led by progressive

young Iranians who want to live in a

country where they can speak and worship

and vote and live as they choose.

Running the risk of offending and

alienating that block of forward-looking

young Iranians would be a risk I do

not believe we should bear.

As the gentleman from Illinois (Mr.

KIRK) suggests, we need to resist the

temptation of saying that the Israelis

can once again take care of this problem

as they did in 1981, because I do

not think the record shows that. What

we need to do is devise a robust, effective

plan to sanction and leverage the

Iranians toward a path of peace, rather

than a path of development of nuclear

weapons.

There is a sincere attempt led by the

British and the Germans and the

French to reach such a result. Most recently,

that attempt has resulted in an

agreement in November of 2004 which

calls for the suspension of the Iranian

enrichment program by the Iranians,

an active inspection program by the

United Nations, and then the extension

of economic incentives so the Iranian

economy may grow and prosper as a result

of that proposition. There is hope

that that will succeed. I hope it will

succeed. I know the gentleman from Illinois

(Mr. KIRK) does as well.

But the record must also show that

since November of 2004 there have been

at least three very serious problems reported

with respect to compliance with

the agreement. According to the IAEA,

that is the United Nations arms inspection

regime, Iran has limited IAEA access

to two secret Iranian military

sites, including a large complex at

Parchin where suspected nuclear access

may be taking place. Only two. The

IAEA inspectors visited the site in January

of 2005, but Iran has not allowed

visits subsequently. So they have already

begun to shut down the inspections.

Secondly, Iran is also alleged to have

withheld information and conducted

maintenance and other work on centrifuge

equipment and uranium conversion

activities. So there is centrifuge

work continuing even though the official

posture of the Iranian government

is they have suspended nuclear weapons

activities.

Finally, Iran is also beginning construction

of a heavy water research reactor

which could well be suited to plutonium

production, and I would note

for the record that discussions between

our European allies and the Iranians do

not cover plutonium development of a

weapon, they cover uranium enrichment.

There are two major pathways

to achieve a nuclear weapon. One is

based on uranium, and one is based on

plutonium. Even in its best day, this

agreement is not addressing plutonium.

So to answer the gentleman’s question

directly, what should we do, we

should anticipate what would happen if

this agreement does not succeed, and

we would define success as the abandonment

of the nuclear weapons development

program by the Iranians followed

by a transparent inspection regime

so the rest of the world could

verify that it has not yet been restarted.

In order to do that, the gentleman

from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and I believe,

and I think Democrats and Republicans

can come together and believe, that a

robust and effective program of economic

sanctions is what we need. I

know the gentleman from Illinois (Mr.

KIRK) has worked on one particular

idea which I think has very strong

merit and ask the gentleman to outline

that.

Mr. Speaker, gasoline

is the Achilles’ heel of the Iranian

autocrats. They have presided over

such a dysfunctional country that they

are in a situation where they sell crude

oil in huge amounts to the rest of the

world but import gasoline. Think about

that. A country that is literally awash

in the basic stuff that gasoline is made

of cannot produce its own gasoline. Estimates

go as high as 40 percent of the

gasoline consumed by Iranian consumers

is imported from other countries.

Now another measure of the importance

of what the gentleman from Illinois

(Mr. KIRK) is saying is this. Today

when a citizen of Tehran fills up his or

her tank of gas, they pay 40 cents a gallon.

I wish I could go home and tell my

constituents they were going to fill up

their gas tanks for 40 cents a gallon.

Obviously, it costs a lot more to

produce gasoline than 40 cents a gallon

in Iran, but this is such a sensitive

issue for the population of the country

that the Iranian parliament has voted,

and as a matter of fact in January of

this year the Iranian parliament voted

to freeze domestic prices for gasoline

and other fuels at 2003 levels.

Why did they do that? They did it because

it would be so disruptive to the

society and the economy to have a

price shock that would reflect the true

cost of a gallon of gasoline. If such a

disruption occurred, it would shake the

control, the iron grip the autocrats

have over this country. They have

identified their own weakness by freezing

the price of domestic gasoline.

What the gentleman from Illinois

(Mr. KIRK) is suggesting is a surgical

sanction. We are going to be I believe

going to the U.N. Security Council in

this calendar year. That is my prediction.

The gentleman from Illinois

(Mr. KIRK) may not share that, but as

I see things unfolding. On June 6, Monday,

the Iranians once again said they

would voluntarily suspend their uranium

enrichment program until more

talks ensued with the Europeans.

The election I made reference to earlier,

the one where 98 percent of the

candidates or more were expelled from

the ballot, if we can call that an election,

will take place on June 17. The

talks will resume at some point in Geneva

shortly after June 17.

I truly believe, given the track

record we have seen thus far, that a referral

to the U.N. Security Council is

very near. We have seen after a dozen

years of frustration with Iraqi sanctions

that the U.N. Security Council

taking a vote does not do a lot in and

of itself. They took a lot of votes

against Saddam Hussein over the

course of a dozen years, but people still

suffered and died and nothing really

changed.

The key question if, and I think

when, we reach the point of the U.N.

Security Council, is what are we going

to be asking for? Simply passing a resolution

that condemns the Iranians for

deceiving the rest of the world, violating

their responsibilities under the

nonproliferation treaty and continuing

with the development of a nuclear

weapon is not going to do it. It is going

to take a meaningful sanction.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr.

KIRK) has laid out a very meaningful

sanction. He has wisely avoided the

stick-your-head-in-the-sand approach

of saying, if they have a few weapons,

so what, they are a small country. I

fear we would find out the ‘‘so what’’

would be very soon.

He has also avoided the risk to rush

headlong into a military solution to

this problem. Military action should

never be taken off the table, never, but

they should never be the first instinct

or the first option. I believe what the

gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) has

outlined makes eminent sense, given

the internal politics of Iran.

If Iran could only consume the gasoline

that she produces domestically,

one of two things would happen and

they are both very disruptive to the regime.

The first is that they would have

to heavily subsidize the production

that they already have internally; they

would have to ration what people can

use to hold the price down; and they

would have to give up something else.

Either food prices would rise, housing

prices would rise, other energy prices

would rise and the standard of living of

the average Iranian would drop rather

precipitously.

The other option would be to let the

price of gasoline rise to meet the market

curve of supply and demand, which

I believe would cause chaos in that society.

I believe that the hundreds and

thousands of young Iranians who have

taken to the streets in recent years

want a change, and if the grip that

their rulers have is weakened by the

plan that has been set forth here, so be

it.

The gentleman from Illinois said a

few minutes ago about optimism, and

he talked about Ukraine and about

Libya and other countries giving up

nuclear weapons. Another source of optimism

I would daresay is this: If one

went back and researched speeches

made on this floor in 1985, if Members

had stood and said, you know, within 6

years, millions of people in the Warsaw

Pact countries are going to rise up and

make changes within their countries

without a violent revolution by simply

demanding that change occur, they

would have been hooted off this floor as

being hopelessly naive and unaware of

the way things really were.

I am not suggesting that Iran is like

the Eastern European countries. I

know the religion is different, the history

is different, the culture is different.

But I truly believe that human

nature is not different. And I think

that our 25-year-old students that we

hear from in Tehran want the same

thing that our constituents want and

the same thing those brave Poles and

Czechs and Germans and Ukrainians

and Russians wanted, which is to live

freely. And if we send a message that

we will stand by them, I believe that

they will be emboldened to try. And I

think that the gentleman from Illinois’

idea is not only an effective sanction

but it is that powerful message.

I thank my friend. It

is characteristic of the gentleman from

Illinois that he is a creative thinker

and someone who wants to problemsolve

rather than score political points.

Working with him has been a terrific

experience and one that I look forward

to continuing on this and other ventures.

I think there is broad consensus in

this House and in this country between

the two parties on two points. The first

is that there is a real and present

threat to our survival in the form of Islamic

jihadist terror. September 11 is

the most dramatic example, but there

are others. I think there are scarcely

any people who believe that is not a

very serious threat.

Of course I did. And

lost people I knew personally. I think

virtually everyone in New Jersey did in

some way.

The second point of consensus is that

America should always first use its

economic and diplomatic and spiritual

creativity to work with our friends and

solve problems. No one here wants to

rush to military conflict. And when we

do get in military conflict, that is

when it can be divisive and, frankly,

should be, that we should have vigorous

debate. What I like so much

about the gentleman from Illinois’ idea

is that it fully employs the diplomatic

and economic creativity of our country,

and I think it does rise to a spiritual

level of what our relationship will

be with our friends in Iran for years to

come. This is a surgical sanction that

uses the might of our private sector.

The gentleman from Illinois made

reference to the insurance sector. It is

very true that the insurance industry

is very unlikely to insure vessels that

would run afoul of a quarantine of gasoline.

And if the insurers will not insure

the cargo, the cargo does not flow.

If the cargo does not flow, you do not

need a naval quarantine. Frankly, the

economics work in that advantage.

Secondly, this is a recognition that

we want to share in the success of our

European friends. They deserve credit

for bringing us to a point where the

Iranians are at least taking the position

that they want to suspend this

program. They deserve credit for saying

they are ready to go to the Security

Council, our British and French

and German friends, should that need

become evident. So this is an extension

of a friendship with our allies in Western

Europe, and it is a way to build on

the success that they have had without

resorting to armed conflict but by

using the creative, economic and diplomatic

tools at our disposal.

Finally, I would say spiritually, I do

not doubt that someday, my daughters

are 12 and 10, Jackie and Josie, and I

think someday they will go to Iran. I

want them to go to Iran as exchange

students or as performers or as athletes

or as people to visit friends that

they have met in college or graduate

school. I do not want them to go there

as soldiers. We cannot ignore the reality

that a jihadist despotic regime is

trying to get a nuclear weapon, and we

cannot ignore the high probability

they will use it in ways that will terrify

the world. But understanding of

that threat does not imply a rush to

military action. Instead, it implies a

thoughtful, constructive plan such as

the gentleman from Illinois has laid

out.

It is our intention to introduce a resolution

that lays out the ideas behind

the gentleman from Illinois’ discussion

tonight. We want to persuade both

Democratic and Republican colleagues

and the administration to be supportive

of this idea. We want to show

that it is a reflection of our partnership

with our Western European allies.

And we want it to succeed. It is my

hope that it is never necessary, that

the mere fact that this is being discussed

will embolden progressive, freedom-

loving Iranians to take matters

into their own hands. But I think it is

going to take more than that. And I

think that the idea the gentleman from

Illinois has sketched out is one that

will work. It is pragmatic, it represents

our best tools and values, and I look

forward to supporting it.