Mr. Speaker, today I

rise to support the bipartisan resolution

on Iraq which we will vote on later

this week.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a member of

this body for the past 14 years, and I

have heard Members throughout those

years describe various votes as the

most important votes that they will

cast during their careers in Congress. I

would submit to my colleagues that

those votes—all of them—pale in comparison

to any vote to send young

American soldiers into harm’s way.

My family knows the pain of war. On

August 9, 1970, my brother Bill was

killed in Vietnam. He was a medical

corpsman, out in the field patching up

his buddies, when he stepped on a land

mine and lost his life. I do not want

any other American family to go

through what the McNulty family went

through back in 1970. That is why I

only favor a military option as the last

option.

As a great New York Governor used

to say when involved in debates, ‘‘let’s

look at the record.’’ Let us look at the

record with regard to Saddam Hussein.

He has chemical and biological weapons.

He has used them. He has killed

tens of thousands of Kurds. He gassed

to death 5,000 Kurds in a single day—

2,000 more than all of the people we

lost on September 11, 2001. And, as the

President pointed out last night, there

have been 750 attacks on American pilots

just in the past year.

There are 135,000 American service

personnel within the range of Saddam’s

missiles right now. And what is most

disturbing of all, Mr. Speaker, is

Saddam’s efforts to obtain nuclear

weapons. Most of the experts up until

recently have been saying that he is 2

to 5 years away from a nuclear capability.

Now several are saying it is less

than a year.

Mr. Speaker, how can we possibly

contain a modern nuclear war? I remember

the statement by then-President

Lyndon Johnson when asked

about the impact of a modern nuclear

war. He responded to the question by

saying simply, ‘‘The survivors will

envy the dead.’’

Mr. Speaker, this is the bottom line.

Saddam Hussein can never be allowed

to possess a nuclear capability. This bipartisan

resolution emphasizes international

cooperation, working with the

United Nations, and exhausting all

other options before we go to a military

option. It ensures that military

force will be used only as a last resort.

This is a substantial reordering of

priorities from the first draft, and for

that I thank the bipartisan leadership.

I support the resolution.