Mr. Speaker, I thank our great chairman for yielding me

the time. And, Mr. Speaker, if my colleagues in this Chamber have any

doubt about the necessity of our war against the sadistic and despotic

regime of Saddam Hussein, I urge them to look at this photo that I took

with Iraqi girls during a congressional trip that some of my colleagues

and I went on last December.

If my colleagues take a close look at this picture, they will see

bright, sunny faces of happy girls who look like they could live in my

district or any of their districts around this country, but the sad

reality is that a little over a year ago, these young girls were living

under the ugly regime of a murderous dictator who would not hesitate to

take their lives or the lives of their friends and family. In fact,

from 1983 to 1988 Saddam Hussein wiped out 60 villages and murdered

more than 30,000 Iraqi citizens with weapons of mass destruction. Human

rights organizations continually received reports from women who said

that rape was routinely used by Iraqi officials as weapons of torture,

intimidation, and blackmail.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know what would have happened to these girls if

the United States had not acted against Saddam Hussein's ruthless

Baathist regime, but I do know this much. Since the liberation of Iraq,

more than 5.5 million children went back to school this year; 2,300

schools which fell into disarray under Saddam's regime have been

rehabilitated. School children have books, shoulder bags, notebooks,

pencils, papers and desks to use for their studies; but, most

importantly, they are now living free from Saddam's repressive regime,

and they never have to worry again about being harmed by their

tyrannical government, thanks to the strong leadership of President

Bush and the heroic efforts of our men and women of the armed services.

I cannot say enough about our troops who risk life and limb every day

to bring freedom to these girls and to the other people of Iraq. I urge

strong support of this resolution endorsing our troops.