Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 557,

and I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, our military and coalition forces, as well as our

intelligence community, are all working tirelessly to protect this

Nation 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

A year ago, the United States led a military coalition to disarm

Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein's regime committed horrible atrocities;

and Saddam was a threat, a grave and increasing threat to his country,

his region, and to the world. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, marked the 16th

anniversary of Saddam's use of chemical weapons on the Kurdish citizens

of Iraq. Sixteen years ago, Mr. Speaker, as a result of this atrocity,

5,000 Kurdish Iraqis died. Saddam was indeed a terrorist in his own

nation. Thanks to our efforts, Saddam Hussein will never commit such

atrocities again.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, we are all safer without this tyrant

in power. Our decision to go to war in Iraq was based on our

intelligence about Saddam's threat to world security.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Intelligence, Analysis and

Counterintelligence, I know the substantial investment now being made

in our intelligence community to meet the demands of the global war on

terrorism. Our intelligence community is aggressively rebuilding its

capabilities that withered during the mid-1990s. Our clandestine

service dropped by 25 percent, and nearly one-third of our overseas

offices were closed. Our overall intelligence reporting fell by almost

50 percent during that period of time. Language skills were slow to

develop, limiting our ability to infiltrate rogue organizations or

intercept messages encrypted in tribal dialect and regional tongues. We

effectively lost our ability to see and hear in many of the world's

most dangerous places. Our intelligence community provided the best

information and analysis on Iraq that it could, given the reduced

collection, language shortfalls, and Iraq's active denial and deception

programs.

Everyone from David Kay to the Director of Central Intelligence,

George Tenet, has stated that analysts did not and would not change

their judgment to meet policy objectives.

Some argue that judgments in the October 2002 National Intelligence

Estimate on Iraq's Continuing Programs of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Programs were flawed. They point to the report's statement that ``Iraq

has chemical and biological weapons.'' However, this is only the first

six words of the second sentence in the declassified portion of the

report. The rest of the sentence reads, ``as well as missiles with

range in excess of U.N. restrictions and, if left unchecked, Iraq

probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade.''

Critics also fail to mention judgments made by Dr. Kay and the Iraqi

Survey Group regarding their findings in Iraq: ``We judge that Iraq has

continued its weapons of mass destruction programs in defiance of U.N.

resolutions and restrictions.'' Quote: ``Although we assess that Saddam

does not yet have nuclear weapons or sufficient material to make any,

he remains intent on acquiring them.''

Yes, chemical or biological weapons stockpiling have not been found,

but secret laboratories have. And, yes, Iraq appears not to have

reconstructed its nuclear program, but the Iraq survey group uncovered

documents that revealed Saddam's intent to make nuclear weapons.

Intelligence analysts seldom, if ever, are 100 percent perfect. This

is the nature of the business. Intelligence officers collect the dots

and analysts attempt to connect them. Given the reduced resources and

inadequate insight into Iraq, I say the picture we drew from a limited

amount of dots was pretty good.

And we were right to take action. Every day intelligence officers

make tough judgment calls and dangerous operations are conducted. We

must support them. We must support our troops in the ongoing efforts to

protect our Nation.

I support House Resolution 557 and strongly urge its adoption.