Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here and I wish

to address the first of the four points that Mr. Cole presented when he

introduced this particular rule.

I, like the gentlewoman from California who just spoke, and those of

us who were elected for the first time in the last two cycles, was not

here for the 1998 debate and piece of legislation passed by 360 of our

Members and signed by President Clinton which outlined our foreign

policy objectives with Iraq; nor was I here for what I was told was the

17-hour debate on the vote that authorized use of force in Iraq.

Those two, in my opinion, should have been the definitive debate and

vote on what our common policy would be as we move forward.

What I would like to talk to you about now is what I find most

compelling, and that is the legal rationale for what we are doing in

Iraq.

Saddam Hussein's Iraq violated 17 U.N. resolutions, three of which

demanded use of force for the violation of those. Saddam Hussein's Iraq

had violated the treaty he signed with the United States. His forces

were shooting at American servicemen. He put a bounty on the head of

every American airman that could be brought to him. He had offered a

cash bonus to every family of a suicide bomber who would blow up either

an Israeli or an American at the time.

When a foreign country violates its treaty with us and shoots at our

servicemen, that is a legal justification for our actions. In fact, it

is odd enough that we probably have a greater legal justification for

this war than any other conflict with which this country has been

involved in the last 50 years.

In Korea, we went in after one U.N. resolution, not 17.

In Vietnam, we made it a national priority because of a treaty we

had, not with Vietnam but with an ally, France.

We bombed Serbia and went into Bosnia, not because of a legal pretext

or compelling national interest, but because our European allies asked

us to assist them with their particular issue.

The quarantine during the Cuban missile crisis was an aggressive act

of war that was condemned by the U.N. Secretary General and protested

in dozens of cities throughout the world, but was, in my mind, not a

legal act but a right act of President Kennedy.

In Iraq, what we are doing is both legal and it is right.

Every war we have had has been littered with protests. Historians

tell us in the Revolutionary War a third of Americans were opposed to

it and a third were indifferent.

The War of 1812, Mr. McGovern's State tried to secede from the Union.

In the Civil War, we had the greatest riots proportionately we have

ever had in this country, and the Governor of New York inflammatorily

said President Lincoln's goal was to kill all of the Irish.

In the Spanish American War, the Speaker of the House postwar

resigned in protest.

In World War I, the Secretary of State prewar resigned in protest.

Only World War II has been atypical in those concepts of what we had.

As a history teacher, I see mass amounts of parallels with what we

are doing now and what has happened in history. I don't have the time

to go into any of those.

What I simply hope is for this House and this Nation is that we don't

have the tunnel vision of short-term policy and we do not reject the

lessons of history that will help us understand what should be the

definition of our common potential future and policy towards Iraq.