Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree

to the resolution (H. Res. 534) recognizing the importance and

credibility of an independent Iraqi judiciary in the formation of a new

and democratic Iraq.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all

Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend

their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under

consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may

consume.

Mr. Speaker, an independent judiciary is one of the hallmarks of good

government and is an essential check on the power of judicial and

legislative branches of the modern state. Indeed, a requirement for

evenhanded justice is an element of natural law and is called for in

the Bible and the Koran which require equal justice for the poor and

the rich.

In the case of Iraq, it would have been simple for a kangaroo court

of some sort to have convened, held a trial of such obvious violators

as Saddam Hussein and then had them shot immediately. This has been the

case in some uprisings, both in the Middle East and elsewhere, such as

when Romania's regime fell. This is not the path that the Iraqis have

chosen, and we should honor them for this choice. The trial of Saddam

as it is being carried out stands in sharp contrast to the actions of

the Hussein regime against its dissenters who were usually executed

after some paperwork was completed but where there was no semblance of

a fair trial.

The resolution before us expresses our support for an independent

Iraqi judiciary. This judiciary may disappoint from time to time. That

is the nature of independent judges, to make unpopular decisions based

strictly on law. Adherence to the rule of law and the existence of an

independent Iraqi judiciary will be a critical component to the

consolidation of Iraqi sovereignty and democratic governance, and I

appreciate the efforts of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Burgess), the

author of this resolution, who traveled to Iraq, met with the Iraqi

judges and came away so deeply impressed that he decided to put forward

this resolution tonight.

I also thank the chairman and the ranking member of the Committee on

International Relations, who expedited its consideration on the floor,

and to the House leadership for including it among the matters

scheduled this week as we move to the end of the House session.