Mr. President, when historians

look back on American foreign

policy in the early 21st century, they

will ask a few basic questions. One will

be whether we used our immense military

strength wisely. Another will be

whether we took effective action to

avert genocide in the world. But the

biggest question will be whether we did

all we could to avert the use of weapons

of mass destruction, and especially

a nuclear catastrophe.

The resolution before us addresses

one of the most sensitive nuclear nonproliferation

issues of our day, that of

Iran. Over the last 2 years, public allegations

and International Atomic Energy

Agency inspections have uncovered

nearly two decades of covert nuclear

programs that Iran has pursued

in violation of its obligations under

safeguards agreements with the IAEA.

While Iran insists publicly that these

programs are all peaceful, all the signs

and much of the political rhetoric in

Iran point to a nuclear weapons program

that has been conducted under

the cover of peaceful nuclear activities.

Nearly a year ago, Iran promised to

come clean on its nuclear programs

and to suspend all its uranium enrichment

and reprocessing activities. But

Iran has yet to comply fully with its

commitment. Instead, it has hidden

some of its activities and forced IAEA

inspectors to pull teeth in order to get

information about its programs; it has

delayed inspections and, at times, suspended

all cooperation; it has continued

production of components for uranium

enrichment centrifuges; and it

has announced an intent to test its

uranium conversion facility in a manner

that will produce feed material for

uranium enrichment centrifuges. All

those actions are violations of Iran’s

legal and political commitments.

More importantly, those actions suggest

that Iran still has something to

hide. They relate to nuclear activities

that are difficult to explain as peaceful

programs. Some of those actions relate

to programs involving the same criminal

network that aided Libya and provided

it with a nuclear weapon design.

And they are accompanied by political

statements that suggest Iran may well

want to develop nuclear weapons. If

Iran wants to gain the confidence of

the international community, that is

certainly not the way to go about it.

I do not believe that Iran poses an

imminent threat of testing or deploying

nuclear weapons. There is hence no

need at this time to threaten or undertake

military action, and the resolution

before us does not threaten, encourage

or authorize such action.

Some journalists interpreted a similar

resolution in the House of Representatives

as authorizing military

action, despite the denials of those who

supported that resolution, including its

co-author, Representative LANTOS of

California. That is because the House

resolution used the words

which sounded too similar

to previous resolutions on other

issues that did authorize the use of

force. To make it absolutely clear that

the resolution before us does not do

that, the authors of the substitute

amendment have deleted the word

‘‘all’’ from that phrase. We do not intend

this resolution to encourage the

use of military force by any country.

Neither can any concurrent resolution

authorize the use of force by the

United States. Under our Constitution

and under the War Powers Resolution,

only legislation signed by the President

can do that. A concurrent resolution

has no legal effect and cannot do

so.

What we do intend by this resolution

is to encourage all countries to help

convince Iran that its national security

is best served by giving up the

urge to develop a nuclear weapons capability.

An Iran with nuclear weapons—

or with the ability to produce

such weapons—will not be a more secure

Iran. Rather, it will only prompt

great concern among its neighbors and

risk their developing nuclear weapons

as well; and it will estrange itself from

all countries that support the Nuclear

Non-Proliferation Treaty or that believe

in keeping one’s international obligations.

If Iran wants to understand what nuclear

weapons will bring about, it can

look to North Korea, which is reduced

to begging and threatening the international

community in order to feed

its people and to provide even minimal

energy resources. Those are the wages

of proliferation: not security, but insecurity;

not acclaim, but ostracism.

If the nations of the world—and especially

the industrialized countries in

Europe and elsewhere that have important

trade relations with Iran—will

band together to deliver this message,

I believe that Iran will hear it and heed

it. But the message may well have to

be delivered with more than words.

Countries may have to take forceful

diplomatic and economic actions in

order to demonstrate to Iran the risks

that it runs if it insists upon building

a nuclear weapons capability. The

IAEA Board of Governors may well

have to report Iran’s noncompliance to

the United Nations Security Council,

and the Security Council may have to

take action under Articles 39 through

41 of the United Nations Charter to encourage

or order Iran to cease its programs

that would contribute to building

that nuclear weapons capability.

Countries can also remind Iran that

concerns which may have prompted its

covert nuclear programs are now largely

dissipated. The Soviet Union is gone,

and Russia does not threaten Iranian

sovereignty. Saddam Hussein is now a

criminal in the dock, rather than a dictator

with imperial ambitions. And the

case of Libya demonstrates that the

United States will readily adjust its

policy toward a country that renounces

weapons of mass destruction and international

terrorism. Iran’s security concerns

can be met—indeed, can best be

met—without its developing or producing

any weapons of mass destruction.

It is time that we have a serious discussion

with Europe about harmonizing

our policies toward Iran. Europe

has pursued a strategy of offering positive

incentives for Iran to change its

behavior, but no penalties if it does

not—effectively the reverse of U.S. policy.

By coordinating more closely, the

United States and Europe are more

likely to affect Iran’s actions. We

should clearly state that if Iran ends

its pursuit of a nuclear weapons program

and gets out of the terrorism

business, then we would be willing to

change our policy of isolating and

sanctioning Iran.

I hope that enactment of the resolution

before us will help galvanize world

attention to the threat of nuclear proliferation

in Iran and to the need to

convince Iran to change its ways. I

hope that it will also encourage Iran to

choose the path of non-proliferation

and base its future on engagement with

the world, rather than increasing, selfimposed

isolation.

I want to thank the original sponsors

of S. Con. Res. 81, Senators FEINSTEIN

and KYL, for their cooperation in developing

a substitute text that we can all

support. I believe that Representatives

HYDE and LANTOS, whose H. Con. Res.

398 provided much guidance to us, will

also find this text something that they

can accept so as to achieve enactment

of this important resolution. And I appreciate

the work of their staffs over

the past several weeks. My own staff

and Chairman LUGAR’s staff were also

instrumental in bringing this work to

what I believe will be a successful conclusion.

We have all been guided not by politics,

but by the importance of the matter

before us. When the issue is nuclear

proliferation, uncountable innocent

lives hang in the balance. On such an

issue, the world must act as one.