

for ridding Iraq of ballistic missiles and biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

The behind-the-scenes campaign of caution is at odds with the Clinton administration's public position as the strongest proponent of unconditional access for the inspectors to any site in Iraq. Led by the United States, and backed by American threats of war, the U.N. Security Council has demanded repeatedly since 1991—most recently in Resolution 1154 on March 2—that Iraq give “immediate, unconditional and unrestricted” cooperation to the inspection teams. That last resolution, at U.S. insistence, promised “the severest consequences for Iraq” for further defiance and was voted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, which is legal grounds for use of military force.

Last week, as Albright reportedly sought to rein in Butler, the administration was retreating from the vows it made six months ago to strike immediately and with significant military force if Iraq failed to honor a Feb. 23 agreement that resolved the last such crisis over inspections. At that time, administration spokesmen described a “snap back” policy of automatic military retaliation if Iraqi President Saddam Hussein violated his agreement with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Now the administration argues, as White House spokesman P.J. Crowley said yesterday, that Iraq is proposing “a cat-and-mouse game” and “we’re not going to play.” He said the United States would continue its “encouragement” of Iraq’s compliance with its obligations and would not allow economic sanctions to be lifted until it does so.

Albright, in a one-sentence statement issued through a spokesman, said last night: “U.S. policy has been to fully support UNSCOM in its inspections and I have never told Ambassador Butler how to do his job.” She said those speaking for her declined to answer further questions about her Aug. 4 “private discussions” with Butler and would not address specifically whether she had advised him to cancel the planned raids.

Butler, reached by telephone yesterday, said any suggestion that he received orders from Albright would be “a very considerable distortion of what took place.” He added, “No member of the [Security] Council, including the United States, has purported to give me instructions. They all recognize that their job is policy, my job is operations.”

Asked whether Albright urged him or advised him not to go forward, Butler said any answer “would be a very slippery slope” in which “I’d have to tell you what the Russian ambassador said, what the French ambassador said. Forgive me, but I won’t get into that.” Asked to confirm he spoke to Albright last week, he said, “I’m becoming concerned now about this line of inquiry.”

Beginning in June, according to knowledgeable officials, the U.N. inspectors developed secret plans—withheld from most members of their own staff—for surprise raids at two sites where they believed they would find evidence of forbidden chemical and biological weapons and the ballistic missiles capable of deploying them. The officials declined to describe the sites further, noting that they are still in operation.

In a little-known practice that all parties are loath to acknowledge, Butler dispatched senior lieutenants to London and Washington in late June to provide highly classified briefings on the intended inspection “targets,” the sources said. Formally, Butler reports equally to all members of the Security Council and does not give them advance operational plans. But one official said he understands “it’s suicide to go forward with an inspection like this” without informing his principal sponsors, the United States and Britain.

The two governments, according to knowledgeable officials, acknowledged to Butler’s deputies that UNSCOM had the right to make its own decisions. But they worked in concert in the weeks that followed to dissuade Butler from going forward with the inspection plan.

After consultations in Washington, Derek Plumbly, director of the British Foreign Office’s Middle East Command, flew to New York for a July 15 meeting with Butler. He told the Australian diplomat in no uncertain terms that the time was not ripe for a provocative challenge to Iraq, in part because Baghdad was still cooperating, ostensibly, on a “schedule of work” intended to resolve open questions, the sources said.

Shortly after that meeting, U.S. Ambassador Peter Burchill, the second-ranking delegate to the United Nations, called in Butler for a consultation in which he raised a long list of U.S. questions and concerns about the planned raids. Reading from prepared guidance, he told Butler the decision was UNSCOM’s but left the inspection chief with the plain understanding that the United States did not support his plan, according to a knowledgeable account of the meeting.

Butler canceled the raids in July but laid contingency plans to reschedule them this month after meetings on Aug. 3 and 4 in Baghdad with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz. Aziz announced late on the first day that Iraq would answer no further questions about its forbidden weapons, asserting that all the answers had long since been made.

Butler had brought a senior inspection team led by Scott Ritter, who heads UNSCOM’s efforts to penetrate Iraqi counterintelligence efforts against the inspectors. Included on Ritter’s team, officials said, were language and computer experts, experts on import and export records, and scientists knowledgeable about missiles, chemical and biological weapons.

On Aug. 4, Butler notified the U.S. government that he had authorized Ritter’s team to conduct the raids on Aug. 6. That same day, he got word that Albright wished to speak with him and traveled to the U.S. Embassy in Bahrain for a secure discussion. Albright argued, according to knowledgeable accounts, that it would be a big mistake to proceed because the political stage had not been set in the Security Council.

Butler agreed to a three-day delay, to Aug. 9, in hopes that he could build broader support for UNSCOM during informal consultations with the Security Council. But after he briefed the council governments in New York, he got another high-level American call on Friday urging him to have the Ritter team stand down. The same day, he ordered them home.

In a letter to the council Wednesday, Butler said Iraq’s new restrictions “bring to a halt all of the disarmament activities” of his inspectors. On Tuesday, Mohamed Baradei, director general of the IAEA, sent a similar letter to the council saying he could no longer give confident assurance that Iraq is not attempting to reconstitute its nuclear weapons program.

Both men are awaiting further instruction from the Security Council, which is scheduled to take up the matter Tuesday. Yesterday in Baghdad, U.N. special envoy Prakash Shah said he conveyed a message from Annan that “Iraq should continue its cooperation” with the weapons inspectors. He announced no results from what he described as a “cordial” meeting.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair would advise all

Members to address their comments to the Chair.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I stand here today to say I wholeheartedly support the decision of our President and Commander in Chief to launch a series of air strikes against Iraq and that I support 100 percent the resolution we will be voting on shortly.

While it is a sad day, this action was necessary. It is an action that is justified. Every avenue has been exhausted to prevent this, but ultimately, it is action prompted by Saddam Hussein and his contempt for complying with the international rule of law.

Now the consequences for that disdain must be realized. In a closed door session in this House last night, all Members, Republicans and Democrats, met with Defense Secretary Cohen. I think any reservations with regard to timing were put to rest at that time. But if further questions linger, I should point out that important congressional and Senatorial voices of support are strongly behind the President’s actions. These voices include House Committee on International Relations member, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), incoming Senate Committee on Armed Services chairman, JOHN WARNER, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations chairman, JESSE HELMS, Senator DASCHLE and Senator RICHARD LUGAR, who said the attack came at exactly the right time, that any other decision would have severely damaged the credibility of our United States.

I wish to conclude by saying to our men and women in uniform, you have our undivided support. You represent our Nation’s finest. You defend not only our freedom but also the ideals of democracy across the globe. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members that they should not make reference to Senators’ comments.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), a Vietnam veteran.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

I want to make two quick points on the floor this morning. The first point is that this is a representative body, based on constitutional provisions that provide for differences of opinion. The strength of this country is that we, as Representatives, critically analyze the decisions of other elected officials and even the President. So for us to discuss the issue of an invasion of Iraq is totally proper.

The other issue I want to bring up is that all of us, regardless of our party

and regardless of our perspective on this issue, have total and absolute support when we focus on those troops in the Persian Gulf. Those troops in the Persian Gulf have our heartfelt, secure support that what they are doing is just. And we wish them an absolute successful mission and we await their arrival back home.

We wish them all a happy holiday.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

(Mr. FARR of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the troops and in support of the Commander in Chief of the troops, the President of the United States.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE).

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of our Commander in Chief, the President, and our soldiers who are on the front line today in the Gulf and in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the military strike by American and allied forces against the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq.

For far too long, Saddam Hussein has felt free to defy the international community. For far too long, he has menaced his own people and threatened his neighbors in the region. For far too long, he has failed to live up to his obligations under the terms that ended the Persian Gulf War. For far too long, he has sought to develop weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. Our exertion of military strength against his regime is an appropriate step to communicate to Saddam that he cannot continue his outlaw ways with impunity.

All Americans should pray for the safe return of our men and women in uniform as they embark on this inherently dangerous but necessary, mission. Let me state clearly that no one bears any ill will toward the Iraqi people. In fact, the actions of Saddam Hussein and his regime have long constituted the greatest threat to the security of the Iraqi people. In the spirit of the holidays, let us all hope that today's action may advance the day when Peace on Earth can become reality.

As a veteran of the United States Army, I know that our military personnel will perform their duties with professionalism, diligence and bravery. I am also confident that the leadership of my fellow North Carolinian, General Hugh Shelton, will help bring this action to successful conclusion. I call on all Americans to support this mission and our men and women in uniform.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON), distinguished ranking member on the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend particularly the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) and a number of my colleagues

on the other side for their actions here today. There is a difference in the timing of the use of force. I think there is no question that many of the colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle and some on the Democratic side of the aisle would have acted earlier. We will never know whether that would have been a better policy or a worst policy.

One of the reasons I trust this President's use of force is that he has consistently been reluctant to use it and with the post-Soviet era, where we no longer can intimidate our friends and allies that if you do not go along with us, you will be overrun by the Communist hordes, it has been his reluctance to use force that has given him wide public and international support when he used it.

This President was elected and spent years trying to solve the Yugoslavian situation without force. Not until 1995 did he begin substantial air strikes that finally brought people to the table and the Dayton agreement of 1995.

□ 1200

In Haiti the deadline for force was September 18. General Colin Powell, Sam Nunn and former President Carter called the President up and said, give us 24 hours more. It is a hard thing to do. The whole world is watching. Is he blinking? Does he really hope to get an agreement without bloodshed?

The President took that political risk, and 24 hours later American forces could land without any fire, without the loss of life on our side or theirs. And the same is here. The President could have said, gee, the letter had not reached me and therefore the strikes occurred on November 15. But I think what the President did again is recognize the world's concern about the one superpower and so he sent a very clear message, I will take every possible step not to use force.

When Saddam Hussein acted again, I met with the President, and I said this and I think every member of this House ought to understand it, the only considerations in this decision were and ought to be American national security and the security of our forces in the region. We have a Secretary of Defense who is a Republican. We have a Secretary of State who has an outstanding record unmatched. They understood and they spoke to us, telling us this decision was made on the facts. The military individuals, our top foreign policy and defense advisors said take this action now, the President has done the right thing. And I applaud again my friends on the other side of the aisle for their support of the Commander in Chief and our troops in the field.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART).

(Mr. DIAZ-BALART asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the armed forces of the United States of America and specifically House Resolution 612.

Mr. Speaker, At this extraordinary time in our nation's history, no one should doubt for a moment that Americans are a people of strong resolve and a people who take our country's international responsibilities seriously. Last night, like every other time in the past, the men and women of our Armed Services answered to call to duty and risked their own lives to preserve our freedoms.

We owe them a debt of gratitude. It is fitting, therefore, that we gather today to express the support of the American people for their service and for their mission. And we do this unreservedly.

Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator, has continued his provocation and intransigence in the face of international condemnation and warnings. It is imperative that he not be allowed to manufacture weapons of mass destruction. He has, since 1980 demonstrated his willingness to attack his neighbors and threaten the peace and stability of the Middle East. This in turn is a direct threat to the national interests of the United States.

From all reports, our military forces have acted with bravery and professionalism to minimize injury to Iraqi civilians. We are all aware that taking such care often places our own pilots at greater threat to themselves. They are to be commended for their actions that are above and beyond the call of duty.

Mr. Speaker, especially at this time of year we pray for peace on earth and goodwill for all mankind. However, so long as tyrants continue to oppress their own people and threaten the peace of the world, we must not rest.

Our thoughts and prayers are also with the families of the men and women of our Armed Forces who are separated during this holiday season. We thank them for their sacrifices.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON).

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers today are with other sailors, airmen, and soldiers in the Persian Gulf and their families. Our support of them is unconditional. We wish them success in their missions and pray that every one of them will return home safely to their families, friends and loved ones.

We cannot allow Saddam Hussein to have nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons or the means to deliver them. He has shown himself willing to use them, including against his own people.

I would also like to say a word about the family who await anxiously at home today wondering if their loved ones will survive, wishing that they were home out of harm's way preparing for the holidays. Operations like this are often hardest on the families, and as a nation we must rally around them. We have an obligation to keep them informed as much as we can and supported by their nation and by their neighbors.

As a veteran myself and the only woman veteran to ever serve in the United States Congress, I also want to remind everyone that our obligation does not end when the guns fall silent.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY).

(Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, as a member of the Committee on National Security, I rise today in firm support of our soldiers and sailors in the Gulf. The American people have asked these men and women to put their lives on the line to defend freedom all over the world, and it is entirely fitting that today in this House we dedicate ourselves to support their cause.

My colleagues, in the post Cold War theater of our country, we are faced with new threats of all kinds. Rogue nations that have the capability of creating biological, nuclear and chemical weapons comprise the next generation of challenges that our Armed Services face.

Saddam Hussein has found out last night why he should never take our national commitment and dedication to the preservation of peace for granted. Time and time again we warned him that if he persisted on this course, that if he prevented the agreement of inspections, and that if he continued to snub the wishes of the international community, then the United States would let loose the awesome power of its military to force Iraq's compliance with U.N. resolutions.

Our nation has sent a clear signal to the international community that Saddam's kind of terrorism will not be tolerated. The careless manufacture of these weapons of mass destruction is an affront to all civilized societies. While the people of Iraq search for food, Saddam Hussein searches for a new palace to build for himself once again.

These weeks are going to take another important step to changing that situation. Saddam Hussein's days should be numbered and we must commit ourselves to the installation of a fair and democratic government in Iraq.

In conclusion, the President has acted with leadership, he has taken the appropriate action; and it is clear by today's action that the Congress stands by our men and women in uniform and the President of the United States. I want to thank the leadership for setting aside our other business so that we can tend to this important issue of life and death.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), the chairman elect of our appropriations Subcommittee on National Security.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) and to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for their marvelous leadership insofar as our national security is concerned.

Today, I simply want to rise and say to my colleagues that today we are see-

ing the Congress of the United States at its finest. We come together in support of the Commander in Chief and in support of our troops when their lives are put in danger. In defense of freedom, we are the leader of the world.

In these days ahead of us, we are going to have more difficult times in which we will see some division in the House. But at this moment, Democrats and Republicans alike are standing hand in hand in support of this resolution, which is an expression of bipartisan and nonpartisan support of our troops facing danger overseas and defense of freedom.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire at this moment just how much time remains, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) has 11 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) has 12½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN).

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the President's decision to take action in Iraq and in strong support of the troops who have once again shown that we have the finest military in the world.

I want to recognize the units from my area of Jacksonville, Florida, including two bomber units from Cecil Field Naval Air Station; Viking, Shadow, and Seahawk units from Naval Air Station Jacksonville; and the missile cruisers U.S.S. *Philippine Sea* and U.S.S. *Gettysburg* based at Naval Station Mayport. I salute their service and offer a prayer of support for their families here and at home.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that we put political rhetoric and fighting aside as we once again face down the enemy of peace, stability and democracy. We must be a strong and unified nation during this time, and I urge my colleagues to support our President and support our troops.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), the chairman of our Subcommittee on Research and Development.

(Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank our distinguished chairman for allowing me this opportunity to speak, and I thank our ranking member for his leadership on defense issues.

I rise in full and strong support of this measure. But I want to remind our colleagues that while we are here to state our support for the troops in words, we need much more than words in the current environment in this city.

We are going through massive problems right now, Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) and the gentleman from South

Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) have said over and over again. This is in fact our 27th deployment of our troops in 6 years. Each of these deployments has not been planned for, has not been budgeted for; and, therefore, we have had to take money out of modernization and quality of life to pay to put the troops in harm's way. And when our colleagues vote in favor of this amendment today, this measure, I would ask our colleagues to understand, this is not just a cheerleading session where we stand up and go, rah-rah, yeah for the troops. We need the funding to support these troops. We need to put the dollars on the table. Because when we send these bombers into Iraq, when we send these troops overseas, there are added costs that we do not have the money for.

And while I stand here fully unequivocally supporting the deployment that is taking place today, I ask my colleagues to understand that they need to provide the support for the funding shortfalls that will continue in the next year.

I also rise to say that, Mr. Speaker, this action I support today but it should have taken place a year ago. In fact, I would like to insert into the RECORD an article from the Washington Times where it was cited that at least on 6 occasions, beginning in November of 1997, the Secretary of State or other top administration officials sought to stop the U.N. inspector from moving on surprise inspections in Iraq. We actually over the past year have stopped the inspection teams. And now we are saying we must proceed forward very quickly.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following articles:

The interventions included at least six occasions, beginning in November 1997, in which Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright or other top administration officials sought—with success in each case but one—to persuade chief U.N. inspector Richard Butler to rescind orders for surprise searches for weapons of mass destruction or to remove a controversial inspector from Iraq.

[From the Washington Times, Aug. 31, 1998]

ITTER GIVES REASON FOR UNSCOM'S PLIGHT—SAYS U.S. HAS NO SUPPORT VS. SADDAM

(By Joyce Howard Price)

U.S. officials are afraid of a confrontation, with Saddam Hussein because they don't have international support to enforce access to suspected sites of weapons of mass destruction, says former U.N. weapons inspector William Scott Ritter.

"Since April . . . the United States has placed considerable pressure" on the U.N. inspection team "to hold off from carrying out inspections that could cause a confrontation with Iraq," he said yesterday on ABC's "This Week."

"They are afraid of confrontation because of the ramifications," said the 37-year-old former Marine, who resigned last week as a weapons inspector.

"Confrontation with Iraq over inspections requires the United States and the Security Council to live up to their promise of enforcement . . . in [U.N.] Resolution 1154," he

said, which calls for the "severest consequences" if Iraq does not allow access to suspected sites of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons.

"Right now I believe that the United States does not want such confrontation because it believes it cannot muster the support for such confrontation," Mr. Ritter said.

Saddam broke off cooperation Aug. 5 with weapons inspectors of the U.N. Special Commission, or Unscom.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson, interviewed on TV talk show yesterday, rejected Mr. Ritter's charges that Washington has gone soft.

"There's been no change of policy. . . . The record shows that the Clinton administration support for Unscom, the weapons inspectors, has been unparalleled," Mr. Richardson said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

"There have been times where timing and tactics had to be discussed with [chief U.N. weapons inspector Richard] Butler. But the record shows . . . that because of U.S. action, inspectors like Scott Ritter were able to conduct their inspections," he said.

On CNN's "Late Edition," Mr. Richardson said "timing and tactics" were discussed as part of efforts to build international support in the Security Council for the U.S. position toward Iraq.

"At no time did we go to Butler and say, 'Don't inspect, don't do this,'" said Mr. Richardson. "This is a U.N. decision. This is Butler's decision. He is very independent."

Mr. Ritter said U.S. threats of military force earlier this year, when Iraq denied entrance to some sites and sent weapons inspectors packing, were not convincing—certainly not to Saddam.

"There are indications that this saber-rattling was nothing but a bluff to begin with, an effort to force Saddam to back down in the face of force," Mr. Ritter said on ABC.

"One of the problems is it has to be credible force in order for Saddam to flinch, and I think the Iraqis just called the bluff. I don't think there was ever the credible use of force or threat of use of force."

Mr. Ritter said last week that at least six intrusive inspections had been stopped since November under pressure from Washington. Yesterday, he detailed two instances.

"There was a case in July when we actually deployed a team of 45 inspectors in the country to carry out inspections . . . to uncover how Iraq hides these weapons from the Special Commission, and the United States together with the United Kingdom intervened and conferred with Richard Butler to put pressure on him to cancel this inspection, despite the fact that we had a team in country, ready to go," Mr. Ritter said.

"In August, we had another team deployed, ready to go. We had very, very good sites, based upon sound intelligence, and once again . . . the United States, through intervention from both [Secretary of State] Madeleine Albright and [National Security Adviser] Sandy Berger, had the inspection first postponed for a matter of days and then canceled outright."

Mr. Speaker, we must have a clear and consistent policy with Iraq and that policy means when Saddam does not comply we move in military, and I support this. But this action should have taken place months ago and this action requires our financial support as well as our verbal support.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK).

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolu-

tion. I rise in strong support of our President. I rise in strong support of our troops.

I have always been a supporter of our military troops. I came through World War II. I know exactly what it means to protect our country. I know exactly what it means to be ready. And sometimes I am taken aback on this floor when I hear many of our well-meaning people on this floor question things which they have very little background to know about.

We have many experts in this Congress. We need more people who are willing to say, let's see what the score is, let's look at this thing and find out what it is all about.

Our President is the Commander in Chief. It is his job to make these decisions. I am not here to question his decision. I am here to say I stand behind him and I stand behind those troops. Timing, we are no experts on timing. We have heard the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We have heard Secretary Cohen. They are experts. We are merely generalists, Mr. Speaker.

I stand to support this wonderful resolution brought by the majority party.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER).

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution and strong support of our troops who are in action in the Persian Gulf.

Today, even amidst a political crisis at home, our military personnel are engaged in a major operation against the regime of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Over the last year, Saddam Hussein has violated the agreements that he made to end the Gulf War. And I would agree with my colleague who just stated, the actions taking place today should have started long ago, because Saddam Hussein was committing these same violations 6 months ago and 6 weeks ago that he is violating today and was violating today which precipitated the President's decision to call in military actions.

Saddam Hussein agreed to give up the right to possess weapons of mass destruction in order to end the Gulf War 8 years ago. By violating his pledges that ensured that he gave up those weapons of mass destruction, he is the one who has called this military action upon his people.

Let us resolve today that we are not the enemies of the people of Iraq. The people of Iraq are our friends. The Members of Congress have stated we should, in fact we passed a resolution here and allocated money to support those people who believe in democracy in Iraq and who would wish to overthrow Saddam Hussein's vicious regime.

So today, as we tip our hats and as we sing the praises of our military personnel who are willing to put their lives on the line for stability and peace in the Gulf which ultimately tied to the security of the United States of America, let us also resolve that we are

for peace and freedom and we are for the peace and freedom of the people of Iraq as well and they can join with us and bring about a more peaceful world and end these military operations by getting rid of the Saddam Hussein dictatorship. It is that dictatorship that is the enemy of the people of the United States, not the people of Iraq.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs).

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this joint resolution before us in the House of Representatives that we may speak as a unified body and give our support to our President, to our Joint Chiefs of Staff, to our allies who have joined with us in this effort to curve totalitarianism and to make a strong statement on behalf of peace.

It is important for us to get behind our troops now and to be unified as a country that our fighting men and women, and I am thinking particularly today of those at Vandenburg Air Force Base in my district and the colonel with whom I spoke this morning, urging those troops well, knowing that they are giving up their time with their families over this holiday season. We must be with them in spirit and offer our prayers. Speaking also for the people of Iraq, wanting to work with them to find peace in their land and let us all be unified as we do this together.

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Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER).

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the men and women of our armed forces. I thank them for their sacrifice and their patriotism and I pray for their safe return home.

Saddam Hussein is not in compliance with the terms and conditions of the agreement that ended the Persian Gulf War. He has consistently violated international law and he is insistent on development and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. There is no question he needs to be stopped.

However, I want to remind my colleagues that real support of our troops takes more than a resolution from Congress when they are sent into combat. It takes a real and serious financial commitment from this body. We need to increase the size of our annual defense budget. We need to address the military retirement system. We need to make sure our troops have the best equipment available when they are sent into harm's way.

During the Persian Gulf War there were 18 active Army divisions. Today there are 10. During the Persian Gulf War there were 24 active fighter wings. Today 13. There were 546 Navy ships. Today 333. I do not want to belabor this point today, Mr. Speaker, but we need to address those shortfalls next year.

Again let us pray for our troops and offer them our heartfelt thanks for their service to our country.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) the minority leader.

(Mr. GEPHARDT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the resolution that is before us and think it is the right thing for us to do on this important day. I fully support the mission of our armed forces currently carrying out this military action in Iraq. These efforts are part of a long-standing bipartisan effort to degrade the Iraqi government's capacity to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction and to diminish its ability to threaten its neighbors in the region.

Over the last 8 years Presidents Bush and Clinton have pursued a policy to contain the threat that Saddam Hussein poses to the region, the Mideast region and the international community. Today our troops bravely are continuing this effort. I believe that this Congress must give them and is required to give them our undivided support and encouragement.

The U.S. action is the latest chapter in our efforts. It came at the end of a long pattern of Iraqi games to thwart the work of weapons inspectors and frustrate implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions.

The most recent act of defiance was in October. The United States was ready at that time to use military force with the support of the international community, including eight Arab nations, and the unanimous support of the United Nations Security Council to enforce implementation of these U.N. resolutions. Saddam Hussein in October backed down under these threats, and he pledged and his regime pledged to resume cooperation unconditionally with the weapons inspectors. At that time our President made clear that if Saddam Hussein failed to cooperate fully, without equivocation, the United States would be prepared to act, and to act without delay, to act without going back to the Security Council, to act without coming anywhere to get authority to do it.

The President then said, and I quote, "Until we see complete compliance, we will remain vigilant, we will keep up the pressure, we will be ready to act." As Members all know over the past 3 weeks, Saddam Hussein has engaged in new acts of defiance of the United Nations Security Council resolutions and the weapons inspectors known as UNSCOM. These acts are a clear violation of the international community's determination to ensure that Iraq no longer poses a threat to the region.

The timetable for action was perfectly clear. We have known that Richard Butler would submit the report for several weeks. This is no surprise to anyone in Iraq, in the region, across the world who is involved in these foreign policy issues. Congressional leaders were briefed by the President's na-

tional security team on the evolving situation and the military options which were being considered in response. Any suggestion that this action has been affected by the impeachment debate one way or the other is blatantly false.

I sincerely hope that we can temporarily put aside partisanship and direct our efforts to fully supporting our troops, our young people, in this critical mission. We should never let Saddam Hussein dictate the nature or the timing of our response. We must have the ability to carry out our mission effectively to ensure that Iraq cannot reconstitute its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, and most importantly we must give our commanders in the field the flexibility they need to succeed in their mission with the least risk to the men and women who are putting their lives on the line right now to achieve these goals.

This Congress must stand firmly and in a united way behind the defense of our national interest. We must send a strong message, the strongest possible message to Saddam Hussein that domestic politics will never, ever affect our resolve, and we must send a clear and unequivocal message to the brave young men and women of the United States armed forces that they have our unqualified support as they undertake this serious and dangerous mission.

We must join together today as Republicans, as Democrats, as independents, but as Americans. We must speak with one voice, one crystal clear voice behind our men and women, behind our President and behind our Nation at this time of critical emergency.

If my son or daughter were in the field today, right now, I would want nothing more than every American to stand behind and be proud of their effort on our behalf. By voting for this resolution, we do that today.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Savannah, GA (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SPENCE for yielding me this time and also Ranking Member SKELTON for bringing this to the floor along with Speaker LIVINGSTON. I think it is very timely and important that at this day we stop and pause in a bipartisan, united fashion and support our troops. For all Americans, we are united against Saddam Hussein but for those folks that I represent in Hinesville, Georgia, many of their friends and neighbors will be packing and saying good-bye to loved ones as members of the Third Infantry Division start to deploy. We do not know how long they will be there. We do not know how many. But we think it is very important that they know, those of us in southeast Georgia who love Fort Stewart and General Riley and all the fighting men and women that we support them and we want to get them home safely.

Here in Congress we are going to do everything we can to protect them and

America's interests. That is why we have fought so hard under Chairman SPENCE's leadership for quality of life, equipment modernization and readiness.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, as a West Point graduate, a former active duty officer and a current reservist, the time is right to tell our young men and women in the armed forces that we support them. That is our mission today, a united front. However, our mission tomorrow is to ensure that our forces have the means at their disposal to conduct necessary operations in the future. Talk is cheap. Rebuilding our military strength is the clearest sign to our young men and women in uniform and their families that we support them, we care for them, and that we are going to do everything with the means at our disposal to protect them. Let us commit today as we talk on this resolution to do the necessary work at hand to strengthen our military for the future.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri for yielding me this time, and I thank the chairman and the ranking member for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for this resolution. I believe it is important that we demonstrate America's resounding and unequivocal commitment to our Nation's armed forces. We must voice our support, not as Democrats, not as Republicans but as Americans. We know our troops will give us 100 percent and we can afford to give them no less. The President in consultation with America's top military leaders has given sound, rational support for his decision to launch new attacks on Iraq at this time. Members of the Moody Air Force Base in the Second Congressional District of Georgia will soon be called upon to support this endeavor. More than 200 Air Force personnel will be part of a combat search and rescue package that will be deployed within the next few days. This is a very difficult time to ask our service men and women to be separated from their families. That is another reason why it is so important that we have the morale of our troops uplifted by the solidarity to that mission.

I would extend my prayers for all of the deployed men and women and their families for a safe and speedy return. God bless our troops. God bless their families. God bless America.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER).

(Mr. LINDER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to submit for the RECORD a statement on

behalf of our troops in this very difficult time in their lives as well as the life of our Nation.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER).

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for the time and the opportunity to speak in support of our military men and women. I rise in support of this resolution. I ask for bipartisan support in this House, a statement of support for our military men and women. Not only must we support our military men and women who defend our freedoms but we must also stand in support of the regular folks, the people of Iraq, suffering under the yoke of the dictator Saddam Hussein.

Iraq is now governed by a terrorist government driven under the iron hand of dictator Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein continues today to threaten the security of his neighbors with efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction. Our military men and women stand ready to defend our freedoms. Today they are in action. Let us speak loudly, let us speak clearly, let us speak with a united voice, with a bipartisan statement of support today.

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We support our military men and women with this firm statement of support contained in our resolution. Let us keep our defenders of freedoms and their families in our prayers today and tomorrow, and also let us take time to thank those every day who defend our freedoms.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI).

(Mr. BORSKI asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 612, which expresses strong support for the men and women of our Armed Forces who are participating in Operation Desert Fox. I believe this is an appropriate expression of bipartisan support for a difficult but necessary military strike against Saddam Hussein.

At the conclusion of the Persian Gulf War, Saddam Hussein agreed to a cease-fire resolution which explicitly committed him to the destruction and termination of his nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs. To verify his compliance, Saddam agreed to full and unfettered access to United Nations weapons inspectors.

Since then, Saddam has played a cat-and-mouse game with the United Nations and the international community. The United States has repeatedly threatened the use of force against Iraq if it failed to cooperate, and Iraq has backed down. President Clinton has gone out of his way to resolve these disputes with diplomacy, but Saddam Hussein has failed to

reciprocate with a long-term compliance to his international obligations.

Only a few weeks ago, Saddam Hussein once again defied the international community and blocked UNSCOM's access to important sites and documents pertaining to weapons of mass destruction. President Clinton ordered a military strike, but, at the last minute, terminated the operation when Saddam Hussein agreed to allow the inspectors back in to Iraq. The President gave Saddam one last chance, but very clearly warned Saddam that future violations would be met with immediate and decisive military action.

Unfortunately, Saddam Hussein failed to heed these warnings. On December 15, UNSCOM Executive Chairman Richard Butler issued a report to the UN stating that Saddam Hussein was once again preventing UN inspectors from doing their job. In response, Chairman Butler removed his inspectors and President Clinton launched Operation Desert Fox.

Saddam Hussein thought he could exploit what he perceived as a weakness in our country caused by the domestic turmoil over impeachment. But what Saddam once again miscalculated—and what we are demonstrating here today with this resolution—is the strength of our country in times of international crises. Despite domestic problems, the people of the United States of America will always rally behind our President and our troops when our national interests are threatened.

Mr. Speaker, I support Operation Desert Fox, and I support our troops who are doing a magnificent job protecting our national interests in the Persian Gulf. These proud men and women would certainly rather be home for the holidays, but they know their mission and how important it is that Saddam Hussein not be allowed to develop weapons of mass destruction and once again threaten his neighbors in the region.

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

Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the rare opportunity to have breakfast with three bright young United States Navy lieutenant commanders, one a submariner, one a surface warfare officer and the other a pilot of F-14s. It was interesting in talking to them about their future, the future of the United States Navy, that they reflected to me what I know all the young officers must say and feel about their work and about their contribution to national security. In relation to the pilot, I heard about the dire need for spare parts, about the need for more highly trained mechanics and the need of the help we should give to the families.

Mr. Speaker, these are the young men and young women who are flying missions last night and tonight over Iraq. They are the ones of whom we are asking so very much, and yet we, who are constitutionally required to raise and maintain the military, have left some of them with spare parts problems and inadequate personnel, and yet we expect them to be letter perfect. Thus far they have.

I say a thanks to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), the chairman of

this committee, for he and I worked early this year in a letter to the President and other leaders making a strong case for additional funding for national security of this country. It was good to see the additional dollars in the supplemental this last year. But in order for us to come to this floor and praise the young men and young women for their courage and bravery, we must do our part first, and that part is making secure those jobs, making sure that they have spare parts, making sure that their airplanes fly and that they have bright young people who are strongly motivated to fix their airplanes and to sail the ships. That is our job.

We are here today, and it has been almost overlooked, because of Saddam Hussein's recalcitrance in not allowing inspectors from the United Nations to look for and find the weapons of mass destruction. That is our purpose, to make sure that he does not have those weapons; biological, chemical, nuclear, that could wreck havoc not just on America and Americans' interests and Americans across this globe, but our allies and our friends.

I fully support the President's decision. I fully support him, and yesterday I had an early meeting with the Secretary and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs when they told me of this plan, and I told them I was for them.

We must, as a body, speak with one voice to support this decision and to support the young men and young women. But I must say more than anything we must support the young men and young women in uniform regardless of the branch in which they serve by doing our part, by adequately funding what they do, by giving them the message that we are with them, more in words, more in resolution, but by adequate funding and resources so they can continue to do the job that we ask them to do and that the Commander in Chief asks them to do.

So I fully support this resolution. I hope it will pass unanimously, that the message will be sent to our friends and foes alike that we stand together as a Nation supporting the President's decision and supporting those in uniform who are doing such a masterful job for us and for our country.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are gathered here today to make comments in support of our troops who are presently deployed in the Persian Gulf carrying on operations against certain targets in Iraq. I think it is worth noting at this time, it is important to note, that we are prepared to carry out this type operation and our men and women are equipped to do this. But I have to point out that this is a limited type operation. It is not an all-out type war that we must be prepared to defend against. There is serious question as to whether or not our military is sufficiently strong, with all the cutbacks we have been making, to carry out our national strategy of being able to fight and win

two major regional contingencies. That is my concern.

I reiterate we are here supporting our people today in this type of operation. We must, we must, do more to prepare our country to defend against the other threats we will be faced with in the future.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, one of the most grave decisions that a Member of Congress must make is the decision to go to war. Fewer than 24 hours ago, President William Jefferson Clinton launched missiles in response to continued intransigence by President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. Over the past two months, President Clinton has judiciously and skillfully negotiated a truce with President Hussein, and even aborted a launched air strike against military targets in Iraq. As President Clinton clearly stated, that November 15, 1998 cease-fire was the last effort in the continued work to have Iraq comply with the terms that ended the Gulf War over seven and one-half years ago.

As a person of peace and prayer, I have grave reservations any time force or violence is used to solve any problem, conflict or difference. It is unfortunate that we have not yet progressed to the point where violence is not an element of international problem-solving. Each and every life on earth is too precious to be wasted as a result of the collateral damage that inevitably happens as the result of war. The use of force should be used only as a last resort when all other options have been thoroughly examined and exhausted.

Along with 434 of my colleagues in the House of Representatives and 100 of my colleagues in the Senate, I took an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic. This recent action is in the defense of the best interests of the United States. President William Jefferson Clinton, acting upon the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, ordered the most recent air strike. There have been some Members of Congress who have questioned the timing and necessity of this air strike. Now is not the time for Members of Congress to question this joint and unanimous decision of the military leaders of our Nation, all of whom support this needed action. Now is the time to offer our prayers, our aid, and our support to men and women of our Armed Forces, their families and our President.

I have long expressed my support for the ending of humanitarian sanctions on Iraq, and along with over 40 of my colleagues, sent a bipartisan letter to the President asking for a revisiting of the economic sanctions against Iraq. While leveled at the Iraqi regime, these sanctions have had the unintended effect of taking a deadly toll on the innocent civilians of Iraq. History is proof that it is in the United States' best long-term interests to shape a policy that embraces humanitarian concerns and allows new ways to address the legitimate security concerns of the United States. Maintaining humanitarian principles and having a tough stance on Iraq are not mutually exclusive.

On June 26 of this year, we celebrated the 50th year of the Berlin Airlift. After the Soviet Union banned all travel to and from East Germany shortly after the end of World War II, aircraft from U.S. Air Forces in Europe delivered

156 tons of supplies during 64 sorties. During the Berlin Airlift, almost 18 million tons of coal, food, medicine, heavy machinery, newsprint, construction equipment, vehicles, and household goods were flown in to the people, not the government, of East Germany. The Berlin Airlift saved the lives of thousands of people yearning for freedom and justice from the shackles of oppression. The strong, aggressive stance that the United States took against the regime of the Soviet Union complemented its compassion for the people of East Germany.

Fifty years later, we live in the wake of the Berlin Airlift. Through the skill and courage of United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson, President Clinton, and concerned citizens, were able to previously step back from the brink of war. This is, unfortunately, no longer the case. There are certainly many challenges against lasting peace and stability in Iraq, and it is vital that Iraq fully and completely comply with the inspection teams authorized by the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq. The monitoring and dismantling of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction must take place.

In our letter to President Clinton, we urged the separation of humanitarian sanction from military sanctions. We also asked for improving the oversight and mechanisms for the oil-for-food trade, and the expeditious reform of the federal regulations impeding the flow of humanitarian goods to the people of Iraq. Like East Berlin before the airlift, we have heard several official and unofficial reports of the horrible starvation of children, medical deprivation of senior citizens, and general devastation faced by ordinary, everyday citizens in Iraq.

It is unfortunate that the President of the United States was forced to use missiles in order to get Iraq to comply with reasonable U.N. requirements. Along with Secretary General Kofi Annan, I am deeply saddened and personally hurt that Saddam Hussein did not give peace a chance. Any coordinated policy regarding Iraq should not further punish the women, children, and senior citizens already wincing beneath the thumb of a dictator. In the long run, Saddam Hussein, like any other dictator, will fade away. It is important and vital that the United States forge a humanitarian pact with the people of Iraq and revisit the effect of our economic sanctions and this recent missile strike on Iraq. Fifty years ago, the people of East Germany hailed the collective wisdom and humanitarian courage of America. Fifty years from now, the Iraqi people, and all citizens of the Middle East, will praise the continued fight for freedom, justice and liberty of the American people.

I support our troops. I support the families of our troops. Along with my constituents, I pray that during this month of the most holy of holidays for so many citizens, the collective peace and love that we all so desperately need envelop our troops, their families, and the people of Iraq.

Rest assured that children, women, and senior citizens will die. Rest assured that some of our troops, who are someone's father or mother, brother or sister, niece or nephew, will never return home. Military action of this, or any, scope requires deep prayer, temperance, and patriotism of our country's leaders. Along with the citizens of the 15th Congressional District of Michigan, I hope that my col-

leagues in Congress will join me in prayer for our country, our troops, the Persian Gulf region, and the Iraqi people, who deserve a better leader than Saddam Hussein.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I support our troops in their mission to eliminate Saddam Hussein's ability to use weapons of mass destruction.

Although I prefer a tight, multinational embargo around Iraq to disable Saddam's regime, that path was not taken. At this juncture, with repeated warnings to Iraq by the United States to comply with Iraq's pledge to disarm and with repeated violations by Saddam, we have little choice but to proceed with military action.

For these reasons, I will vote for the resolution before the House of Representatives today to support our troops and to reaffirm that the policy of the United States to drive Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, December 16, 1998, the United States and Great Britain responded to the litany of abuses long propagated by Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq. Saddam Hussein has repeatedly and consistently violated the terms of the cease-fire agreement that ended the Persian Gulf war in 1991. The terms of that treaty, endorsed by the international community including a significant number of Middle Eastern and Persian Gulf states, called for, among other things, Iraq to dismantle its program for weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Saddam Hussein agreed to these terms and agreed to international inspection, destruction and verification of Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

The creation of the United Nations weapons inspection team, known as UNSCOM was heralded as proof that the international community was living up to its part of the bargain with Saddam Hussein. But Mr. Speaker in the seven years since UNSCOM's creation, Saddam Hussein has been duplicitous and callous by continuing to thwart international efforts to rid Iraq of its capability to produce these WMD. All the while, this Iraqi regime has explored every effort to exploit, cajole and employ chicanery to disrupt UNSCOM's important work. And after reviewing the record, one can only draw the conclusion that Saddam Hussein was never serious about giving up his WMD program. He has violated countless U.N. resolutions and obstructed weapons inspections ad infinitum.

Even after Iraq's defeat by coalition forces in 1991, Hussein was biding his time to regain regional hegemony and hold hostage the world community. Saddam Hussein has shown through out his time in power that he is the archetypical rogue leader akin to a gangster of the 1920s. He has gassed his own people, launched ballistic missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia, invaded a sovereign nation, murdered scores of his political enemies, terrorized minority Shiites and Kurdish civilians and embarked on a seven year campaign that is resulting in the mass starvation of thousands of Iraqi citizens. In short, he has turned the Iraqi nation, one with a proud people and ancient history, into an international pariah state.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of House Resolution 612, our men and women in uniform and our President. While this necessary action is being conducted as we speak, this is not a time to rejoice, or strike up the bands, or begin to celebrate. This difficult decision was one of last resort, precipitated by

the violation of commitments made by Saddam Hussein. If anyone doubts that this course of action is necessary, they have not been paying attention to the last seven years of broken promises.

Moreover, the timing of the attack is being called into question by some pundits and newspapers. But this too is accountable only to Saddam Hussein. It is equally tragic and regrettable that some of our nation's leader (thankfully only a handful) have questioned the timing of this attack as well. This military action is serious business. The impeachment proceedings are serious business. But both matters before us are governed by the nature of the constitutional process and the unfurling of international events. The only one capable of corrupting these two matters into one, is Saddam Hussein. And his sense of timing should not constrain our freedom of action nor inhibit us from pursuing our moral obligations. For this reason alone, we must remain vigilant to our purpose and unwavering in our task. I am confident that in this distressing moment in our history, the true spirit of our nation will rise to carry out its appointed duty. In this regard, we are unified in our support for our brave servicemen and women. We are proud of the work that they do each and everyday in their selfless sacrifice of protecting our country and fighting for our ideals. May God bless each and everyone of them and their families. And may God bless the President, his advisors, and the United States of America.

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in voicing my strong support for our men and women in our Armed Forces who have answered their Nation's call to serve in the effort to rid the world of the threat of Saddam Hussein to develop and use weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Speaker, our troops deserve our full support and our Commander in Chief does as well. This was a courageous and necessary action by President Clinton and he deserves our unconditional support.

My colleagues, I recall when our country first engaged Saddam Hussein and Iraqi at the start of the gulf war in 1991, my constituents and I were saddened but proud when we learned that a Virgin Islander was among the first casualties. All Americans, no matter where they make their homes, proudly answer the call of their nation to serve when it is necessary for them to do so.

And so I support this resolution today. I support our troops and pray for their safe and speedy return home in this season of peace. And I support our Commander in Chief.

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 612, a resolution of support for our men and women of the armed forces during the present engagement with Iraq.

Following the gulf war, Iraq agreed with the Gulf War Alliance and the United Nations requirements that it must cease production of weapons of mass destruction. Iraq has continuously reneged on this agreement and thwarted the efforts of United Nations' arms inspectors.

The presence of chemical and biological weapons poses a serious threat to our national security. In fact, these weapons pose a threat to every nation on earth. Saddam Hussein has proven to be a rogue and reckless tyrant who cannot be trusted. He has shown that he will use these weapons, both on his enemies and his own people.

After learning that our troops engaged Iraq, my thoughts and prayers went out to them and their families. The men and women of our Armed Forces have selflessly defended America's national security interest in the Persian Gulf. We can all be proud of their commitment and loyalty to this country.

During this grave time, our troops should know that Congress and the Nation are unified in support of them.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, the flu precludes me from taking part in this important debate on the Floor today. Nevertheless, I support this resolution, which expresses our strong support for the men and women of our military forces in their current action against the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein. This resolution also reaffirms the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq.

Over the past year, Saddam Hussein has been playing this cynical game of failing to fulfill the very inspection agreements which he, himself, signed as part of the peace agreement following his ill-fated invasion of Kuwait. Several weeks ago when Saddam Hussein notified the United Nations weapons inspectors that he was no longer going to cooperate with them and was halting the inspections, the world knew that Saddam was not serious about cooperation and that he was attempting to protect a dangerous arsenal of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons which he intended to use on his neighbors and enemies in the future.

At that time, 6 weeks ago, the U.S. military leadership drafted a plan to resume military air strikes against Saddam's weapons of mass destruction. The President ordered those plans to be executed and the air strikes were given the green light. We all know that at the last minute Saddam backed down and agreed to allow the U.N. inspectors to resume their work and the military strikes were called off.

Many of us in the Congress, and in the country, were disappointed that the President backed down because we all knew that Saddam would not keep his word and that we would once again face down the road the need to strike at his weapons arsenal. Many argued that the failure to respond to Saddam at that time would create a greater threat to the region and to the world and would further embolden Saddam to flaunt his word and create these crises over and over again, betting that no action would ever be taken.

Saddam's refusal last week to again honor his commitments, thus forcing the withdrawal of the U.N. inspection team from Iraq, had to be the last straw. The decision to bomb by the Commander in Chief, with the full support of our Joint Chiefs of Staff, was the correct decision because Saddam through his lack of compliance presented a clear and present danger to the stability of the region and the security of the international community. Last night's air raids despite their curious timing, represented the kind of decisive action which has been inevitable and unavoidable as long as Saddam felt he could get away with his acts of noncompliance.

Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein has proven time and time again that he is intractable. If Saddam had felt he could continue to get away with his actions without incurring any penalty, he seriously miscalculated the will of the people of the United States and that of the international community. As a Member of the

International Relations Committee, and as one who has been a leader in support of decisive military action against Saddam Hussein as far back as 1991, I support the decision to take these actions against the regime of what can only be called a tyranny and a menace to society. I support the courageous men and women our military forces in these critical times and I wish them and their families God-speed on this important mission.

Mr. FALCOMVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I join strongly with our colleagues in urging passage of this resolution of support for our men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces now confronting Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Speaker, the Iraqi Government has repeatedly shown contempt for the diplomatic resolution of the crisis created by their nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs. Over the last year, Saddam Hussein has pushed the United States and the International community three times to the brink of war, only to dance away under cover of diplomatic ruses.

With the UNSCOM report issued days ago and Ramadan to begin this weekend, it is clear that the time for diplomacy is over. The Iraqi Government has lied again and U.N. weapons inspectors have been stopped from doing their job.

U.S. and British military forces in the Persian Gulf are now ensuring what diplomacy could not—that Iraq will not threaten the region nor the world with weapons of mass destruction.

I commend President Clinton for making this courageous decision at this very difficult time—knowing opponents at home and overseas would charge him with undercutting the impeachment proceedings.

I don't buy into these charges, as we all know, as does the President, that the impeachment shall continue and the outcome will not change. If anything, his action at this time will only harden the impeachment vote against him.

Mr. Speaker, I urge our colleagues to support the Commander-in-Chief and our Armed Forces in the Gulf that have placed their lives at risk to ensure that nuclear, chemical and biological weapons from Iraq or other rogue nations do not threaten our shores and that of our allies.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution expressing support for U.S. and British air strikes in the Persian Gulf region. We offer our thoughts and prayers to our brave men and women in uniform who are fighting for our national security during our holiday season. I support our troops to be successful and safe, and I support the decision made by the President and our military commanders.

President Clinton provided a targeted and calibrated military response to Iraq's reckless disregard for United Nations arms inspections and our policy to remove weapons of mass destruction from tyrants like Saddam Hussein. The timing of the air strikes was dictated strictly by national security needs. This was confirmed by defense Secretary William Cohen, CIA Director George Tenet, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Hugh Shelton in a meeting last night. It was the unanimous view of our military and national security advisors that the air strikes were justified and that the timing this week was critical to the success of the mission in the weeks ahead.

Saddam has repeatedly attempted to erode or violate international standards concerning biological and chemical weapons. He has and is intent on building the most vile weapons in the history of man, weapons outlawed by nearly every country in the world. Saddam Hussein must not go unchallenged. Therefore, I accept the judgment of the President's military and national security advisors, and I will provide all the support I can for our troops while they are engaged in this military endeavor.

The military action initiated yesterday by the United States sends a direct and appropriate message: Iraq must fully comply with the terms of the weapons inspections. We must continue to protect our troops and vital interests in the Middle East and reduce the ability of Saddam Hussein to threaten innocent civilians and his neighbors in the region. I support the intent of yesterday's air strikes and look forward to the safe return of our troops after a successful mission.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution, and of President Clinton's decision to order airstrikes against Iraq.

In 1981, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin ordered the Israeli Air Force to destroy Saddam Hussein's Osirak nuclear reactor, because of growing evidence that this French-supplied "research reactor" was being transformed into a covert nuclear bomb factory. World reaction to the attack was swift and harsh. The French, the Russians, and even the UN Security Council condemned the bombing. The Reagan Administration criticized the raid and temporarily suspended arms shipments to Israel.

But in reality, Israel had done the world an enormous favor. It has set back Saddam Hussein's efforts to obtain weapons of mass destruction by several years.

During the Gulf War, the U.S. and its Allies again targeted Iraq's efforts to acquire nuclear, chemical, biological, and ballistic missile capabilities. In the aftermath of that struggle, international inspectors found clear and convincing evidence of a massive Iraqi program to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

Since that time, one of the fundamental goals of U.S. foreign policy has been to assure that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction capabilities are dismantled, and to prevent Saddam Hussein from rebuilding the capacity to hold the world hostage.

That is what yesterday's air strikes against Iraq were all about. This isn't Wag the Dog; it's Enemy of the State. It's Target the Tyrant.

Does anyone really want the President to give that madman even more time to hide his weapons, fortify his military, and spawn terrorism?

This is a cruel and savage dictator who has already used chemical weapons against both the Iranians and his own people. He fired Scud missiles at innocent Israeli civilians, and he is hellbent on amassing an arsenal of nuclear, chemical, biological, and ballistic missiles so that he can again threaten stability in the Persian Gulf region.

Yes, the President should comply with the consultative provisions of the War Powers Act as he proceeds with this military action. And he has in fact been consulting with the Congressional leadership, as provided for under that Act. But he had no choice but to take a prompt decisive action in this matter.

President Clinton deserves our nation's support in this decision, and the heroic men and women in our armed services who are carrying out his order deserve our support and our prayers. They are engaged in a noble mission, whose objective is no less than to avert the threat of a nuclear holocaust and reaffirm the sanctity of international law.—

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our brave men and women in our armed forces who have answered their Nation's call, and who are now standing tall for the United States of America. In the name of national unity and in the spirit of peace and freedom, I believe this Congress must fully embrace and strongly support the mission currently underway in Iraq.

It must be said that I am troubled by the Administration's failure to consult with Congress before sending our troops into harm's way. A close review of the War Powers Act clearly states that the President must do this before engaging our military in armed action. The fact that this was not done illuminates a subtle shift of power from the legislative branch of government to the administrative branch. In matters as serious as unleashing the might of our military on another country, this shift of power should trouble us all.

It is my deepest hope that this military action has been well planned, will be well executed, and will be brought to a quick and decisive conclusion. The brave men and women who have taken an oath to protect and preserve peace and freedom throughout the world deserve nothing less.

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening the United States launched an attack on Iraq. It is unfortunate that we were forced into such an action. I support the decision to use military force and offer my unequivocal support to the men and women of our armed services. I also offer my prayers for their speedy and safe return.

Saddam Hussein has been given chance after chance to live up to the agreements he made at the end of the Gulf War and time after time refused to comply with that agreement. Last week, Saddam Hussein announced, once again, that he would not cooperate with the United Nations Special Commission's (UNSCOM) attempts to find weapons of mass destruction. The UNSCOM inspection teams are a critical tool in monitoring and preventing Iraq from developing chemical, biological and potentially nuclear weapons. Iraq's refusal to allow those inspectors to do their jobs is a direct threat to the United States, and our allies. Therefore, we cannot sit by while Saddam continually defies the international community and continues to develop weapons of mass destruction.

By continually refusing to comply with agreements it made at the end of the Gulf War, and again after November's agreement, Iraq has proven itself to be a menace and threat to its neighbors and to the people of the United States. Preventing Iraq's development of weapons of mass destruction is crucial to preserving the safety and well being of all of our citizens and our national security.

It has become crystal clear that Saddam Hussein will not abandon his efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction. We gave Saddam Hussein every opportunity to end hostilities and economic sanctions. All he had to do was comply with the agreement and stop developing weapons of mass destruction. I be-

lieve we had no choice but to use military force.

Again, I offer my full and unequivocal support for our men and women in the armed service and pray for their quick return and a speedy end to this conflict.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, we are at an interesting juncture in history. We are juxtaposed between great divisions on how to discipline our President and how to demonstrate unanimous support for the men and women of our armed forces as they proceed into armed conflict miles away in Iraq. Make no mistake, that even during these times we live in the greatest country on earth. For even in the fell clutch of circumstance our resolve is clear and our vision is focused. We will not allow Saddam Hussein to build and develop weapons of mass destruction; we will not allow him to continue to circumvent international law; we will not allow him to continue to obstruct and mislead U.N. weapons inspectors as they attempt to locate and inspect weapons sites. We will not allow him to threaten his neighbors; and we will not allow Saddam Hussein to threaten the future of American families and children. We will not allow Saddam Hussein to threaten the new peace in the Middle East and we will stand united against him, no matter the domestic crisis, and mete out the severest punishment that our military resources will allow us. Just as we punish serial killers for their crimes, we will punish this serial promise breaker for his!

I rise to support the President's actions against Saddam Hussein and I rise in unwavering support of our brave and loyal troops who willingly lay their lives on the line for our freedom. We owe it to them to lay down our political differences and stand together in support of the President's decision to initiate military action against Saddam Hussein. These actions are both appropriate and necessary to prevent the rise of a tyrant who is determined to immortalize himself in the world's history books. Saddam Hussein has a record of using chemical and biological weapons against his enemies, both, inside and outside of Iraq. He has launched SCUD missiles against Israel, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab countries. He has used chemical weapons against his Kurdish minority, and if given the opportunity and the means, he would not hesitate to launch an attack against the United States.

We have given the Iraqi leader every opportunity to comply with weapons inspectors. We have warned Saddam that his actions would be met with the severest of consequences. The President's actions are in the best interest of our country and our children, and he deserves the full support of this House and the American people. We owe this much and more to Lt. Colonel Heidi Brown, the first woman to command an Army air defense battalion, and the rest of our brave soldiers who are risking their lives for our national sovereignty.

I would like to thank the Leadership of the House for setting aside other business to support our Commander in Chief and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of carrying out the military mission in the Persian Gulf. I commend the U.S. troops and I commend the President for carrying out his responsibility as Commander in Chief.

The decision to strike strategic defense locations in Iraq was not made by the United

Nations. It was not made by the President. The decision to take military action was made by Saddam Hussein himself. On November 15, Hussein was given final warning by the United Nations and the United States that there would be no more discussion if he stood in the way of U.N. inspectors. When he in fact did so, as detailed in the U.N. inspector's report submitted on December 15, we had no choice but to carry out the military mission in order to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Those Republicans in Congress who criticize the President by saying he is attempting to delay the impeachment vote are the same Members of Congress who would have accused the President of delaying the vote of the Judiciary Committee had this action been necessary last week. And these are the same Members who would have said the President was trying to delay an impeachment trial if this military mission was ordered 30 days from now.

The bottom line is that we must not allow Saddam Hussein the ability to manufacture and possess weapons of mass destruction. If we do, I have no doubt he will use them on his neighbors and ultimately on the United States.

I strongly support the President's actions and I support our U.S. troops in the Gulf.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues to express my support for the US troops in the Persian Gulf and the important work they are doing to protect our national security. The President is our Commander in Chief, and he has my support.

The President's military and foreign policy advisors, as well as our allies, unanimously concluded that Saddam Hussein must be stopped now. His nuclear, chemical and biological weapons pose a serious and immediate threat. We cannot sit back and watch while he rebuilds and strengthens his arsenal.

In times like these, the Congress and the leaders of both parties should set aside our differences to support our Commander in Chief, the President, and our Armed Forces. Such ought to be our instincts at this critical moment, and I applaud all those who have risen above partisan debate to support this action by our country.

It is unclear we did in the 1991 Gulf War.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak. It is important for Members from all across this country to lend their voices and support for our Nation's efforts to eliminate these weapons of mass destruction. Thank God we have taken on this task.

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of our men and women in the field, and pray for their safety and the completion of this mission. As a former member of the Intelligence Committee, I speak from experience, and familiarity with the evolution of these matters. You are embarked on a mission vital to our national security and the stability of the Middle East region, and you go with the full support of the American people. This mission has been developed and planned over the last several months, and is consistent with the policy requirements set forth by the President and the United Nations in November, keyed on the final notification of noncompliance from the international UNSCOM team.

There are those here who have questioned the timing of this attack. To those, I say we

need look no farther than Saddam Hussein himself. Because we live in a free society, our political schedule and debate is not kept secret. There is no secret as to why our membership is gathered here today during this holiday season and able to vote on this resolution today. It is not hard to surmise that the enemies of our state throughout the world, unfamiliar and unversed in the practice of freedom and the expression of liberty, would mistake our spirited and philosophical debate for a disintegration of our collective strength, and choose to capitalize on it. In unity, let us send a clear message of restraint to those who would seek to test our resolve. We do this with this resolution.

To the American people, your courage and support during this time is a credit to your resolve and faith in democracy. There has been much debate about our Constitution over the last several weeks, especially around the separation of our three branches of government. I submit to you a living example of the wisdom of our founders, that while in the throws of partisan and philosophical division gripping this House, the Nation still has the ability to respond quickly and directly to crisis. This is our strength, this is our Constitution, this is our Nation, and the legacy I stand before you to support and protect. The President, our Commander in Chief, and our men and women in the armed services have our complete and unwavering support in their mission.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and the heroic men and women who serve in our Nation's Armed Forces.

Even in the midst of a critical domestic debate, we stand firmly united in the face of threats to our interests abroad. Saddam Hussein continues to violate the terms of the agreement that ended the Gulf War, and we must contain the threat he poses to the security of the region. Saddam Hussein's proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continues to threaten lives in the Persian Gulf and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, our Armed Forces risk their lives every day to protect American families against threats like that posed by Saddam Hussein. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude for their loyal service. It is critical that our troops have a clear and unequivocal understanding that Congress and the American people are one hundred percent behind them. They deserve nothing less than our full and unwavering support in this and all their endeavors.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, world peace has been jeopardized because of Saddam Hussein's continued reluctance to cooperate with UN weapons inspectors. In the past 13 months, the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM) has evacuated from Baghdad, in full or in part, four times. These include an incident in November of 1997, when Iraq refused to allow Americans to participate in UNSCOM, a second time when Iraq refused to grant unconditional access to sensitive sites in February of 1998, and the beginning of the most recent crisis in November of 1998 when Iraq stopped cooperating with UNSCOM until yesterday when Ambassador Butler reports that Iraq was not cooperating with UNSCOM.

When dealing with a dictator as ruthless and unpredictable as Saddam Hussein, that has developed weapons of mass destruction, it is

imperative that the United States take a firm stand and refuse to continue to give ground. The information available to us from the previous inspections and intelligence reports show that Iraq is still working diligently to build an arsenal of weapons. It is my firm belief that the military strikes which were launched were necessary to show Iraq that their behavior is unacceptable.

I strongly favor this resolution of support for the men and women of our armed forces in and around the Persian Gulf. This Nation must stand as one, despite politics, when we confront terrorists such as Saddam Hussein.

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the concurrent resolution and urge its adoption.

Our moral authority and the military might enforcing that authority exist in large part thanks to the men and women wearing the uniform of the United States of America.

Their voluntary commitment to serving this country, its people and its principles is what makes us strong and capable of taking the action that is currently underway.

We work for peace and for resolution to conflict that puts our men and women in harm's way. And we are eternally thankful for their devotion and sacrifice.

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution and commend America's armed forces in Iraq. We must destroy Saddam Hussein's ability to make and use weapons of mass destruction and eliminate his ability to wage war against his neighbors.

Inspectors began their mission to oversee the elimination of Iraq's weapons seven years ago. Since then, Saddam Hussein has repeatedly failed to comply with UN inspection agreements. Iraq has continued to block UNSCOM from inspecting sites, and has restricted UNSCOM's ability to obtain critical evidence. This defiance poses a clear and present danger to countries in the Gulf and people across the world.

In November, the President made it clear that if Saddam Hussein failed to cooperate, we would strike without warning or delay. The President's advisors informed him that mid-December would be the appropriate time for this mission. Failure to act decisively at this juncture would provide Saddam Hussein with time to protect his weapons and prepare for potential action against him.

The President's decision was based upon the unanimous recommendation of the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of State and the National Security Adviser. Tony Blair, Prime Minister of Great Britain, concurred that now is the time to strike. In the President's address to the American people yesterday, he had "no doubt that left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will use these terrible weapons again." I strongly support the President's decision and believe that we must stand united behind our troops. Our men and women in uniform are putting their lives in danger to protect the interests of the people of the United States and our allies around the world.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H. Res. 612, a resolution supporting our troops in the Persian Gulf. Despite strong concerns over the timing behind these air strikes, it is imperative that we stand in support of our armed forces. Many troops from my northwest Florida district will be involved in

this operation and they deserve the full support of Congress and the American people.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the men and women of the U.S. armed forces deployed in the Persian Gulf for their professionalism, patriotism, dedication and courage.

As the new millennium approaches, the greatest threat to our national security is the proliferation of biological and chemical weapons. Saddam Hussein's regime has demonstrated again and again its desire to manufacture and use these weapons of mass destruction. We simply cannot allow Saddam the capability and the resources to complete this awful task.

Day in and day out, the men and women of our armed forces perform the vitally important job of protecting our national security. I'm proud of their work, and I am deeply grateful to those who have accepted this challenge in the Persian Gulf. With over 24,000 U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf, we must give our brave soldiers our unequivocal support and encouragement at this difficult time.

We applaud our brave troops and thank them for their service to our country. Our thoughts and prayers are with our troops and their families.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in expressing my unqualified support for our troops as they undertake this important mission. I cannot overstate my admiration for our troops as they put their lives on the line to make the world safer for all. Saddam Hussein is a threat to many nations, as the President made clear last night, and we must make sure that his ambitions are contained and his capabilities limited.

This is a time when Americans must come together. This mission is a logical and justified step in an American policy that began during the Bush Administration. Having been briefed on the incidents that led up to this mission, I have faith that our military and political leaders—those with the best information—have made an appropriate and entirely defensible decision. And I applaud the willingness of the British to join us, which underscores the military and political credibility of the mission.

We must put aside partisan and other divisions now. I agree wholeheartedly with Speaker-Elect LIVINGSTON's decision to postpone the impeachment debate. We need to pause, take in the magnitude of what has been happening, and support our troops. I believe that is what the House is now doing and I hope all Americans will follow suit.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, anytime young Americans are carrying out our foreign policy with parts of our national security apparatus, Congress should stand in support of them, of the Commander in Chief and of the policy they propound. If anyone disagrees with the policy, it is their duty to speak up in this democracy.

As a member of the National Security Committee, I know what sort of threat is posed by Saddam Hussein's arsenal of terror of the biological, chemical and nuclear sort. He has exploited our biggest weakness, a lack of committed, long-standing allies in the Gulf region. It is important to note the recent diplomatic breakthrough in the Middle East at Gaza, which no doubt reinforced in the minds of our Arab and Jewish friends the good will intended to Gulf states on the part of the United States.

Also, it is of tremendous importance to note that the uniformed services, who have been

openly critical of President Clinton and this Administration from time to time, have spoken in unison and with passion about the timing and the need for the strikes at this time. Just as the United States took strong action against terrorism in the embassy bombings in the midst of Congress' impeachment activities, we again move forward unaffected by a domestic partisan squabble in the Congress.

I support the President, the troops and the policy of a long-term commitment to the disarming of the terrorist nation that has been a thorn in the world's flesh for nearly a decade. I commend the President for moving forward on U.S. policy around the world when military events dictate.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the men and women of our military participating in Operation Desert Fox. Their willingness to risk their lives defending our Constitution and freedom is the highest form of patriotism.

Saddam Hussein has stood in the way of allowing the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) to conduct their inspections that were mandated in the 1991 cease-fire one-too-many times. He has continued to break promises and put the people of Iraq in harm's way. On November 14, Saddam was given his last chance to resume full cooperation as a condition of the 1991 cease-fire. Nonetheless, Iraq has blocked the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) from inspecting suspect sites and restricted its ability to obtain necessary evidence. Iraq has failed to cooperate. His actions have jeopardized the security and stability of the Persian Gulf that our troops fought so hard for in 1991. This is simply unacceptable. Saddam has now run out of chances.

The President is completely justified in his use of force. The leaders he depends on to advise him on national security matters, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of State, and the National Security Advisor, have unanimously endorsed not only the use of force, but the timing of the attack as well. Furthermore, this attack was in coordination with the British military. The credibility of the United Nations as a peace-keeping organization is predicated on the ability of its members to enforce its mandates.

But let's not lose sight of the most important reason we are on the floor today: to recognize the bravery of our soldiers. What our troops are doing is very dangerous and extremely important. It is not us who honor them with this resolution, it is they who honor us with their service. Their readiness, skill, and courage that they have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate are a credit to the great military tradition of this nation. It is that tradition that we are supporting.

I want to express my most heartfelt appreciation to the troops and their families for their tremendous sacrifice and my most sincere hope that this conflict will be over soon so our men and women serving in the Persian Gulf will celebrate safe and blessed holidays at home.

Mr. LAHOOD. I rise in support of House Resolution 612, a resolution of support for the men and women in uniform. They have been called upon to once again "check" Saddam Hussein's refusal to comply with world demands that he stop the mass production of chemical weapons.

Mr. Speaker, after learning that the U.S. military forces had engaged enemy forces, my prayers and undeniable support went out to them and their families. For years, they have selflessly defended America's national security interests in the Persian Gulf at great personal sacrifice. All Americans can be proud of the way our troops have performed. They are a credit to our nation and an inspiration to us all. Regardless of the questions raised by the unique circumstances, Mr. Speaker, it is important that our troops know that Congress and the nation are behind them.

The challenges to U.S. security posed by Saddam's actions in Iraq is stark. Simply put, the United States cannot allow Saddam to continue to frustrate the efforts of the international community and to rebuild his weapons capabilities. Doing so would again allow him to threaten his neighbors, U.S. friends and allies in the region, and direct U.S. interest.

Whatever one thinks of the timing of these latest U.S. military strikes against Iraq, we are all unified in support of our service men and women. We are proud of each and every one of them. I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution and urge all Americans to pray for the safety of our sons and daughters, and husbands and wives who are currently in harm's way in the Gulf.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues for their unanimous support.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of President Clinton's decision to order military strikes against Saddam Hussein and especially in support of our troops in action.

Since committing at the end of the Persian Gulf War to full and open inspections of his nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons capabilities, Saddam Hussein has repeatedly blocked the work of the United Nations inspectors. Time and again he has refused to turn over key documents and he has continually refused UNSCOM inspectors entry to suspect facilities.

On November 14, Saddam asked for one more chance, and we gave it to him. Once again he reneged on his commitment. Military action is now necessary to stop his efforts to produce weapons of mass destruction.

Our troops engaged in Iraq are doing good, important, and dangerous work. They deserve our prayers and support.

As a member of the National Security Committee, I returned on Tuesday from a trip to visit our troops deployed in the Balkans. I had the opportunity to see first-hand the sacrifices our men and women in uniform make in service to our nation. Americans in the Gulf are now making the ultimate sacrifice and it is our responsibility to be steadfast in our support.

This is not a time for partisan bickering. This is a time when we must come together as a nation in support of our men and women fighting for a just cause.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution and provide their full backing to our fighting men and women in Iraq.

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise today in support of our troops in the Persian Gulf. In my mind, there is no more honorable duty than that of our members of the armed services.

Since the close of the Persian Gulf War, Iraq has repeatedly refused to comply with U.N. resolutions concerning its weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein continues

to thumb his nose at the United States. Iraq is a threat to both our allies and our troops currently stationed in the region. I have always and will always support military action to contain Iraq's dangerous development of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. It is time we put a stop to Saddam Hussein and his ludicrous ways.

As a former member of the Navy I understand the commitment and love for country which is needed to serve in our armed services. These soldiers are giving the ultimate level of commitment by defending freedom.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers go out to our troops and their families.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of this resolution that expresses our strong and absolute support for the men and women of the U.S. armed forces deployed in the Persian Gulf for their professionalism, patriotism, dedication, and courage. I am deeply grateful to the soldiers and the families of these troops for their contribution to the cause of peace and the national security of the United States. When our troops are engaged in hostilities or are in harms way, we unconditionally support them in the dangerous work that they do to protect the interests of the United States. While the President's timing of this attack is questionable, I leave that question to the best judgment of the American people.

Saddam Hussein is a murderous dictator who cannot be permitted to continue to release his terror on his people and the world. He has repeatedly proven that he cannot be trusted, and Iraq will remain a threat to peace as long as this dictator remains in charge. The mission by our troops against Saddam Hussein is a just one and it is absolutely necessary, but it should have come months ago.

I am very proud of all the American men and women who currently serve our country in the Middle East. The presence of the greatest fighting force in the world—the United States military—in the Middle East plays a vital role in keeping peace there. These troops have our unwavering support. May God be with each of them as they carry out their task with patriotism and courage.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, as the representative for Vandenberg Air Force Base on the Central Coast of California, I have always supported our servicemen and women and their families. Today, I rise today in strong support of our troops and of this critical mission to protect our national interest and safeguard our global stability.

Yesterday, we entered a new phase in our multilateral campaign to rein in Saddam Hussein's ability to terrorize his people and his neighbors, and to destabilize the Middle East and the international community. There can be no doubt that this action is justified and brought on solely by Saddam's refusal to allow UNSCOM to complete its inspections in a thorough and timely manner. Decisive action was undertaken at precisely the right time to bring about the greatest impact with the least cost.

Hussein's attempts to manufacture chemical, biological and nuclear weapons of mass destruction is well known, and so is his willingness to use them. He must be stopped—by diplomatic measures if possible, but by force if necessary. Only by confronting Saddam can we end his reign of terror which has inflicted untold human suffering on his own people.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I spoke with the commander at Vandenberg to express my

support for the selfless work that he and his troops do everyday in the service of this country. This dedication is always brought into sharp focus during times like this, but make no mistake—our military men and women are on the job every day to safeguard our freedom. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their devotion to duty and country which is present everyday and so particularly evident today.

I urge my colleagues to support our troops and their important mission by passing this important resolution.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to return to Washington, DC, today in time to cast my vote in favor of the House Resolution supporting our military operations and personnel in the current action against Saddam Hussein. The Majority Leadership in the House failed to inform Members of the scheduling of a recorded vote until it was too late for me to catch any flight last night from my district to Washington. I fully support our military service men and women as they carry out their duties in support of President Clinton's order for an air and missile attack of Iraqi weapons-producing and military targets. Now is the time for our nation to support the Commander in Chief who was forced into this decision after United Nations arms inspectors reported that Baghdad continues to obstruct the will and mandate of the U.N.

Again, had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on the resolution of support.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of President Clinton's decision to order U.S. naval and air forces to strike at military and government targets in Iraq in response to Saddam Hussein's latest refusal to allow international arms officials to inspect weapons facilities for biological and chemical weapons.

As long as weapons of mass destruction are in Hussein's possession, Iraq poses a deadly threat to security in the already volatile Middle East. In addition, he is capable of wreaking havoc anywhere in the world—including the United States—using only a minimal amount of his chemical/biological stockpile. Let me be clear, allowing Hussein to continue gathering his weapons of mass destruction would have far reaching consequences for the safety of mankind beyond the physical boundaries of the middle east. One only has to see one of the well publicized photos of a field of Kurdish corpses to see an example of the chemical genocide he inflicted on his own people.

Hussein has tested the will of America and the world community one too many times, and now he bears full responsibility for his actions. The terms of the agreement that averted a November air strike were clear: comply or face the consequences. However, Hussein continues to engage in a long pattern of games in hiding Iraq's nuclear and biological warfare capabilities. As long as Iraq plans to continue to defy the United Nations and the world community by attempting to continue to develop weapons of mass destruction in the face of international condemnation, the United States must remain vigilant and ready to act. This strike sends a firm message to Hussein that the United States is not going to tolerate his failure to comply with required weapons inspection obligations any longer. The United States, as leader of the world community, must be prepared to act forcefully to end Iraq's defiance, and I firmly support the use of this force to eliminate Iraq's ability to produce weapons that threaten its neighbors.

Terrorism is the single greatest threat to the United States and its security. We need to stand behind the President's decision when our national security is threatened. The brave men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces deserve our unwavering support and gratitude, and I commend each and everyone one of those brave soldiers carrying out this important mission.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the U.S. troops who are bravely carrying out this current action against Iraq. Being deployed and separated from one's country and family is difficult at any time, but especially during the Christmas season. I join millions of Americans and others around the world in praying for their safety during this time.

I also pray the Iraqi people will find a way to create for themselves a government headed by legitimate leaders who can bring them back into the fold of law-abiding nations. Until such change takes place, I fear that the military presence of the United States, Britain, and other nations will have to be maintained at great financial cost.

For several years, President Clinton has submitted to Congress a defense budget in which he refused to include funding for the expensive peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. This forces Congress to add so-called emergency funding beyond the budget agreement or else seriously damage the readiness of our other military forces by transferring money from their budgets. With the almost certain end of the weapons inspection mission, we face yet another prolonged, expensive deployment of U.S. troops and equipment.

In light of his continued use of military forces for a wide range of missions, I call upon the President to ensure a timely release of all funds in the FY99 defense bills and the one billion dollars included in the omnibus bill for national missile defense. I also ask that he respond in a positive way to the many calls for a defense budget which will meet the demands placed upon our military. We need to support our troops not only in word, but also in deed, by providing the resources they need to do their job.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). All time for debate has expired.

The resolution is considered read for amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 5, answered "present" 1, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 539]

YEAS—417

Abercrombie	Archer	Ballenger
Ackerman	Armey	Barcia
Aderholt	Bachus	Barr
Allen	Baker	Barrett (NE)
Andrews	Baldacci	Barrett (WI)

## LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. ARMEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to work on this whole subject of the schedule for the remainder of the day and ensuing. I know Members on both sides of the aisle are very anxious about this schedule, and let me just suggest that we will need to perhaps put the House into recess for an hour.

We will continue with our meeting and our negotiations with the minority, and hopefully within the hour we can return with an announcement of what the schedule will be for the remainder of this day, this week, and that time ensuing.

Mr. Speaker, I should encourage Members to stay close to their offices. We would like to, on behalf of all the Members, be able to give you definitive word within that hour time period, and at that point, of course, each and every Member can follow up as they and their family's needs dictate.

If I may ask the indulgence of the Chamber, that we take that recess, come back within the hour, and make that announcement.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ARMEY. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Texas, the majority leader, let me just state from the perspective of many on this side of the aisle, and I assume some even on the gentleman's side of the aisle, that we would look down upon any activity in this body to go forward with impeachment while American men and women are engaged in armed conflict.

I hope in your deliberations, I hope in your deliberations, that you consider the message that that will send to people around the world, and more particularly, those who are fighting on behalf of this country.

Mr. ARMEY. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his advice.

## RECESS

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1457

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) at 2 o'clock and 57 minutes p.m.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING QUESTION OF PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule IX, I hereby give notice of my

Bartlett  
Barton  
Bass  
Bateman  
Becerra  
Bentsen  
Bereuter  
Berman  
Berry  
Billbray  
Bilirakis  
Bishop  
Blagojevich  
Bliley  
Blumenauer  
Blunt  
Boehlert  
Boehner  
Bonilla  
Bonior  
Bono  
Borski  
Boswell  
Boucher  
Boyd  
Brady (PA)  
Brady (TX)  
Brown (CA)  
Brown (FL)  
Brown (OH)  
Bryant  
Bunning  
Burr  
Burton  
Buyer  
Callahan  
Calvert  
Camp  
Campbell  
Canady  
Cannon  
Capps  
Cardin  
Carson  
Castle  
Chabot  
Chambliss  
Chenoweth  
Christensen  
Clay  
Clayton  
Clement  
Clyburn  
Coble  
Coburn  
Collins  
Combust  
Condit  
Cook  
Cooksey  
Costello  
Cox  
Coyne  
Cramer  
Crane  
Crapo  
Cubin  
Cummings  
Cunningham  
Danner  
Davis (FL)  
Davis (IL)  
Davis (VA)  
Deal  
DeFazio  
Delahunt  
DeLauro  
DeLay  
Deutsch  
Diaz-Balart  
Dickey  
Dicks  
Dingell  
Dixon  
Doggett  
Dooley  
Doyle  
Dreier  
Duncan  
Dunn  
Edwards  
Ehlers  
Ehrlich  
Emerson  
Engel  
English  
Ensign  
Eshoo  
Etheridge

Evans  
Everett  
Ewing  
Farr  
Fattah  
Fawell  
Fazio  
Filner  
Foley  
Forbes  
Ford  
Fossella  
Fowler  
Fox  
Frank (MA)  
Franks (NJ)  
Frelinghuysen  
Frost  
Ganske  
Gejdenson  
Gekas  
Gephardt  
Gibbons  
Gilchrist  
Gillmor  
Gilman  
Gingrich  
Gonzalez  
Goode  
Goodlatte  
Goodling  
Gordon  
Goss  
Graham  
Granger  
Green  
Greenwood  
Gutierrez  
Gutknecht  
Hall (OH)  
Hall (TX)  
Hamilton  
Hansen  
Harman  
Hastert  
Hastings (FL)  
Hastings (WA)  
Hayworth  
Hefley  
Hefner  
Herger  
Hill  
Hilleary  
Hilliard  
Hinchee  
Hinojosa  
Hobson  
Hoekstra  
Holden  
Hooley  
Horn  
Hostettler  
Houghton  
Hoyer  
Hulshof  
Hunter  
Hutchinson  
Hyde  
Inglis  
Istook  
Jackson (IL)  
Jackson-Lee  
(TX)  
Jefferson  
Jenkins  
John  
Johnson (CT)  
Johnson (WI)  
Johnson, E. B.  
Johnson, Sam  
Jones  
Kanjorski  
Kaptur  
Kasich  
Kelly  
Kennedy (MA)  
Kennedy (RI)  
Kennelly  
Kildee  
Kilpatrick  
Kim  
Kind (WI)  
King (NY)  
Kingston  
Kleczka  
Klink  
Klug  
Knollenberg  
Kolbe

Kucinich  
LaFalce  
LaHood  
Lampson  
Lantos  
Largent  
Latham  
LaTourette  
Lazio  
Leach  
Levin  
Lewis (CA)  
Lewis (GA)  
Lewis (KY)  
Linder  
Lipinski  
Livingston  
LoBiondo  
Loftgren  
Lowey  
Lucas  
Luther  
Maloney (CT)  
Maloney (NY)  
Manzullo  
Markey  
Martinez  
Mascara  
Matsui  
McCarthy (MO)  
McCarthy (NY)  
McCollum  
McCreery  
McDade  
McDermott  
McGovern  
McHale  
McHugh  
McInnis  
McIntosh  
McIntyre  
McKeon  
McNulty  
Meehan  
Meek (FL)  
Meeks (NY)  
Menendez  
Metcalfe  
Mica  
Millender-  
McDonald  
Miller (FL)  
Minge  
Mink  
Moakley  
Mollohan  
Moran (KS)  
Moran (VA)  
Morella  
Myrick  
Nadler  
Neal  
Nethercutt  
Neumann  
Ney  
Northup  
Norwood  
Nussle  
Oberstar  
Obey  
Olver  
Ortiz  
Owens  
Oxley  
Packard  
Pallone  
Pappas  
Parker  
Pascarell  
Pastor  
Paxon  
Payne  
Pease  
Pelosi  
Peterson (MN)  
Peterson (PA)  
Petri  
Pickering  
Pickett  
Pitts  
Pombo  
Pomeroy  
Porter  
Portman  
Poshard  
Price (NC)  
Pryce (OH)  
Quinn  
Radanovich

Rahall  
Ramstad  
Rangel  
Redmond  
Regula  
Reyes  
Riggs  
Riley  
Rivers  
Rodriguez  
Roemer  
Rogan  
Rogers  
Rohrabacher  
Ros-Lehtinen  
Rothman  
Roukema  
Roybal-Allard  
Royce  
Ryun  
Sabo  
Salmon  
Sanders  
Sandlin  
Sawyer  
Saxton  
Schaefer, Dan  
Schaffer, Bob  
Schumer  
Scott  
Sendenbrenner  
Serrano  
Sessions  
Shaheed  
Shaw  
Shays

Sherman  
Shimkus  
Shuster  
Sisisky  
Skaggs  
Skeen  
Skelton  
Slaughter  
Smith (MI)  
Smith (NJ)  
Smith (OR)  
Smith (TX)  
Smith, Adam  
Smith, Linda  
Snyder  
Solomon  
Souder  
Spence  
Spratt  
Stabenow  
Stark  
Stearns  
Stenholm  
Stokes  
Strickland  
Stump  
Stupak  
Sununu  
Talent  
Tanner  
Tauscher  
Tauzin  
Taylor (MS)  
Thomas  
Thompson  
Thornberry

Thune  
Thurman  
Tiahrt  
Tierney  
Torres  
Towns  
Traficant  
Turner  
Upton  
Velazquez  
Vento  
Visclosky  
Walsh  
Wamp  
Waters  
Watkins  
Watt (NC)  
Watts (OK)  
Waxman  
Weldon (FL)  
Weldon (PA)  
Weller  
Wexler  
Weygand  
White  
Whitfield  
Wicker  
Wilson  
Wise  
Wolf  
Woolsey  
Wynn  
Yates  
Young (AK)  
Young (FL)

## NAYS—5

Conyers  
Lee

McKinney  
Paul

Sanford

## ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Furse

## NOT VOTING—12

Baesler  
DeGette  
Doolittle  
Gallegly

Manton  
Miller (CA)  
Murtha  
Rush

Sanchez  
Scarborough  
Snowbarger  
Taylor (NC)

□ 1300

So the resolution was agreed to.  
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote 539, I was unavoidably detained with business in my district. Had I been present I would have voted "aye."

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SNOWBARGER. Mr. Speaker, the system for alerting Members of a pending vote was not in operation when the vote was called on H. Res. 612, to express Congressional support for the men and women of our Armed Forces who are conducting operations against Iraq. I strongly support our troops and support this resolution. I would have voted "yes" on this measure.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution just adopted.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.