

voices of the American people as represented by this body. But free men cannot be silenced; and so once again today, as we have almost every day since September 11, we gather in this Chamber to do the people's business.

There is no more grave responsibility that we undertake as Members of this House than the protection of our Nation and the lives of our men and women who serve that Nation in our armed services.

So today and tomorrow and on Thursday, we will as free men should, passionately, but peacefully, debate what is best for America and for our freedom-loving allies around the world. We will do in this place what the "Butcher of Baghdad" and the remnants of the al Qaeda hiding in bombed-out caves in far-flung places around the world hate the most, we will exercise democracy; and we will show the world how free men and women behave.

I rise in support of this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

This resolution authorizes the President to use necessary and appropriate military force against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq to defend the national security interests of the United States and to enforce the United Nations Security Council resolutions that Saddam Hussein has routinely ignored over the last decade. We take this step knowing that Saddam Hussein is a threat to the American people, to Iraq's neighbors, and to the civilized world at large.

On September 11, 2001, this Nation changed utterly. On that fateful morning, Americans woke up with the usual expectations: go to work, provide for the family, feed the children, live the American dream. Firemen, stockbrokers, custodians, police officers, office workers, all started their day, perhaps with a cup of coffee, perhaps hurrying to get to work on time.

But those plans were shattered when planes hit the World Trade Towers, the Pentagon, and while attempting to strike this very building and silence the voices of democracy in this very Chamber were thwarted by brave passengers over the skies of Pennsylvania. All of us lost our innocence that day.

Before September 11, we all believed that the troubles that infected the rest of the world could not impact us. We lived in a splendid isolation, protected by two vast oceans. Before that fateful day, war and disorder were distant rumblings from a far-off land. But on September 11, that distant rumbling hit New York, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. We have a sacred duty to do all that we can to ensure that what happened on September 11 never happens in America again.

Some may question the connection between Iraq and those terrorists who hijacked those planes. There is no doubt that Iraq supports and harbors those terrorists who wish harm to the United States. Is there a direct connec-

tion between Iraq and al Qaeda? The President thinks so; and based upon what I have seen, I think so also. Should we wait until we are attacked again before finding out for sure; or should we do all that we can to disarm Saddam Hussein's regime before they provide al Qaeda with weapons of mass destruction?

Just a year ago, this Capitol building was attacked when someone mailed anthrax-laden letters to Members of Congress. We have never found the perpetrator. Was that a terrorist attack? Undoubtedly. Was it connected to al Qaeda or Saddam Hussein? We do not know. But it serves as a wake-up call to all Americans. Why do we not take the biological and chemical weapons away from this regime before we find out for sure?

For those Members who are worried about the doctrine of preemption, let me say this is not a new conflict with Iraq. Our planes which have been patrolling the no-fly zone since the end of the Persian Gulf War pursuant to U.N. resolutions have been fired upon by the Iraqi military hundreds of times.

This conflict is ongoing, but now it has become critical that we take the next step. We know Saddam Hussein is a bad actor. We know what he did to the people of Kuwait when he invaded there. We know what he did to his neighbors in Iran when he used chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war. We know that he gassed his own people, including women and children, to put down a rebellion. For those who argue that we must build a consensus with the United Nations, let me say that we are taking an effective action here in this Chamber to perhaps help the U.N. do what is right in their own chamber.

Earlier this century, fascist regimes in Italy and Germany routinely ignored the dictates of the League of Nations. Both Mussolini and Hitler built up their armies, invaded their neighbors and oppressed their citizens, all in the face of an ineffective League of Nations.

If the United Nations is to have relevance in the 21st Century, we must not let it go the way of the League of Nations. We must give the United Nations the backbone it needs to enforce its own resolutions. But if the U.N. refuses to save itself, and more importantly the security of its member states and the cause of peace in this world, we must take all appropriate action to protect ourselves.

Edmund Burke once said that the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. We must not let evil triumph. We must do something. We must pass this resolution, support the President of the United States as he works to disarm Saddam Hussein, and win the war against terrorism.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that one-half of my time be yielded to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and that he be allowed to further allocate that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BLUNT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I understand that the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) is about to ask that the time allotted to the Democratic side of the aisle be divided equally between those Members who are in favor of the resolution and those Members who are opposed to the resolution.

This is a motion that I fully and enthusiastically support, but I would like to make the observation that while there are Members on the other side of the aisle who are opposed to the resolution, no similar request has been made to divide that time equally. If no request is made to divide that half of the time which is allotted to the debate for this resolution, then it will develop that we will have a debate dominated by those who favor the resolution because three-quarters of the time will be allocated to those Members who favor the resolution, and only one-fourth will be allocated to those who oppose the resolution.

It seems to me that this situation is inherently unfair. Therefore, I would request that the majority party also divide the time allotted to them so that half of that time may be distributed among Members who are opposed to the resolution. In that way we will have a fairer debate.

If we enter this debate with three-quarters of the time distributed to one side and only one-fourth to the other, it is obvious that the weight of the debate will be unfair going in, and that those who oppose the resolution will be facing a stacked deck. That is not appropriate or in keeping with the traditions of this House.

Now, I know a rule was passed earlier in the day, and perhaps it may have been more appropriate to make this statement or something similar to it at that time. Nevertheless, that time has now lapsed. This is the only time that is available to raise this issue and to make this request, which I make in all earnestness and all seriousness.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to vote on a resolution, the result of which is likely to cause the deaths of unknown numbers of unknown people should it prevail. This is the most serious matter that can be addressed by the Members of this free and open body. Therefore, it seems to me that this debate ought to be conducted in a free and open manner.

Allocating the time, and I believe that this is a very short time which has been allocated for this debate, it should be much longer, but given the fact that we have only this short amount of time, that time ought to be divided equally so that those people who are opposed to the resolution will have the opportunity to make their case in the same amount of time as those people who favor the resolution.

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

Mr. HINCHEY. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the gentleman's statement because it makes a very good point about fairness.

Prior to the writing of the rule, I did make some requests about getting some time because as a Republican, I have strong constitutional reservations about what we are doing, and I think they are worthwhile hearing. That was turned down. It was not written into the rule; and of course the amendment that I offered that may have offered an opportunity for me to make these constitutional points, that also was declined. But I have been informed today that I would be allowed 3 minutes to make the case for the Constitution.

I appreciate very much the gentleman bringing this up, and I hope our leadership will reconsider and allow Republicans on this side to have a fair share of the time, as the Democrats are doing.

□ 1230

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I reclaim my time.

I earnestly thank the gentleman for his efforts made today. It seems to me that the rejection of the gentleman's efforts constitutes a mistake on the part of the people who made that decision. His voice ought to have been heard. He ought to have been listened to when he asked for a proper allocation of time. He ought to have been listened to when he asked for the opportunity to present an amendment on this resolution. He was not. We now have an opportunity to rectify those mistakes.

Furthermore, the allocation of 3 minutes to defend the Constitution of the United States seems to me to be wholly inadequate and unworthy of this body. So, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I earnestly request that the request of the gentleman who just spoke be recognized by the majority party in this House, that fairness be honored by the majority in this House, and that they divide the time that has been given to them so that those people who are opposed to this resolution, earnestly and devoutly opposed to it, will have an equal time to express that devotion and earnestness in opposition to this resolution as those who favor it. I make that request.

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

Mr. HINCHEY. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

It is my intention to yield time to every Republican who asks for it, regardless of what side they are on. I will not discriminate between people who are for it or against it. If they are Republicans and they want time, we will give it to him or her so long as we have time; and we will allocate it as fairly as we possibly can.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for

that. But I would just like to make the observation that, while the gentleman's offer is made sincerely and I respect him, as I always do, and everything he says on this floor and everything that he does, I think that he is not providing the opportunity that many people in this House earnestly desire and I think the people of this country earnestly desire, and that is a fair and open exchange on the merits of this resolution.

I ask, how can we have a fair and open exchange on the merits of this resolution when those who are opposed to the resolution, regardless of what party they may belong to, are not provided the opportunity to make their case? They are only given a fourth of the opportunity, while those who favor the opposition are given three-fourths. This is inherently an unfair circumstance.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield on his reservation?

Mr. HINCHEY. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and I thank the gentleman from Texas and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS).

The gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) makes a very valid point. It was my understanding by the resolution that each Member was guaranteed 5 minutes. I am not sure if I heard the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) correctly, but my understanding is that he reported 3 minutes.

I say to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) I think it is extremely important in this debate that even 5 minutes may not be long enough to discuss the issues of life and death. I believe the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) has made a very valid point about sharing of the time, and I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for sharing the time.

I add my plea to the request that if we have to stay here into the weekend that this is such a vital discussion that there should be no limit and no limit on the amount of time and certainly we should equate the interests of the people of the United States with the interests of Members of the United States to be able to debate the issues of life and death in the full force and view of the American people, and it should not be limited, and certainly 3 minutes is not adequate.

I would ask that the gentleman's request and his reservation be, if the Members will, judged and judged appropriately and approved that we share the time for this enormous decision that we have to make.

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

Mr. HINCHEY. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me these arguments should have been

made when the rule was debated. The rule has been adopted. There was testimony before the Committee on Rules. I do not know that these folks were there making the same arguments, but to make it now comes rather late in the proceedings. We will be as fair as we possibly can, but the rule has been adopted. It does not address itself at all to how much time certain Members will have depending on their attitudes towards this resolution. This concern comes too late. The rule has been adopted by voice vote.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, and I thank the Chair for his forbearance and I ask an opportunity to go on for no more than another 2 minutes.

I appreciate what the gentleman said, and I recognize his sincerity. However, I believe that the House has made a mistake and that we have the opportunity now to correct that mistake and that people of goodwill recognizing the mistake will do so. That is, step forward honestly, forthrightly and correct the mistake that has been made in the context of the rule. We need to debate this issue fairly and openly, and it seems to me and I think it would seem to any fair-minded person, not just the Members of this House but any fair-minded American, that it is not possible to have a fair and open and equitable debate when the time has been so misallocated, three-quarters of it given to those who favor the resolution and a quarter for those who oppose.

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

Mr. HINCHEY. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's concern about how we manage our time on this side of the aisle, but I would point out to him as a matter of fairness that the manner proposed and being followed by the Chairman of the Committee on International Relations is the only fair way to apportion time on this side of the aisle.

If, for example, the preponderance of the speakers on this side of the aisle are in favor of the resolution, to give half of the time to those in opposition of the resolution would be grossly unfair to those who favor the resolution and would have only a small portion of time with which they could express their point of view relative to a very large amount of time that perhaps 10 percent of those on this side of the aisle might choose to exercise. So the chairman of the committee is absolutely right to reserve the time.

I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for his decision to apportion the time on his side of the aisle because there may be greater division over there. But the gentleman should yield to this side of the aisle to determine how we will apportion our time.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I understand what the