Mr. President, I appreciate

the thoughtful discussion our majority

leader has given on health

issues, on combating AIDS, and on the

need to prepare vaccines and protection

against the biological weapons

that terrorists may use. It was a very

important part of the President’s

speech last night, and certainly there

is no one more qualified in this body,

or elsewhere, than the distinguished

majority leader, the Senator from Tennessee,

to speak about these matters.

Following on the State of the Union

Message, some commentators were saying

today they wish the President had

spoken more about the economy. He

did speak about the economy. He made

it clear that his goal is to see that

every American who wants a job and

needs a job can find one, and he proposed

tax relief to make sure that the

money is there for small businesses to

expand and grow and hire more people.

Money for working families, for child

care and health deductions on their tax

returns, and putting a thousand dollars

in the pocket of every American family

is going to make the economy move.

Mr. President, the news

has been focusing, and much of the discussion

in this Chamber has been on,

the threat that Iraq poses. I have listened

to some of my colleagues today

on the question of what to do about

Iraq. Over and over, there is this clarion

call for more time: more time for

inspectors to do their work; more time

to enlist more allies; more time for

Saddam Hussein to comply.

With all due respect, I ask them: How

much is enough? We have already been

at this for 12 years, 12 years since the

end of the Persian Gulf war. Do we

need 12 more years? One more year?

I would like to flip the question on

my colleagues and ask: How much time

do we have? Every minute we wait,

Saddam Hussein’s efforts to acquire

weapons of mass destruction and to

share them continue. Every minute we

wait, the surviving al-Qaida terrorists

plot their next attack. We fear it may

be a weapon of mass destruction, particularly

chemical and biological attack.

Sooner or later, either here or somewhere

else in the world, we will run out

of time. We ran out of time in New

York, Pennsylvania, and the Pentagon

on September 11. Brave sailors on the

USS *Cole* ran out of time. Our two embassies

in Africa ran out of time in

1998. Over 200 innocent victims, mostly

Australians, ran out of time in a Bali,

Indonesia, nightclub.

How many more attacks must we absorb

before we realize that time is not

on our side? Where will the next attack

be? Will it be against a soft target?

Certainly the soft targets are the ones

the terrorists say they want to attack.

Will it be St. Louis, Kansas City, San

Francisco, New York, or someplace in

New Hampshire or someplace in South

Carolina?

What will it be the next time? More

airplanes flown into buildings? Probably

not. Truck bombs against sports

stadiums? Suicide bombers in crowds?

More likely a toxin released in a subway

or a skyscraper or at a large public

event.

Right now there are people who are

sworn enemies of this Nation plotting

the next attack. We know their intentions

and, unfortunately, we know

their capabilities. What we do not

know is their next method of attack,

although they have a track record of

intentional unpredictability.

Will they get their next weapon from

Iraq? After 12 years of cat and mouse

or rope-a-dope—whatever one wants to

call it—we want to call Saddam Hussein’s

strategy of delay and deception

unacceptable.

We cannot wait much longer. We already

know too well the true nature of

the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. He

has failed to live up to his obligations

under the 1991 cease-fire after the gulf

war. Still, some friends on the other

side of the aisle plead for more time. I

cannot understand why anyone would

plead for more time for Saddam Hussein,

a man who has been in clear

breach of U.N. obligations since 1992.

Specifically, Iraq has been in material

breach of U.N. Resolution 687

which was passed in the spring of 1991.

That resolution called upon Iraq to

‘‘unconditionally accept’’ the destruction,

removal or rendering harmless

‘‘under international supervision’’ of

all ‘‘chemical and biological weapons

and all stocks of agents and all related

subsystems and components of all research,

development, support and manufacturing

facilities.’’

Some may be unable to understand

that Iraq has been in material breach

of the U.N. obligation since 1991. Sadly,

this is nothing new. This latest round

under U.N. Resolution 1441 was

Saddam’s last chance to get back into

compliance.

Dr. Hans Blix reported to the U.N.

Security Council on Monday that in

large part, Saddam Hussein has failed

to get back into compliance. Even the

Washington Post editorialized that it

is an ‘‘indisputable truth’’ that ‘‘Iraq is

in material breach’’ of 1441. If Iraq is

not complying, then it must be lying.

Iraq has not only failed to disarm, it

has worked to obstruct and evade

international supervision. There are reports

Saddam Hussein has tried to infiltrate

the U.N. teams; that Iraq has

threatened its scientists with death if

they cooperate with U.N. inspectors;

that Iraqi security agents have posed

as scientists to thwart the inspectors’

work. Clearly, Iraq is in violation of

1441 for having failed to comprehensively

account for missing weapons of

mass destruction.

Secretary Colin Powell had it right

when he said it makes no sense for the

inspectors to stumble around in the

dark looking for evidence of noncompliance.

It is instead Saddam Hussein’s

legal obligation to turn the

lights on and turn over the goods.

In addition, Saddam Hussein continues

to violate U.N. resolutions by

firing at coalition aircraft. He refused

U.N. inspectors’ request for aerial surveillance,

and yet some still plead for

more time.

We have drawn so many lines in the

sand that we are running out of desert,

we are running out of sand in which to

draw lines.

The American people will not forgive

us if another attack comes when we

dither with procedures and process in

the corridors of the United Nations.

What do we say to the victims then?

What words of comfort could we possibly

give to widows or children who

have lost their parents? Can we say: I

am sorry, but we had to enlist the support

of the French before we could act?

What solace would that provide a family

mourning a loved one lost forever?

What about our military troops ordered

into harm’s way? Every moment

of delay allows Saddam Hussein to

ready himself for battle, and the more

ready he is will quickly translate into

higher casualties among U.S. and allied

forces.

Time, regrettably, is not on our side.

We know what we have to know to act.

Indeed, I believe we would be failing

our sworn obligation to defend this Nation

if we fail to act in light of all we

know about the threats we face in Iraq.

For all of my colleagues who are still

asking for more time, I plead with

them to read the key findings about

Iraqi weapons of mass destruction efforts

taken directly from the CIA’s unclassified

Web site. It was reported

there last fall.

We know from U.S. and British intelligence

reports that have been made

public that since 1991, Iraq has repeatedly

been caught redhanded lying

about the extent of its missile and

weapons of mass destruction programs.

With the defection of Saddam’s sonin-

law, Hussein al-Kamel, in 1991, as

head of the Iraq WMD program, he revealed

the extent of the continued illegal

operations in the face of sanctions

and prohibitions. Baghdad illegally retained

proscribed al-Hussein missiles

and launchers. It constructed a new

test engine for the development of missiles

capable of threatening much of

the region. And it pursued illegal programs

to procure materials for illegal

development of longer-range missiles.

We know that if Iraq acquires sufficient

weapons grade material, it could

make a nuclear weapon within a year

and, as the President said last night,

from the British Government we know

that Baghdad has sought significant

quantities of uranium from Africa, despite

having no active civil program

that could require it.

Iraq has recalled specialists to work

on its nuclear programs. All key aspects

of Iraq’s biological warfare program

are still active, and most elements

are larger and more advanced

than before the gulf war. Iraq has

begun renewed production of chemical

warfare. Iraq has mobile laboratories

for military use, corroborating reports

about the mobile production of biological

weapons. Dr. Blix has corroborated

much of U.S. and British intelligence

citing unresolved disarmament issues

and complaining Iraq’s cooperation is

not active and should not be a game of

catch-as-catch-can.

Mr. President, clearly, Iraq is in material

breach of its international obligations,

and that should serve as a sufficient

trigger for forced disarmament

by the international community led by

the U.S. and its willing allies at the appropriate

time.

After 12 years of consistent evasion, I

cannot foresee any circumstance in

which the Iraqi regime would now

change its stripes. Deception is a reflex

of Saddam Hussein’s government, and

it will persist until the regime is gone.

Iraq has had 12 years worth of opportunity

to avoid war. And at every turn,

it has chosen a course of action that is

delivering us again toward hostilities.

I believe that at this point, the only

way truly to disarm Iraq is by force.

If France does not want to go along,

obviously, that is no excuse for inaction.

Multilateralism should not stall

us. We took oaths as Members of this

body to defend this Nation against all

enemies, foreign and domestic, not on

the condition that the United Nations

and France agree.

President Bush is well within his

duty and obligation to defend this Nation

by the use of force against Iraq at

any time now. The Risks before this

Nation and the world demand that he

be ready and willing to use military

force, with or without universal international

support.

This is a moment of truth for our

longtime allies of France and Germany.

By their action or inaction, will

they strengthen or weaken the international

laws that protect all our nations

and citizens?

Obviously, it is better to have international

support than to not have it.

But as Colin Powell said,

multilaterialism should never be an excuse

for inaction.

When I took the oath as a U.S. Senator,

I did not swear to defend this Nation

against all enemies foreign and domestic—

only if the United Nations

voted its approval.

I note the remarks of the senior Senator

from Delaware yesterday who lamented

that never in his career had he

heard such disapproval from so many

of our allies.

I too am saddened by this situation.

I genuinely wish it were not so.

But I disagree with my colleague in

assuming that the root cause of our

disagreement lies in a faulty U.S. position.

Why is it that so many of my colleagues

prefer the judgment of our European

allies to that of our own best

experts and analysts?

I think there is very little in the historical

track record of many of our old

European allies that inspires confidence

in their ability to identify and

deal with threats.

In particular, I find little in France’s

history to envy with regard to identifying

and standing up to threats.

Frankly, I would be worried about

our course of action if the French were

on board in full. They have a great interest

in oil. Thirty percent of the oil

out of Iraq goes to a French oil company.

That is not grounds to trust

them.

It reminds me of when one of my

hometown newspapers, the St. Louis

Post-Dispatch, editorialized in favor of

something I had done. I immediately

told my staff that I must have taken

an incorrect position on the issue.

I have often found during my career

that the right thing is often in direct

opposition to the professional stonethrowers

and nay-sayers.

But in all seriousness, in contrast to

many of my colleagues on the other

side of the aisle, I believe the root

cause of the disagreement between

some of our old European allies and the

United States lies within more within

the realm of political and naked economic

interests than with matters of

national security.

The irony of the current situation is

that American unilateralism may be

the last best hope of old Europe, the

Middle East and the United Nations—

as it has been so many times over the

last few decades.

Our President is on the right course.

It is not the easy path. But it is the

right one. And he deserves the support

of this body and the American people.

I yield the floor.