Mr. President, I rise

today to express my hope that the

agreement reached by Secretary Annan

in Iraq results in the end of a conflict

that has plagued the international

community over the past seven years—

the failure of Saddam Hussein to live

up to the terms that he agreed to following

the invasion of Kuwait and his

defeat in the Gulf War.

If Saddam has truly experienced a

change of heart and has decided to

abandon the production and concealment

of weapons of mass destruction,

this agreement is a milestone; if this is

just one more ploy to evade the destruction

of his arsenal, then we remain

on course for a showdown with

Iraq.

We all know Saddam Hussein’s

record. He invaded the sovereign nation

of Kuwait. He used chemical weapons

against Iran and against his own

people. He used women and children as

human shields to protect himself and

his weapons of mass destruction. He is

both a coward and a menace—and that

is a dangerous combination.

At this time it is impossible to judge

whether this deal will truly permit the

UN weapons inspectors full and unfettered

access. UNSCOM inspectors have

always insisted that they need to be

able to follow a trail wherever it leads

them. They are not seeking access to a

certain category of sites—they just

need freedom to track the evidence. If

this agreement permits them to do this

and allows them to use whatever techniques

are necessary, then the agreement

is a step forward. The inspectors

do not seal off buildings because they

are ‘‘cowboys,’’ they do it because the

Iraqi’s were moving equipment out the

back door as they entered the front.

It would have been prudent for the

Administration to have studied the

plan, and clarified the details before it

offered its support. But, as is the case

with the lack of information to the

Senate on the Administration’s plan to

bomb Iraq, prudence was apparently

too much to expect.

While I am reserving judgment on

the Secretary General’s agreement

until the terms have been thoroughly

explained, one positive immediate effect

is that it has created a pause in

the crisis. The Congress has a responsibility

to the American people, and especially

the men and women serving in

our armed forces, to ensure that the

Administration has clear objectives

and a coherent policy in regard to Iraq.

The use of air strikes against Iraq may

have been averted in this instance, but

given Saddam’s track record of lies and

deceit, I do not believe that this is the

last time that we will be forced as a nation

to confront him.

We all witnessed the Administration’s

public relations offensive with

Cabinet officials holding town hall

meetings around the country to build

public support for limited air strikes.

Through these forums it has become

painfully clear that the Administration

refuses—or perhaps more disturbingly—

cannot consistently answer four

basic questions: (1) What are the Administration’s

goals; (2) how will limited

air strikes achieve those objectives;

(3) what happens after the bombing

stops; and (4) what is our endgame?

First the Administration told us that

the goal of the United States was to

allow UNSCOM inspectors full and unfettered

access to suspected storage

sites for chemical and biological weapons.

Then we were told that it was to

make sure that Saddam would not be

able to ‘‘reconstitute’’ his nuclear,

chemical and biological weapons production

capabilities. But the Administration

has failed to explain to the

American people how air strikes will

achieve these objectives.

After a round of briefings in the Senate

with Administration officials, the

only thing that is clear is what US air

strikes are not going to accomplish:

they will not eliminate Iraq’s stockpiles

of chemical and biological weapons;

they will not eliminate Iraq’s capability

to produce weapons of mass

destruction; and they will not remove

Iraq’s rulers, who persist on a course of

action which threatens international

security and the welfare of their own

people.

The Administration’s plan for ‘‘substantial’’

air strikes—which I suppose

falls somewhere between ‘‘pinprick’’

and ‘‘massive’’ attacks—may delay

Saddam’s capability to deliver weapons

of mass destruction. Of course, many of

the buildings where biological weapons

are produced and stored are dual-use

facilities—like hospitals and vaccine

laboratories. There is also a danger

that uncontrolled explosions of storage

facilities could result in the release of

toxic substances. So it is not a question

of whether we are able to destroy

these targets, but whether the resulting

deaths of Iraqi civilians would

prove counterproductive to our goals.

In addition, Saddam has been playing

a shell-game with chemical and biological

weapons stockpiles. As General

Zinni, commander-in-chief of the US

central command acknowledged in December,

‘‘we do not have a good sense

of what he has and where he has it’’;

and we do not know the location of mobile

missile sites.

Unfortunately, Saddam does not need

a huge production capacity or weapons

stockpile to remain a threat. As a February

15 article in London’s Sunday

Telegraph noted, recent investigations

of a tiny leak of anthrax from a Soviet

facility in 1979 have documented 77

deaths, with animals killed up to 30

miles away, even though less than a

gram of anthrax escaped.

Even if the Administration allows

the military to conduct a comprehensive

air campaign which cripples

Saddam’s ability to produce weapons of

mass destruction, it is highly unlikely

that air strikes will result in UNSCOM

inspectors being given unfettered access

to suspect sites or will enhance

our ability to contain Saddam.

This brings us to the question of

what happens after the bombing stops?

The only proven way to effectively

eliminate Iraq’s chemical and biological

weapons capacity is to have inspectors

on the ground. As President Clinton

remarked in an address last week

to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, UNSCOM

inspectors,

But 17 tons of biological growth

agents, 600 tons of VX precursors and

4,000 tons of other chemical precursors

remain unaccounted for. Iraq could

have produced 200 tons of VX alone

with this missing material. If, following

the air strikes, Saddam denies permission

for UNSCOM to conduct inspections,

or if UNSCOM finds that it

is not safe to proceed following the air

strikes, then US actions will have jeopardized

international security, not enhanced

it.

Furthermore, limited air strikes may

extend rather than contain Saddam’s

power and influence in the region. We

only have to look at the fact that the

states most threatened by Saddam—

the Arab nations in proximity to Iraq,

with the exception of Kuwait—are not

supporting US military action. Even

Saudi Arabia, which we protected

against invasion during the Gulf War,

and our NATO ally Turkey have refused

the use of air bases.

The Arab nations are acting according

to their own self-interest. They realize

that Saddam is a threat to their

national security, but they also recognize

that limited US air strikes which

fail to depose Saddam could leave them

in an even more precarious position.

The states neighboring Iraq have legitimate

concerns that they could be

destabilized if their populations rally

around Saddam, who would be seen as

a hero for standing up to the West.

Saddam could gain further sympathy

from those disaffected populations by

opting out of the oil-for-food program.

The entire sanctions regime could

crumble, and Saddam could continue to

increase his weapons program unfettered

by multilateral sanctions. Efforts

to promote democracy in the region

would be jeopardized. Terrorism could

be increased and exported to the

United States.

President Clinton asked a rhetorical

question in his speech last week at the

Pentagon: ‘‘What if he (Saddam) fails

to comply, and we fail to act?’’ Well, I

have a question for President Clinton,

what if our air strikes only strengthen

Saddam’s power and eliminate any

chance of finding and destroying his

weapons of mass destruction?

Administration officials have glibly

answered that we will just bomb again.

That is not a policy; that is not a strategy.

It is a cop-out for poor planning

and the lack of a comprehensive policy

toward Iraq.

How often can we bomb without mobilizing

Muslim nations to stand by the

people of Iraq? How often can we bomb

without some form of retaliation from

Iraq against our allies in the region, if

not against the United States itself?

This Administration talks in terms of

limited strikes, but in war we must

take into account the ‘‘law of unintended

consequences,’’ and the threat

of a regional conflict should not be dismissed.

Which brings us to the subject of an

endgame. When air strikes appeared

imminent, I called Secretary General

Kofi Annan and urged him to personally

pursue a diplomatic solution. And

I asked him at that time whether he

had a message he would like to convey

to the Senate. He responded that we

should think through the endgame—

what we will do after a military strike

if we proceed to bomb Iraq. That is, I

believe, sound advice.

The Administration claims that it

has a long-term strategy in Iraq—a

strategy of containment. But I fail to

see any connection between the Administration’s

short-term strategy of limited

air strikes and its stated longterm

goal of containing Saddam Hussein.

As I said earlier, the best way to

contain Saddam is to have weapons inspectors

on the ground. Even when

they are being impeded, their very

presence makes it impossible for Saddam

to engage in large-scale production

of weapons of mass destruction.

The Administration’s proposed use of

air strikes is therefore inconsistent

with its stated long-term strategy of

containment.

Now, the Administration has stated

that there are no good options for action

against Iraq—and I agree. However,

one of the reasons why there are

no good options is the failure of this

Administration to make an all-out effort

over the past seven years to remove

Saddam from power by establishing

a power base for an alternative

Iraqi government. Surely, this is an effort

which could have secured allies in

the region.

According to news reports, by the

end of 1996, both of the CIA’s covert operations

programs had been obliterated.

One effort to recruit Iraqi officers,

to try to provoke a military coup

was apparently infiltrated by Iraqi

double agents, and at least 100 officers

were executed by Saddam for cooperating

with Americans. Another effort to

back the Iraqi National Congress in

northern Iraq was abandoned by the US

government and thousands were

slaughtered when they mounted an offensive

against Saddam Hussein.

An article in the February 15 Los Angeles

Times noted that the CIA team

that was on the ground when the offensive

started was recalled to the US

when the acting Director of the CIA

asked the FBI to conduct a criminal investigation

as to whether five CIA officers

involved in covert operations in

Iraq were plotting to kill Saddam—

charges, by the way, that were later

dropped. Now this had a chilling effect

on covert activity in Iraq, raising concerns

as to whether this Administration

is serious about getting rid of Saddam

Hussein.

I do not support Congressional efforts

to overturn the Executive Order forbidding

the assassination of foreign leaders.

However, there is sufficient flexibility

for covert operations to succeed

in removing Saddam from power and

those efforts must be promoted.

As I stated before, I am pleased that

Secretary General Annan succeeded in

reaching an agreement with Saddam

Hussein. Even if this agreement

unravels, it has afforded Congress an

opportunity to debate the Administration’s

policy toward Iraq.

We must demand that the Administration

come forward with a clear explanation

of its strategy and tactics.

We must condemn the Administration

for refusing to give a codeword briefing

to Senators on targeting strategy—

only later did we read an outline of

this strategy on the front page of The

New York Times.

As pressure to bomb Iraq was mounting,

I remained convinced that further

diplomatic efforts should be explored.

There seemed to be a ‘‘rush to bomb.’’

As I said earlier, I called Secretary

General Annan before the Administration

agreed to his trip and asked him

to go to Baghdad and speak to Saddam.

I let Ambassador Richardson know

that I would support a solution allowing

representatives of the permanent

members of the Security Council accompany

UNSCOM inspectors, as long

as UNSCOM was not impeded or compromised

in any way.

While I applaud the Secretary General’s

initiative, I have been appalled

by the failure of the UN as an organization,

and the Security Council in particular,

to support enforcement of the

UN resolutions. It is the greatest of

ironies that this Administration is

sending American men and women to

risk their lives to uphold UN Resolution

687. This is a UN Security Council

Resolution, but three out of the five

permanent members oppose the use of

force. France is more concerned with

being able to sell Iraqi oil, China wants

to buy the oil, and Russia seeks to be

paid the $6 billion it is owed by Iraq.

Only Britain is standing by the United

States.

There may come a time when the

United States has to use force against

Iraq to protect our national security.

We cannot subcontract our national security

policy to the United Nations.

When, and if, that time comes, I hope

that this Administration will let our

armed forces do its job without one

hand tied behind its back. And we

should send a clear message to the

‘‘Butcher of Baghdad’’: If chemical or

biological weapons are used anywhere

in the world, and there is even the

most tenuous link to Iraq, the full

force of the United States will be used

against him.

Mr. President, in an excellent speech

on the situation in Iraq, Senator ROBERTS

of Kansas cited the words uttered

30 years ago by Senator Richard Russell,

the Chairman of the Armed Services

Committee during the Vietnam

War. I think that it is appropriate for

me to once again repeat those words on

the Senate floor. He said:

And Senator Russell also made the

following pledge:

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues

and the Administration to hear those

words—they have as much relevance

today as when they were first uttered

in this chamber.

I yield the floor.