Mr. President, I thought I

might take just a moment to speak to

the issue of the policy of the United

States of America toward Iraq and Saddam

Hussein.

In the month or so that the Senate

has been out of session, there has been

a significant series of developments

which cause me considerable concern

about the direction of the administration’s

policy—or not policies, as the

case may be—and the requirements of

the Senate to act in accordance.

The President will recall that about 7

years ago the entire country was fixed

on the problem of Saddam Hussein’s invasion

of Kuwait and strongly supported

the action of the President—at

that time President Bush—to first engage

in what was called Desert Shield

and then later Desert Storm; the militarily

significant rollback of the Iraqi

forces in about 100 hours. I visited

Saudi Arabia as that buildup of American

forces was occurring. It was unprecedented

really since the time of

the Vietnam war. The success of the

operation was one of the great successes

of U.S. military history.

I remember the parades all across

America when our troops returned

home. We were very proud of what we

had done. We had turned back a difficult

dictator who had engaged in unspeakable

horrors against people in Kuwait,

against the environment, and

really against the rule of international

law.

We had disengaged from Iraq because

the President had succeeded through

the efforts of General Norman

Schwarzkopf and the Secretary of Defense—

at the time Richard Cheney—

and Secretary of State Jim Baker to

force Saddam Hussein into an agreement

that would forever bar him from

developing weapons of mass destruction,

or the means to deliver them.

That was an agreement that Saddam

Hussein willingly entered into, although

one could say it wasn’t too

willingly because we had about 500,000

troops in his country at the time. But

the deal was we will stop now if you

will sign this agreement; otherwise we

will have to continue our military operation.

Saddam Hussein wisely decided

to sign an agreement with the

United States. That agreement was to

allow U.N. inspectors to ensure that

Iraq was not developing weapons of

mass destruction, and that it would destroy

the stocks that it had developed.

We know that for the first few years

world attention was focused on Saddam

Hussein because of what he had done.

The United Nations was focused on

supporting and enforcing those inspections,

and the United States on a couple

of occasions either took or threatened

to take military action to force

Saddam Hussein to comply with his

part of the bargain. America was

united in that position. Now, the Bush

administration policy at the time was

called a policy of containment. The effort

was not to get Saddam Hussein out

of power per se but, rather, to prevent

him from doing any damage to neighbors.

But a concomitant to that policy

was to ensure that he did not have the

capability of causing his neighbors

problems by virtue of the U.N. inspections.

Slowly, over time, after the Clinton

administration took office, that policy

evolved. Now, they continued to call it

containment, but a critical component

of the policy was missing —the policy

that denied Saddam Hussein the ability

to conduct military operations against

his neighbors—because over time the

administration became less and less

willing to ensure that the inspection

regime called for under the agreement

was actually carried out. UNSCOM is

the name by which we know this, the

acronym of the United Nations inspection

regime. And the UNSCOM inspections

eventually became very big news

because Saddam Hussein saw that from

time to time he could thwart the inspectors,

prevent them from doing

their job, and cause the United States

to have to build up military forces in

the region. And about the time we

would spend a lot of money and effort

and time to get these military forces in

place, then he would agree to strike

some kind of a deal. And as soon as we

then brought the force level back down

again, he would break the deal, and we

would have to do the same thing all

over again. He was jerking our chain.

This administration, however, failed

to develop a strategy to deal with that.

Many of us in the Senate, through

meetings with members of the administration,

through correspondence, and

through public hearings and statements,

have tried to get the administration

to focus on a long-term strategy

that would have as its ultimate

goal not containing Saddam Hussein

but eliminating Saddam Hussein. No

one believes that this is easy. It is a

long-term project, and it takes a real

commitment. This administration has

not been willing to make that commitment.

In February of last year, the administration

again built up forces because

again Saddam Hussein had refused to

allow the inspectors to do their job

under the agreement that he had made.

Many of us in the Senate were concerned

that if the administration simply

lobbed a few cruise missiles into

certain Iraqi facilities, it would be

antithetical to our long-term goal. It

would not do anything to ensure that

the inspectors could do their job. It

would probably kill a lot of innocent

people. It would turn world opinion

against the United States. And we need

the support of our allies, support that

we used to have when the Bush administration

worked to get that support.

But most importantly, military action

would not be in furtherance of any particular

strategic policy. It would waste

money, it would not achieve anything,

and in the end we would still have an

empty policy.

The administration continued to insist

that our policy was one of containment.

But containment is no policy if,

in fact, you are at the same time allowing

your opponent—in this case, Iraq—

to build up military forces so that

when they want to strike, they have

the capability of doing so. And because

we don’t have forces in the area sufficient

to stop aggression, again, it

would have to be a reaction on the part

of the free world in response to aggression

by Saddam Hussein rather than

preventive action to begin with.

And so as time went on, the Iraqis

continued to snub their nose at the

United Nations inspectors, probably

building up the capability to produce

weapons of mass destruction and also

to develop the missiles, or produce the

missiles to deliver those weapons.

The inspectors then have reported

back to us. Richard Butler, who heads

UNSCOM right now, and others have

said that if we stop those inspections,

it is only a matter of time before Iraq

can develop the capability of producing

these missiles and either has now or

could quickly develop the chemical and

biological weapons that would be necessary

to threaten or cause harm to

their neighbors. So the inspections are

a key component of any strategy, including

a strategy of containment. And

it does no good to have a strategy of

containment if you don’t enforce the

inspection regime called upon by the

agreement with Saddam Hussein 7

years ago.

Recently, Scott Ritter, a well known

inspector on the UNSCOM team, has

resigned in protest, and the reason, Mr.

President, is because he has said that

U.S. officials, including the Secretary

of State, Madeleine Albright, have

thwarted the inspections by specifically

putting conditions on U.S. involvement

with the inspectors and by

conditioning the time, the place, and

manner of inspections.

Now, this is all wrapped up in diplomatic

speak. The administration has

flatly denied this is true. The administration,

frankly, in this respect is not

telling the truth, Mr. President. If

Scott Ritter is to be believed, restrictions

have been placed upon the American

involvement in the inspections of

these facilities. And it has been done

because the administration doesn’t

want to have to follow up on what the

inspections will demonstrate; namely,

that action needs to be taken against

Saddam Hussein.

Or, failing that, if Saddam Hussein

says, ‘‘I am not going to allow you to

inspect certain facilities,’’ the administration

will then be forced with the option

of either doing nothing or of having

to take some kind of action. And

since the administration is unwilling,

apparently, to take any kind of action,

it therefore has to select the option of

doing nothing. But it obviously cannot

be perceived as doing nothing, so instead

it sweeps the problem under the

rug, says, ‘‘We don’t see any problem

with Saddam Hussein.’’ And of course

you don’t see any problem if you have

your eyes closed, if you are not engaging

in any inspections, or you are not

allowing your inspectors to engage in

the key inspections.

Frankly, Mr. President, the administration’s

duplicity in this regard is

something that the Congress should

not permit and the American people

need to be aware of. We ought to have

the truth from the administration.

Have we changed our policy with respect

to Iraq? Have we decided not to

enforce the agreement anymore? And

what are the implications of this policy?

Scott Ritter has laid forth his allegations.

The administration has responded

simply with denials. And yet

there are enough sources who confirm

Scott Ritter’s allegations to cause me

to believe that the administration’s denials

are false, that in fact Secretary of

State Albright has, in one way or another,

discouraged the American inspectors

from inspecting key facilities

that the inspectors believe need to be

inspected because of what would be revealed.

So, Mr. President, here is where we

are now. After the agreement that Saddam

Hussein entered into, in which he

agreed to allow inspections to ensure

that he did not develop the capability

to pose a threat to his neighbors, part

of the containment policy—as a result

of that agreement, the United States

had enforced for a period of years the

inspection regime through UNSCOM—

we are now no longer doing that in

practice. It is now a charade.

The reason it is a charade is because

we don’t want to face the consequences

of either, A, being denied the ability to

engage in the inspections or, B, finding

something we don’t want to find, because

in either event we would have to

do something, and this administration

is frozen into inaction in dealing with

Saddam Hussein. If they can lob a few

cruise missiles at a problem, as they

did against the terrorist Osama bin

Laden 10, 12 days ago, then they can

say they have taken action.

But that is not enough in dealing

with Saddam Hussein. He is more clever.

He knows that we lack patience. He

knows that if he defies us long enough,

eventually our allies will desert us because,

A, we don’t have the capability

anymore of keeping the coalition together

and, B, the American people will

get tired of the issue and no longer be

willing to support the kind of military

action or long-term action that would

be required to oust Saddam Hussein.

The result of this is that the United

States has, in fact, changed its policy

with respect to Iraq without telling either

the Congress or the American people.

It apparently no longer intends to

enforce the agreement that George

Bush and his administration insisted

Saddam Hussein make.

The implications for peace in the

world are significant, because when

Saddam Hussein has been able to build

up his weapons of mass destruction to

the level where he can cause significant

damage, he will either do so or he

will threaten to do so. At that point,

his capability will cause a lot of countries

in the world, especially those

close neighbors who fear that kind of

activity on his part, to back off of any

opposition to him. His neighbors are

relatively unprotected and, not believing

the United States is a reliable ally

to protect them, they will accede to his

demands. Then, rather than having one

or two countries in the Middle East

that we have to contend with, we will

have one or two belligerents and a lot

of neutral parties who no longer cooperate

with us in restricting his activities

and his aggression and his terrorism.

We need these countries in the fight

against terrorism. I am very concerned

that by backing off of the enforcement

of the agreement against Saddam Hussein

we will have permitted terrorism

to further its goals in the Middle East

and around the world, especially

against Americans; and will have advanced

the day when Iraq decides to

engage in yet another form of aggression.

I think it is a sad day when not only

do we see U.S. foreign policy in tatters,

in shambles, with respect to a country

that we know poses a threat to us, but

an administration which is unwilling

to come clean on its policy. I know

these are harsh words, but the fact of

the matter is the administration has

not leveled with the American people

on this problem. I believe that Scott

Ritter is essentially correct in his assessment

of the situation, especially

the administration’s decision to pull

the plug on the inspections in any

meaningful way. As a result, I think

this matter deserves airing in the Senate,

in the House, and before the American

people. I expect, either as chairman

of the Judiciary Committee’s Subcommittee

on Terrorism or as a member

of the Intelligence Committee, I

will ask the administration to explain

its position. I think the Senate will

probably have to take some action before

we adjourn in October to ensure

that this country has a strong policy

with respect to one of the rogue nations

of the world.

In conclusion, when discussing this

in my home State of Arizona this last

month, one of my friends said, ‘‘Isn’t it

the obligation of the President to conduct

the foreign policy and shouldn’t

the Congress leave that to the President?’’

The answer is, as I said, as a

general proposition, yes. But when an

administration is frozen into inaction

for one reason or another, whether the

President is being distracted by other

matters or whether it is simply too

hard a problem for the administration

to want to deal with, then the Senate,

in its historic role as a partner in the

administration of foreign affairs, needs

to insert itself into the equation. To

the extent we need to influence the development

and execution of foreign

policy in this area, the U.S. Senate will

have to be involved.

I would rather the administration develop

a policy and a strategy and execute

it with the cooperation of the Senate,

but if the administration is unwilling

to do that, then the Senate will

have to get involved. It is not a happy

day to have to talk about this kind of

thing in this way. We would much

rather cooperate with the administration.

I hold myself out to be willing to

do that at any time and any place. But

the administration has to come clean

with the American people on what its

strategy really is in dealing with Iraq.

Until that statement of strategy has

been laid out in an honest way, the

Senate is going to have to involve

itself in this issue.

I hope and pray we will be able to

maintain peace in the Middle East and

that we will be able to contain Saddam

Hussein, but it is going to require commitment

and will, not just of the

American people, but of the American

Government. I am hoping in the next

few weeks we can help develop the policy

so, between the administration and

the Congress and the American people,

we will jointly, together, unify and be

able to confront this threat to peace in

the world.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.