Mr. President, I

want to pick up where the Senator

from Arizona left off.

What has changed that would lead us

to have another debate on a resolution

authorizing force? Since the last time

we debated this issue here on the Senate

floor, I do not know if the Senator

from Arizona has any thoughts as to

what sort of things have changed. The

only thing I can think of which has

changed is we have had weapons inspectors

in the country and those

weapons inspectors have been deceived.

We did not have weapons inspectors in

the country at the time we were debating

this resolution in September of last

year. The only thing I can think of is

the Senator from Massachusetts and

others who wanted to debate this issue

wanted to make the point that, Well,

weapons inspectors haven’t found anything,

and maybe that has changed.

Remember, they weren’t in the country

in the first place.

We didn’t find anything in the first

place when the U.N. took as a given

that he had these weapons of mass destruction.

It was simply a matter of

what he was going to declare and what

he had done with them. He still hasn’t.

From my perspective, I haven’t seen

any change. We knew he had these

weapons. The President detailed them

the other night. He hasn’t disclosed

what he has done with these weapons,

which is pretty status quo.

When we were debating in September,

we had had weapons inspectors

who had been given the opportunity to

determine where these weapons were,

and Saddam Hussein had not cooperated.

Mr. President, I

would say to my colleague that when

we voted on this resolution in September

there were no weapons inspectors

in the country. There was not even

the prospect of weapons inspectors in

the country. I keep coming back to

what has changed substantively. The

fact that weapons inspectors haven’t

found anything is a fact, but it is not

relevant to what the debate was back

in September when we passed this resolution

because there was not even the

prospect of weapons inspectors at that

time. The debate was clearly about the

fact that Saddam had weapons of mass

destruction and he had not come forward

to date and disclosed them. All

we have seen over the past few months

is more of the same.

It seems to me

what Senator KENNEDY put forward is

what many in the press have put forward,

which is really a change of expectations

and putting up, I would argue,

the straw man; that is, it is our obligation

to show Saddam is not in compliance

by finding a weapon of mass destruction;

the fact we haven’t found

one is somehow a breach on our part,

or a problem; and a level of evidence

we haven’t been able to meet. Of

course, just the opposite is true. As the

Senator from Arizona just read, it is

his obligation to prove he is in compliance,

not our obligation to prove he is

not in compliance.

Another point that

is being made is these inspectors are

not finding anything, and that there is

this undercurrent of expectation that

it is their role to be detected or investigated;

that they are over there to

find the proverbial needle in the haystack;

that they are there to be Sherlock

Holmes when, of course, that is

not their mission. Their mission there

is not as detectives. They are inspectors.

I use the example of someone who

runs a gas station. Someone from the

Bureau of Weights and Measures comes

in and determines whether your scales

are operating correctly. Are you running

a legitimate business? You show

them the record of what your pump is

pumping out in gas, and they check it

to make sure it is valid. That is what

these inspectors are doing. If you are

conducting illegal activities and siphoning

off gas somewhere, they are

not going to find that by checking

whether your pump is working right.

So that really is the case with these

inspectors, is it not, that they are

there to check as to what Saddam is

telling us where his weapons of mass

destruction went, if they actually went

there, or were destroyed. Since he has

not provided us any of that information,

it is very hard for them to be able

to find any smoking gun or deposit of

weapons, when their job really isn’t to

do that; it is just to validate what he is

telling them.

The fact of the

matter is, nothing has changed from

the inspections that occurred prior to

the debate here in the Senate back in

September. So I really question what

the motivation is of having this debate

again when, on a substantive basis,

nothing has changed, other than continued

and maybe even more explicit

deception on the part of Saddam Hussein

in hiding these weapons of mass

destruction.

What has changed, I would argue, is

the United States and our coalition

partners have moved forward in a plan

of deployment to convince Saddam we

are serious, that if he does not comply,

and comply quickly and completely,

there will be action taken.

As we had this debate on the floor—

and one of the reasons many Members

here supported this resolution—it was

to make sure Saddam knew we were serious,

we were going to follow through

with what we said we would do, and the

President had the support of the American

public, thereby making it a credible

threat, giving—I heard this over

and over—giving peace the best chance

by letting Saddam know the certainty

of his noncompliance.

Please.

Yes. The term I use

over and over again is that these are

inspectors, not investigators. These are

not detectives. This concept that inspectors

will find a smoking gun is absurd.

It is absurd. They will not because

they are not looking for a smoking

gun. It is not their mission to find

a smoking gun. They are there, as the

Senator from Arizona quoted our people

at the Defense Department—Paul

Wolfowitz—they are there to determine

whether Saddam is telling us the truth

in the information he has given us.

Since he has not given us any information

as to what he has done with his

weapons of mass destruction, it is very

difficult for them to determine whether

he is telling the truth.

So this whole concept, No. 1, that the

burden of proof is on the United States

of America or on the United Nations or

on these weapons inspectors to find

what Saddam has is false. And the expectation

that there is some smoking

gun we must show Members of the Senate,

people in America, or people

around the world, as some countries

have indicated, is absurd on its face.

Certainly, the countries that are involved

in this action and have been involved

in these negotiations at the

United Nations know it. They know

these inspectors are not there to find a

smoking gun, are not there to find

weapons of mass destruction. That is

not what they are there to do.

They happened to stumble onto 16

warheads that could use chemicals,

that could contain chemical and biological

weapons. They stumbled onto

them. It just tells you how many of

these things are probably lying around

where even inspectors who are not

looking for them can stumble onto

them.

So the basic point I am trying to

make is nothing has fundamentally

changed, except two things: No. 1, more

of the same; more of the same; Saddam

Hussein is not disarming and he is not

cooperating, which he is required to do

under the United Nations resolution.

That has not changed. And the threat

to the United States as a result has not

changed. That was a threat when we

debated this in September. It is a

threat today. So those things have not

changed.

One thing has changed: We have

begun, along with our coalition partners,

to begin to deploy force in the region

with the express purpose of giving

Saddam every opportunity to understand

the seriousness of our commitment.

We should not at this time back

down from that commitment.

I yield the floor.