Mr. President, last

Thursday, at his press conference, the

President of the United States gave his

reasons to justify the use of military

force to remove Saddam Hussein from

power.

The President said again that he has

not made up his mind to go to war, but

his own advisers are saying that even if

Iraq fully complies with U.N. Security

Council Resolution 1441, Saddam Hussein

must be removed from power.

The President said his goal is protecting

the American people from terrorism.

That is a goal we all share. But

he offered no evidence that Iraq had

anything to do with the September 11

attacks or any details of Iraq’s links to

al-Qaida.

He offered no new information about

the potential costs of a war, either in

American and Iraqi lives, or in dollars.

Both Republicans and Democrats have

urged the President to be more forthcoming

with the American people, to

tell us what sacrifices may be involved—

not to have Cabinet members

come to the Senate and the House, and

when asked how much they estimate a

war and its aftermath may cost, say:

We have no idea.

We know the administration has estimated

the costs, yet the President

dismissively says ‘‘ask the spenders’’ in

Congress, knowing full well that Congress

appropriates funds, it is the

President who spends them.

It is disingenuous, at best, to refuse

to level with the American people at a

time of rapidly escalating deficits. We

know it has already cost billions of dollars

just to send our troops over there,

but how many more tens or hundreds of

billions of dollars, may be added to the

deficit? The President is apparently

ready to send hundreds of thousands of

America’s sons and daughters into battle

without saying anything about the

costs and risks.

The President repeatedly spoke of

the danger of ‘‘doing nothing,’’ as if

doing nothing is what those who urge

patience and caution—with war only as

a last resort—are recommending. In

fact, virtually no one is saying we

should do nothing about Saddam Hussein.

Even most of the millions of people

who have joined protests and demonstrations

against the use of force

without U.N. Security Council authorization

are not saying the world should

ignore Saddam Hussein.

Yet that is the President’s answer to

those who oppose a preemptive U.S. invasion,

and who, contrary to wanting

to do nothing, want to give the United

Nations more time to try to solve this

crisis without war.

The President also failed to address a

key concern that divides Americans,

that divides us from many of our closest

European allies, that divides our allies

from each other, and that divides

the U.N. Security Council. That issue

is not whether or not Saddam Hussein

is a deceptive, despicable, dangerous

despot who should be disarmed. There

is little, if any, disagreement about

that.

Nor is it whether or not force should

ever be used. Most people accept that

the United States, like any country,

has a right of self-defense if it is faced

with an imminent threat. If the U.N.

inspectors fail to disarm Iraq, force

may become the only option.

Most people also agree that a United

States-led invasion would quickly

overwhelm and defeat Iraq’s illequipped,

demoralized army.

Rather, the President said almost

nothing about the concern shared by so

many people, that by attacking Iraq to

enforce Security Council Resolution

1441 without the support of key allies

on the U.N. Security Council, we risk

weakening the Security Council’s future

effectiveness and our own ability

to rally international support not only

to prevent this war and future wars,

but to deal with other global threats

like terrorism. This concern is exacerbated

by the increasing resentment

throughout the world of the administration’s

domineering and simplistic

‘‘you are either with us or against us’’

approach. It has damaged longstanding

relationships, relationships that have

taken decades of trust and diplomacy

to build, both with our neighbors in

this hemisphere and our friends across

the Atlantic.

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**S3700 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE** *March 13, 2003*

The President says that if the Security

Council does not support the use of

force today, it risks becoming irrelevant.

The President has it backward.

The Security Council would not become

irrelevant because it refuses to

obey the President of the United

States. Rather, the Security Council’s

effectiveness is threatened if the

United States ignores the will of key

allies on the Security Council regarding

the enforcement of a Security

Council resolution.

The President was also asked by several

members of the press why there is

such fervent opposition to his policy

among Americans and some of our oldest

allies when only a year and a half

ago, after the September 11 attacks,

the whole world was united in sympathy

with the United States. He had

no answer.

The President should heed the words

of former National Security Adviser

Brent Scowcroft, who was an architect

of the 1991 Gulf War. General Scowcroft

has strongly criticized the administration’s

ad hoc approach based on a ‘‘coalition

of the willing’’ which the general

calls ‘‘fundamentally, fatally flawed.’’

General Scowcroft said:

For 200 years, people around the

world have looked up to the United

States because of our values, our integrity,

our tolerance, and our respect for

others. These are the qualities that

have set the United States apart.

Today, while most countries share our

goal of disarming Saddam Hussein, we

are being vilified for our arrogance, for

our disdain for international law, and

our intolerance of opposing views.

A distinguished American career diplomat,

John Brady Kiesling, echoed

General Scowcroft’s concerns about the

practical harm done to U.S. interests

and influence abroad. He recently

wrote to Secretary of State Colin Powell,

proffering his resignation as an act

of protest about the administration’s

policy toward Iraq. I suspect Mr.

Kiesling’s eloquent and heartfelt explanation

of how he reached the difficult

decision to give up his career expresses

the feelings and concerns of some other

American diplomats who are representing

the United States at our embassies

and missions around the world.

I ask unanimous consent that Mr.

Kiesling’s letter to the Secretary be

printed in the RECORD at the conclusion

of my remarks.

President Bush’s remarks

last week, the Bush administration and

the Pakistani Government should be

commended for the capture of Khalid

Shaikh Mohammed, one of al-Qaida’s

top leaders who was reportedly the

mastermind of the September 11 attacks.

Whether others within al-Qaida

will quickly fill Mr. Mohammed’s shoes

remains to be seen, but the fact that

the U.S. Government and other governments

are methodically tracking these

people down sends an important message

and should give some comfort to

the American people. This is encouraging.

Let’s hope we can soon celebrate

the capture of Osama bin Laden, because

capturing the leaders of al-Qaida

should be our highest priority.

But the world is increasingly apprehensive

as the United States appears to

be marching inexorably towards war

with Iraq. Today, there are more than

250,000 American men and women in

uniform in the Persian Gulf preparing

for the order to attack. We hear that

the decision must be made within a

matter of days because it is too costly

to keep so many troops deployed overseas.

In other words, now that we have

spent billions of dollars to ship all

those soldiers over there, we need to

use them because we cannot back down

now, as I have heard some people say.

Frankly, this is one of the worst reasons

possible to rush into war.

We should not back down. Saddam

Hussein must be disarmed. Doing nothing—

I agree with the President about

this—would mean the United Nations

is unwilling to enforce its own resolutions

concerning perhaps the most serious

threat the world faces today, the

proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

That would be unacceptable.

The U.N. Security Council ordered Iraq

to fully disclose its weapons of mass

destruction. Iraq has not yet done so.

I agree with those who say the only

reason Saddam Hussein is even grudgingly

cooperating with the U.N. inspectors

is the buildup of U.S. troops on

Iraq’s border. I have commended the

President for refocusing the world’s attention

on Saddam Hussein’s failure to

disarm. I also recognize the time may

come when the use of force to enforce

the U.N. Security Council resolution is

the only option. But are proposals to

give the U.N. inspectors more time unreasonable,

when it could solidify support

for the use of force if that becomes

the only option?

Despite the President’s assertion

that Iraq poses an imminent threat to

the United States, that assertion begs

credulity when the U.N. inspectors are

making some progress and a quarter of

a million American soldiers are poised

on Iraq’s border. Absent a credible, imminent

threat, a decision to enforce

Resolution 1441 should only be made by

the Security Council—not by the

United States or any other government

alone.

The President says war is a last resort.

If he feels that way, why do he

and his advisors want so desperately to

short-circuit the inspection process?

Why is he so anxious to spend billions

of dollars to buy the cooperation

of other countries, other countries that

do not yet believe war is necessary?

Why is he so unconcerned about the

predictably hostile reaction in the

Muslim world to the occupation of

Iraq, perhaps for years, by the United

States military?

Why is the President so determined

to run roughshod over our traditional

alliances and partnerships which have

served us well and whose support we

need both today and in the future?

I cannot pretend to understand the

thinking of those in the administration

who for months or even longer have

seemed possessed with a kind of messianic

zeal in favor of war. A preemptive,

U.S. attack against Iraq without

a declaration of war by Congress or the

U.N. Security Council’s support may be

easy to win, but it could violate international

law and cause lasting damage

to our alliances and to our ability to

obtain the cooperation of other nations

in meeting so many other global challenges.

Just recently, Homeland Security

Secretary Tom Ridge warned that a

war with Iraq could bring more threats

and more terrorist attacks within the

United States. The CIA Director has

testified that Saddam Hussein is more

likely to use chemical or biological

weapons if he is attacked. Yet we are

marching ahead as though these warnings

don’t matter.

I have said before, this war is not inevitable.

I still believe it can be avoided.

But I fear that the President, despite

opposition among the American

people, in the U.N., and around the

world, is no longer listening to anyone

except those within his inner circle

who are eager to fight.

The President says we must overthrow

Saddam Hussein to protect the

American people. Saddam Hussein is a

threat, but North Korea, on the verge

of acquiring half a dozen nuclear weapons,

poses a far more serious and immediate

threat to the United States

and the world. Yet the administration

is too preoccupied with Saddam Hussein

to be distracted by North Korea,

even though North Korea has shown no

qualms about selling ballistic missiles

and anything else that will earn them

money. It makes no sense.

I hope the Iraqi government comes to

its senses. I hope we do not walk away

from the U.N. I hope we don’t decide

that just because our troops are there,

we cannot afford to wait.

I suggest the absence of

a quorum.