Mr. President, I

rise today to voice my strong support

for the convincing call to action

against Iraq that President Bush issued

yesterday at the United Nations to discuss

the unique dangers created by

Saddam Hussein’s regime and to argue

that it is imperative that the international

community, led by the United

States of America, mobilize now to

eliminate those dangers.

On September 11, 2001, a foreboding

new chapter in American history

began. On that day, our Government

was reawakened in this new century to

its oldest and most solemn responsibility:

protecting the lives and liberty

of the American people.

As we survey the landscape of threats

to our security in the years ahead, the

greatest are terrorists—al-Qaida and

rogue regimes such as Saddam Hussein’s.

Saddam hates America and Americans

and is working furiously to accumulate

deadly weapons of mass destruction

and the missiles, planes, and

unmanned aerial vehicles to use in attacking

distant targets.

Every day Saddam remains in power

is a day of danger for the Iraqi people,

for Iraq’s neighbors, for the American

people, and for the world. As long as

Saddam remains in power, there will be

no genuine security and no lasting

peace in the Middle East, among the

Arab nations or among the Arabs,

Israelis, and Christians who live there.

The threat Saddam poses has been

articulated so often that some may

have grown numb to the reality of his

brutality. But after September 11, we

must reacquaint ourselves with him because

if we do not understand and act,

his next victims, like Osama bin

Laden’s, could be innocent Americans.

President Bush advanced that process

with great effectiveness in his

speech at the U.N. yesterday, albeit

after a season long on the beating of

drums of war and short on explaining

why war may now be necessary. But

the President did that yesterday in

New York. Now we, in Congress, must

go forward together with him as the

Constitution’s competing clauses require

us to do. Each of us must decide

what actions will best advance America’s

values and secure the future of

the American people.

The essential facts are known. We

know of the weapons in Saddam’s possession—

chemical, biological, and nuclear

in time. We know of his unequaled

willingness to use them. We

know his history, his invasions of his

neighbors, his dreams of achieving hegemonic

control over the Arab world,

his record of anti-American rage, his

willingness to terrorize, to slaughter,

to suppress his own people and others.

And we need not stretch to imagine

nightmare scenarios in which Saddam

makes common cause with the terrorists

who want to kill Americans and

destroy our way of life.

Indeed, 2 days ago on September 11,

2002, the state-owned newspaper in Iraq

showed a picture of the World Trade

Center’s Twin Towers in flames with

the headline ‘‘God’s Punishment.’’

This man—Saddam Hussein—is a

menace to the people and the peace of

the world. It was his brutal invasion of

his peaceful neighbor, Kuwait, in August

1990 that first and finally convinced

America and the world that

Saddam had become a tyrant, like so

many before him in world history, who

had to be stopped before he did terrible

damage to his people, his region, and

the wider world. I was privileged in

January of 1991 to join with my colleague

from Virginia, Senator JOHN

WARNER, in sponsoring the Senate resolution

that authorized the first President

Bush to go to war against Saddam.

The American military fought bravely

and brilliantly, in that conflict and

won an extraordinary victory in rolling

back Saddam’s invasion of Kuwait. But

we did not achieve total victory. On

April 9, 1991, I came to the Senate floor

and expressed my disappointment that

our forces in Desert Storm had not

been authorized to remove Saddam

from power, while his military was in

disarray.

I said then: ‘‘The United States must

pursue final victory over Saddam. We

must use all reasonable diplomatic,

economic, and military means to

achieve his removal from power. Until

that end is realized, the peace and stability

of the region will not have been

fully accomplished.’’

In 1997 and 1998, I joined with Senators

Bob Kerrey, TRENT LOTT, and

JOHN MCCAIN to introduce the Iraq Liberation

Act, which established in law

for the first time that it is U.S. policy

to change the regime in Baghdad, not

just contain it, and authorized specific

assistance, including military training

and equipment, to the Iraqi opposition

in furtherance of that goal. That declaration

was based on Saddam’s record

of barbarism before, during and after

the gulf war, and his repeated violations

of U.N. resolutions.

On November 13, 1998, after Saddam

ejected the U.N. weapons inspectors, I

said, ‘‘If we let him block the inspections

and the monitoring that he

agreed to as a condition of the ceasefire

in the gulf war, then there is no

doubt that one day soon, he will use

weapons of mass destruction, carried

by ballistic missiles, against Americans

in the Middle East or against our

allies.’’

Since then, months and years have

passed and the danger from Baghdad

has only grown greater. International

pressure—legal, diplomatic, economic,

and political—has failed to change

Saddam’s behavior. Growing stockpiles

of Iraqi weapons, toxins, and delivery

systems have accumulated. So too has

a growing pile of U.N. resolutions

which Saddam has persistently defied.

They testify to the repeated opportunities

the international community has

given him to prove he has changed and

to his determination nonetheless to remain

a recidivist international outlaw.

As President Bush made clear yesterday,

this must end. The hour of truth

and decision has arrived. This is

Saddam’s last chance, and the United

Nations’ best chance to show that its

declarations of international law stand

for something more than the paper on

which they are written. It is time for

all nations, law abiding and peace loving,

to make clear that, after September

11, the world will not hesitate

or equivocate while a tyrant stocks his

arsenal and builds alliances with terrorists.

I am grateful that President Bush

has effectively begun the critical work

of educating the American people, the

Congress, and the world about why.

Our cause is just. The facts are on our

side.

‘‘Making this case’’ is not a burden.

It is the vital responsibility of a democracy’s

leaders when they have decided

that our Nation’s security may

necessitate war.

It is an extraordinary opportunity, as

well, to engage our allies in meeting

the greatest security threat of our generation

before it is too late—not just

for us but for them. An opportunity to

make the consequences of repeated defiance

of the United Nations painfully

clear to Iraq, and to any other government

that might follow in its criminal

path. An opportunity to show the

world’s law-abiding, peace-loving Muslim

majority—who share the same values

we do, the same aspirations we

have for our families, and, I might add,

the same extremist foes—that as we

oppose tyranny and terror, we will actively

support them in their fight for

freedom and a better life.

President Bush has acted wisely and

decisively in asking the United Nations

to lead this noble effort, to insist that

Iraq obey its resolutions, and to be prepared

to enforce them militarily if Iraq

does not comply. But if Saddam does

not comply, and the United Nations

proves itself unwilling or unable to

take decisive action, then the United

States surely can and must assemble

and lead an international military coalition

to enforce the United Nations

resolutions and liberate the Iraqi people,

the Middle East and the world

from Saddam Hussein. If we lead, I am

confident many other nations will

come to our side.

For more than 11 years now, since

the early spring of 1991, I have supported

the use of military force to disarm

Iraq and to remove Saddam Hussein

from power. In fact, since the Iraq

Liberation Act was passed by Congress

and signed by President Clinton in 1998,

that has been the law of our land.

Therefore, I am fully supportive of

such military action now.

I know that many of my colleagues

in the Senate believe thoughtfully and

sincerely that it would be preferable to

give support to the President in two

stages, first to endorse yesterday’s call

for U.N action, and then to return

later, if the U.N. does not act, to authorize

the use of America’s military

power against Iraq. Other Members of

the Senate are understandably concerned

that a debate on the question of

war against Iraq may be unnecessarily

politicized if it occurs in the more

heated environment of this fall’s congressional

elections.

But the White House has made it

clear it will ask for a resolution of support

and authorization in the very near

future. Each member of the Senate

must, and I am confident will, face

that reality in a spirit of non-partisanship,

going where their hearts and

heads take them, in deciding how best

to fulfill our Constitutional responsibility

to provide for the common defense

in the current circumstances. For

my part, I intend to work with Members

of both parties in the Senate with

the White House to draft a Senate resolution

that will receive the broadest

possible bipartisan support for the

President, as Commander in Chief, as

he works to protect our Nation and the

world from Saddam Hussein.

On October 22, 1962, as nuclear weapons

were being amassed in Cuba, President,

Kennedy spoke to the Nation and

warned Americans of the need to act in

the face of the rising threat. President

Kennedy’s courageous and eloquent

words can guide us now. He said on

that occasion.

I yield the floor.