Mr. President, it now appears

that U.S. military action against

Iraq will not be undertaken in the near

future. All Americans, and I’m sure

people all around the world, are pleased

when military force can be avoided,

when our men and women in uniform

are not put in harm’s way, and when

innocent civilian lives are not put at

risk.

But we must be clear: We cannot afford

peace at any price—peace that

could lead to a much more difficult

conflict later on down the road.

It is always possible to get a deal if

you give enough away. The central

issue with regard to Iraq is whether an

agreement furthers American interests.

The deal negotiated by U.N. Secretary

General Kofi Annan with Iraq

does not adequately address the threat

posed by Saddam Hussein. After years

of denying that Saddam Hussein had

any right to determine the scope of inspections

or the makeup of inspection

teams, this agreement codifies his ability

to do both. It is, to quote one diplomat,

‘‘the beginning of the unraveling

of the inspection process.’’ This accord

sets up a new inspection regime

under the control of the Secretary General

of the so-called ‘‘eight palace residences.’’

He appoints ‘‘senior diplomats’’

to the group. He names the

head of the group.

And it is not clear to me, although

others I am sure are getting clarification

on this, who that person would be.

Would it be one of the UNSCOM inspectors?

Would it be some diplomat?

The group will have its own rules.

And we don’t know exactly what they

are because they have not yet been developed.

I know questions are being

asked about this by Ambassador Richardson.

I know he is trying to get clarifications.

I also know that he is concerned

about what he is learning.

The Secretary General is calling the

shots. The United States is not. Secretary

Albright earlier this week objected

to my characterization of this

episode as ‘‘contracting out U.S. foreign

policy.’’ With all due respect, I

stand by that comment, because it appears

that in fact is what has happened.

Because of the central role of the

U.N. Secretary General, it is important

to understand his approach and his

conclusions.

Before and after his mission to Baghdad,

Secretary General Annan stopped

in Paris. He briefed the French government

before he met personally, as I understand

it, with any senior U.S. official.

I find if of great concern that the

French are, frankly, accorded a privilege

denied to the United States.

The Secretary General has now

briefed the Security Council and the

press on his trip.

Let’s look at what he has said. ‘‘Saddam

can be trusted.’’ ‘‘I think I can do

business with him.’’ ‘‘I think he was serious.’’

These are all direct quotes. The

Secretary General told reporters he

spent the weekend building a ‘‘human

relationship’’ with Saddam Hussein.

The Secretary General thinks that he

can trust the man who has invaded his

neighbors, who has used chemical

weapons ten times, and who tried to assassinate

former President George

Bush. This is folly. I cannot understand

why the Clinton Administration would

place trust in someone devoted to

building a ‘‘human relationship’’ with

a mass murdered.

According to the Washington Post,

Secretary General Annan described

UNSCOM inspectors ‘‘as ‘cowboys’ who

had thrown their weight around and behaved

irresponsibly.’’ He also ‘‘passed

along without comment on Iraqi complaint—

denied by [UNSCOM] as a paranoid

delusion—that some of the most

aggressive U.N. inspectors were seeking

to hunt down Iraqi President Saddam

Hussein so he could be assassinated

. . .’’

The Secretary General of the U.N.

starts describing the inspectors as

‘‘cowboys,’’ when, as a matter of fact, I

had the impression, and it was universally

agreed, that they had been very

professional. These are people with expertise

on biological and chemical

weapons. These are people that have

come from the international atomic

agencies. They know what they are

doing. Mr. Butler, the Brit, was in

charge of the inspectors, has been very

diligent, and very circumspect. As a

matter of fact, I understand that one of

the most aggressive and most effective

inspectors is a Russian. Why in the

world would the Secretary General use

this kind of wording? Why would he

come up with, or even pass along, this

ridiculous suggestion that they were

being used to hunt down Saddam Hussein?

These comments are outrageous.

They reflect someone bent on appeasement—

not someone determined to

make the United Nations inspection regime

work effectively.

The Secretary General has greatly

harmed the credibility of the United

Nations by cutting what appears to be

a special deal with the most flagrant

violator of United Nations resolutions,

probably in history. Instead of standing

on principle, he sat with the unprincipled—

and gave him what he

wanted.

The United States has not yet formally

announced its support for the

deal negotiated by Secretary General

Annan. It is not too late to reject a

deal if it leaves Saddam Hussein rejoicing

and leaves UNSCOM out in the

cold.

I yield the floor, Mr. President.