Mr. President, despite

America’s preponderant role in the

world, it is not often that foreign leaders

tell us that their country would not

exist as an independent state were it

not for U.S. support. Yet leaders across

the spectrum in the former Soviet republic

of Georgia, including President

Eduard Shevardnadze and his political

opponents, frankly and gratefully attribute

their national survival to

unstinting American support since

their independence from Soviet rule

eleven years ago. In a troubling display

of how history does not always move in

a positive direction, Georgia’s independence

is once again under threat,

with repercussions that should concern

all who cherish freedom.

In an opportunistic twist of President

Bush’s policy of pre-emption

against clear and present dangers to

America and the world, President

Putin of Russia has appropriated

American rhetoric in the war on terrorism

to justify Russian subversion of

the Georgian state. A free Russian

hand in Georgia is apparently the price

President Putin believes the United

States is willing to pay for Russia’s

support for military action against

Iraq. President Bush and the Congress

of the United States should disabuse

our friends in Moscow of this illusion,

immediately.

President Putin rode to power on

promises to defeat Chechen separatists

in Russia’s south. Reports indicate

that members of Al Qaeda and other

terrorist groups operate in Chechnya.

Russia has a right and an obligation to

bring these legitimate terrorists to justice.

But rather than targeting them

and their Chechen comrades in arms,

Russian forces have conducted a military

campaign of astonishing brutality

against Chechnya’s civilian population

as leaders in the West have looked the

other way.

At the same time, Presidents Bush

and Putin have brought about a historic

change in U.S.-Russia relations

that is moving our two nations from rivalry

to strategic partnership. We in

the United States welcome this development.

But there can be no true partnership

absent Russian commitment to

the fundamental values that guide

American policy in these areas.

I believe President Putin has indeed

made a historic decision to align his

country with the West as Russia moves

away from its imperial past and towards

a democratic, prosperous future.

Yet Russia’s threat to Georgia, like

Russia’s brutality in Chechnya, calls to

mind a discredited, imperial past

whose resurgence threatens the transformation

in U.S.-Russian relations

and, in particular, our joint commitment

to eradicating the networks of

global terror that threaten both our

peoples.

Seized by the domestic political costs

of a grinding war in Chechnya that

Russia cannot win militarily, and calculating

that President Bush’s doctrine

of pre-emption somehow applies to

both a megalomaniacal tyrant like

Saddam Hussein and a democratically

oriented, pro-Western leader like

Eduard Shevardnadze, President Putin

has sent Russian jets to bomb targets

in Georgia. Putin openly outlines his

plans for a Russian invasion of Georgia

to wipe out terrorism there. Motivated

by a deep dislike of President

Shevardnadze, whom they blame for

the Soviet Union’s disintegration and

who has been targeted for assassination

by figures linked to Moscow, and

tempted by visions of Russian control

over Russia’s oil-rich Near Abroad,

some Russian leaders seem to believe

the impunity Russia has enjoyed in

Chechnya would carry over to Russian

military operations against its sovereign

neighbor. They are wrong.

Russia’s civilian and military leadership

must know that our growing, and

welcome, strategic partnership in the

war on terror does not sanction unilateral

Russian military adventurism for

purposes whose relation to the war on

terror is incidental. Moscow, and Washington,

and Tbilisi are right to be

alarmed by continuing reports that

Chechen militants and members of al-

Qaida have taken refuge in Georgia’s

lawless Pankisi Gorge. America’s proper

response was to deploy American

Special Forces teams to Georgia to

train and equip Georgian security

forces to take control of the gorge and

enforce Georgian control over its territory.

President Shevardnadze has announced

a major Georgian military operation,

with U.S. military advisors, to

root out terrorists in Pankisi. International

monitors are already stationed

along Georgia’s border with

Chechnya, and President Shevardnadze

has proposed expanding this monitoring

force to prevent militants from

finding refuge in Georgia in the future.

Shevardnadze yesterday pledged to extradite

13 men that Russia says are

Chechen guerrillas captured by Georgian

security officials.

The United States and Russia, in the

spirit of strategic partnership both

countries profess, have a willing partner

in President Shevardnadze to

eliminate any terrorist presence in

Georgia that Moscow correctly perceives

to threaten its interests. But

Russia has rejected Georgia’s candid,

and unprecedented, proposals to cooperate

in eradicating terrorism. Instead,

Russia seems to want to use the

terrorist problem as a means of reasserting

Russian control in Georgia,

which already suffers the presence of

three Russian military bases and separatist

conflicts supported by Moscow.

Some in Moscow do not understand

that unilateral and preemptive Russian

military operations in Georgia make

the situation worse, not better. These

operations threaten to turn Russia’s

desire to root out a small group of terrorists

into an international crisis that

threatens what President Putin cherishes—

a robust partnership with the

West that he has defined as Russia’s future.

It is unacceptable and immoral for

any American leader to countenance

Russia’s increasingly open campaign

for control of its neighbor to the

south—which is why no American leader

will do so. But pressure from Moscow

works in insidious ways. One ‘‘senior

Administration official’’ recently

told the New York Times,

The United States properly shares

Russia’s concern about foreign terrorists

seeking refuge in Georgia, and can

surely find a way to advance our mutual

interest in helping Georgia end incursions

by these people. But giving

Russia carte blanche to impose its own

solution—as it has, brutally, in

Chechnya—would be a repudiation of

the values we are fighting the war on

terror to defend and the celebration of

freedom that took place in Georgia and

across the former Soviet Union when

imperial rule crumbled.

Strengthening the Georgian Government’s

capacity to control parts of its

own country and working with American

and Georgian officials to eliminate

terrorists from Georgian territory,

on terms acceptable to the Georgian

Government, is an interest Moscow

shares with Washington and

Tbilisi. It is one we can advance together,

in the spirit of partnership that

characterizes our cooperation in the

war on terrorism—not in the spirit of

rivalry and spheres of influence that

recall an unpleasant past.

Leaders in Moscow must know that

no nation has a greater stake in wiping

out al-Qaida’s global terror network

than the United States. We would

never countenance any Georgian actions

to wink at terrorism within its

borders; indeed, our deployment of

American Special Forces to Georgia is

a measure of the seriousness with

which we take the threat terrorists

pose to Georgia and the region. In the

same way, President Putin and those

around him must know that we cannot

countenance unilateral Russian military

action that puts Georgia’s independence

at risk. I hope President

Putin will make the choice that befits

his role as an enlightened leader of the

Russian people, and does not cast his

lot with the officers and civilians

around him who believe Russian can

assert imperial control over a sovereign

neighbor without consequence.

There will be consequences—and no

friend of Russia or Georgia should suggest

otherwise.

Madam President, I ask

unanimous consent that a Wall Street

Journal editorial of September 16, 2002,

entitled ‘‘Putin’s Iraq Price’’ a September

19, 2002, editorial in the Washington

Post, entitled ‘‘A Parody Of

Partnership’’ and an editorial from the

Economist magazine of September 21,

2002, entitled ‘‘Putin’s folly’’ be printed

in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article

was ordered to be printed in the

RECORD, as follows:

Madam President, all

three of these editorials I have asked

to be printed in the RECORD talk about

the danger we are now experiencing

concerning Mr. Putin’s actions, or possible

actions, in Georgia.

Madam President, I thank the Presiding

Officer for her patience. I do believe

this is an important issue. I hope

our Russian friends, with whom we

have a very strong relationship, will

not embark on an adventure which

could have serious repercussions not

only in the region but in the world.

I thank you, Madam President, and

yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.