Mr. President, all I

know is what I read in the newspapers.

Based on what I do know about public

policy and what I read in the newspapers,

I would be very frightened if all

I knew was what I read in the newspapers

because newspapers often get

things wrong. It has been interesting

to me, as we have had the buildup to

this discussion in the Senate about

Iraq, there have been a number of very

thoughtful pieces written that have appeared

in the newspapers, and I wish to

draw on some of those and quote from

some of them at length here today.

It so happens that both of the pieces

I will use today appeared in the Washington

Post, but there have also been

useful pieces in the New York Times

and the Wall Street Journal.

Before I get to that, I want to describe

a conversation I had once as a

younger man that has been an absolute

paradigm conversation in my understanding

of politics.

I was having lunch with an old

friend, a very experienced political

hand, a man who had once served

President Eisenhower as a close member

of his staff. We were discussing a

certain candidate for President.

I said, somewhat improperly, because

it was rather arrogant for me to do

this: Is this candidate smart enough to

be President of the United States?

My old friend answered immediately.

He said: Of course not. Nobody is. Then

he went on to explain.

As I say, he was a man who had been

at Eisenhower’s elbow during some of

the most significant decisions of our

time, and he made this point. He said:

Every truly Presidential decision is so

loaded down with unknowable consequences,

with unforeseen possibilities,

and unforeseeable challenges that

no truly Presidential decision is ever

made on the basis of intellect. It is

made on the basis of instinct.

He mentioned this same candidate,

and he said: He has good instincts, and

you can back him with a clear conscience.

I have thought about that ever since

that conversation, and I have realized

the wisdom of it. If difficult decisions

could be made by smart people and resolved,

they would be resolved before

they got to the President of the United

States because any President in either

party has plenty of smart people

around him who can figure things out

and come to a neat, tidy, absolutely defensible

conclusion. But those decisions

that do not lend themselves to

neat and tidy and absolutely defensible

conclusions are the ones that ultimately

end up on the President’s desk

and are ultimately made, as my old

friend said, on instinct, out of the gut,

rather than intellect out of the analysis.

I remember a President who many

people thought was lacking in intellectual

candle power, who made a very

momentous decision. His name was

Harry Truman. He described how he

was at his mother-in-law’s home for

Sunday dinner back in Missouri when

the phone rang. He went to the entry

hall of that old home where the phone

was kept—showing how long ago this

really was. There was no black box following

him around. There was no communications

apparatus with instant

ties to the White House, just a phone in

the entry hall where the phone used to

be put in the days when there was only

one phone per house, and that would be

in a central location.

He answered the phone. It was Dean

Acheson, who told him the North Koreans

had just started across the border

into South Korea. President Truman

said: We have to stop the—expletives

deleted.

In later years, he was asked to outline

his decision making analysis of the

decision to hold the line in North

Korea, and he told of the phone call

and said: My decision making analysis

was that one sentence when I told Dean

Acheson: We have to stop the—

expletives deleted. He did not think

about it any more than that. That

came straight out of his gut. And it

was Harry Truman’s gut that made

him one of the Presidents we now revere

as one of the greatest of the past

century.

This decision is about going to war in

Iraq or about, putting it more properly,

giving the President authorization to

move ahead with force if at some point

it becomes clear to him that is what we

should do. It is in the category of those

truly Presidential decisions.

As I listen to the debate on the floor,

the questions being asked, the analysis

being demanded, the effort being made

to come up with a clear set of tidy pros

and cons that can then be weighed on a

balance sheet or an accounting statement

and then a carefully crisp decision

made on the basis of all of that

evidence, I go back to my conversation

with my friend. We do not know. No

one knows what will be the situation in

Iraq if we attack after it is over. We do

not know whether the Middle East will

be a more beneficent place or a more

malevolent place if that attack takes

place, and no one does.

I can find experts who will tell us

this would be the very best thing we

could possibly do, and that the Middle

East will be much more peaceful, and

that liberty will be on the march if we

just stand firm. Out of the newspapers

we can find plenty of columnists who

will tell us that.

I can find other experts who will say

this is the greatest disaster we would

possibly bring upon the Middle East,

and that if we attack Iraq, we will unleash

a whole Pandora’s box of problems.

The Arab street will rise up, and

America will be hated for 100 years.

There are plenty of columnists in the

newspapers who will tell us that.

I can find experts who will say: Weapons

of mass destruction will be used

against Israel if we move ahead against

Iraq; that there will be biological and

chemical attacks not only against

Israel but against American installations

everywhere; that American multinational

companies will become the

targets of biological and chemical attacks;

and that all of this can be averted

if we just continue the discussions.

I can find plenty of columnists and people

in the newspapers who will tell us

that.

Then there are those who say: If we

do not act, we will so embolden Saddam

Hussein and all the other dictators

of the area that they will never

move in a peaceful direction; we will

have inevitable war, and it will be

many times worse than anything that

would be triggered by action taken

now. Again, in the newspapers, I can

find plenty of columnists who will tell

us that.

So this is a truly Presidential decision,

and it will be made not in George

Bush’s head or in the heads of those

around him—DICK CHENEY, Colin Powell,

Don Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice,

brilliant people all; they stack up their

degrees, they stack up their accomplishments

in the world, and this is as

glittering an array of talent as any

President has ever assembled to advise

him on foreign policy matters—but the

ultimate decision will be made in the

President’s gut because this is a truly

Presidential decision fraught with so

many unknowable consequences and

possible side effects that no one, no

matter how smart, can accurately analyze

them in advance and come to a

neat and tidy and firm conclusion.

I take some comfort in an analysis

that has been made of what I would

call the long-term and big-picture

question, a big-picture question that

perhaps can be analyzed a little better

than the specifics of whether or not we

move ahead with force in Iraq. I refer

first to a piece that appeared in the

Washington Post written by Jackson

Diehl entitled ‘‘Bush’s Foreign Policy

First—But no one seems to notice—

even at the White House.’’ That is the

subhead.

The ‘‘foreign policy first’’ that Mr.

Diehl is talking about is the fact that

the Bush administration, for the first

time since the cold war, has laid down

a coherent doctrine and strategy with

respect to America’s role in the post cold

war world.

We all sat in the House Chamber 10

days after the attack, perhaps a week

or so after the attack, on September 11,

and we heard President Bush deliver a

fabulous speech. It had some of the

most dramatic rhetoric I expect to ever

hear in my lifetime, and it was the finest

Presidential speech I have ever

heard in my lifetime. As I stepped

away from that speech and the emotion

of the moment and analyzed it, realized

President Bush had, in fact, for the

first time in the post-cold war world,

laid down a vision of that world and

America’s role in it. That speech was

more than a rhetorical masterpiece. It

was a serious policy statement of

where America should be.

That has been fleshed out in a 34-

page statement of foreign policy issued

by the White House. That is what

Jackson Diehl is referring to when he

says Bush’s foreign policy first—the

first statement of the situation post cold

war as seen by an American administration

looking at it in toto.

Quoting from Mr. Diehl’s presentation,

he says:

I think that is exactly what the

President was saying in his statement

to the Joint Session of Congress. We

must face the fact that we have power

unmatched in history and, therefore,

cannot abdicate our responsibility to

shape the international order and, two,

we must face the fact that we still live

in a dangerous world and we are ironically

more vulnerable now than we

were before.

Mr. Diehl goes on, after talking

about the situation surrounding the

word ‘‘unilateral,’’ or ‘‘presumptive action,’’

and he makes this point:

I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed

to continue for an additional 5

minutes.

. Jackson Diehl summarizes

this way:

I ask unanimous consent that the entire

article appear at the conclusion of

my remarks.

Turning to a piece

which also appeared in the Washington

Post written by Bernard Lewis, who is

considered by some to be the ultimate

authority on conflicts in the Middle

East, it is entitled: ‘‘Targeted By a History

of Hatred—The United States Is

Now the Unquestioned Leader of the

Free World, Also Known as the

Infidels.’’ That is an interesting tie: We

are the unquestioned leader of the free

world, also known in many parts of the

world as the infidels.

Put that headline against the statement

contained in Jackson Diehl’s

summary of the Bush position paper

authored primarily by Condoleezza

Rice, and once again you see the big

picture. We do live in a world where we

are the only superpower. We have the

responsibility to do something with

that, and President Bush and his advisers

have now come to the conclusion

that the ultimate test of how we use

our power should be how will it ultimately

spread liberty throughout the

world. That is the kind of flag to which

I can repair. That is the kind of standard

I can follow.

If we were the British in the 1700s and

1800s presiding over the world, the

grand scheme would be: How can we enhance

and increase British Imperial

power? If we were the Romans when

they were the only superpower in that

portion of the world they cared about,

the only big picture item would be:

How can we secure and extend the

power of the Roman legions? But as

President Bush makes this truly Presidential

decision out of his gut, he has

made it clear that the ultimate question

he is asking, and we must ask with

him, is, How will this expand the role

of liberty throughout the world? That,

as I say, is a standard I can follow.

So I will be voting in favor of the resolution,

not because I have figured out

all of the unknowables and

imponderables relating to it and not

because I am absolutely sure that the

Presidential power will be used in the

right possible way in every possible circumstance.

I will be doing it because I

trust George W. Bush’s instincts as

outlined as clearly as any post-war

President has ever outlined America’s

role in the post-war world.

He will use his power to expand and

defend liberty throughout the world.

He may use it by mistake. He may do

things that do not produce that result.

But that will be his polestar; that

should be America’s polestar; that

should be the policy we lay down and

hold now for generations to come. It

resonates with the decision of the

Founding Fathers when the country

was created. It is a worthy position for

us to take now that the country has become

preeminent in the world. Let us

hope and pray that as we give this

President this power it is always used

to that end.

I yield the floor.