Mr. President, this

week, as we know, we debate the most

serious topic Congress can ever face,

whether we will authorize the President

to use force to address a looming

threat to our national security. Right

here and now I wish to say I will support

this President, should he determine

we need to deploy the military of

the United States to force Iraq into

compliance with the resolutions of the

international community requiring it—

transparently and permanently—to disarm

itself of weapons of mass destruction.

If this requires the removal of Saddam

Hussein from power, as I believe it

will, I will support this President’s policy

of regime change, and I respectfully

urge my colleagues to join me. It may

be early in our Senate debate on this

resolution, but we have been discussing

our policy options for years. The President

and his advisers have regularly

consulted with us, with our allies, with

the international community, and with

the American public. As a result, I believe

this administration will act with

a coalition of willing nations, fully

within the boundaries of international

law, with the support of this Congress,

and with the support and prayers of the

American people.

I am honored to have served the people

of Utah for 26 years. Utahans are a

patriotic people. Almost all, Republicans

and Democrats, will support the

President of the United States when he

makes his final determination the vital

interests of this country are at risk

and we must take military action to

protect those vital interests. Tonight

the President will make that case before

the American people, and we will

all listen intently to his words.

As a Senator who represents the interests

of Utah but also the interests of

our country, I know a decision on the

use of force is the most serious consideration

I can make because the costs

may be measured by the ultimate sacrifice

of good Americans. I make this

decision with the deepest of study and

prayer, and I offer my prayers to support

any President who must make

such a final decision.

President Bush has acted conscientiously

and openly in determining his

administration’s policy toward Iraq. I

do not understand criticisms of this administration

as being secretive, unilateral,

militaristic, and uncooperative.

From my perspective, none of these adjectives

represent an objective reality.

President Bush has warned us of the

threat from Saddam Hussein’s Iraq

since he stepped into the national spotlight

during the Presidential campaign.

I was there. He has been expressing

what most observers, expert analysts,

and honest brokers have long recognized.

Iraq has broken all of its pledges to

cooperate with the international community

and disarm;

Iraq has refused to allow international

inspectors since 1998;

Iraq has never completely accounted

for materials used for weapons of mass

destruction, specifically biological and

chemical weapons, since its defeat in

1991;

Iraq has violated every U.N. resolution

passed since 1991;

Iraq has repeatedly fired on U.S. and

allied aircraft patrolling the northern

and southern ‘‘no-fly’’ zones;

Saddam Hussein has continued to

threaten his neighbors and has never

ceased his hostile rhetoric toward the

United States;

And, Iraq has never proven to the

international community that it has

abandoned its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

In fact, as a member of the Senate

Select Committee on Intelligence, I

can tell you Iraq has never really abandoned

that.

Charges that the President has been

unilateralist are completely unfounded.

The pace of diplomatic activity

conducted by administration officials

in the capitals of our friends and

allies, as well as in Geneva and in New

York, is as active as any administration’s

diplomacy in modern times.

Every day there is another respectful

consultation, as the President’s Secretaries

of State and Defense, and the

National Security Adviser’s team, have

repeatedly demonstrated.

The President’s speech before the

United Nations 1 day and 1 year after

September 11 was the most eloquent

and forceful presentation of a U.S.

President before that body.

His appeal was ethical and it was logical.

He stood before the body of the

international community and he said:

The President has consulted with

every Member of Congress, and with

most of us many times.

His representatives have dutifully

and constructively testified before numerous

of our committees, and they

have always been available for more

discussions when needed.

While the Constitution gives the foreign

policy-making prerogative to the

executive branch, I have always

thought it sound judgment that a

President voluntarily seek support and

authorization from the U.S. Congress.

Clearly, that is what this President

has done with numerous consultations

over the past weeks, including discussions

that have culminated in this resolutions

we will debate this week.

This administration has respectfully

included the public in this most serious

of deliberations. Virtually all of these

presentations, testimonies, and speeches

have been done in the public eye.

While a few congressional briefings

have had to be conducted in closed settings

due to the necessary review of

classified materials, the arguments and

most of the evidence for the determination

of this administration’s policy on

Iraq have been there for the public to

judge.

The President’s speech tonight will

crystalize for the American people the

important decision before us.

In the past 2 weeks, there have been

a few partisan eruptions.

I believe we should never shirk from

debate, and I believe that the matters

of war and peace must be thoroughly

debated as long as we recognize that, in

the world of human affairs, there is no

perfect wisdom, particularly of how the

future will unfold.

But let us not presume there are limits

to good faith.

There is not a single Democrat or Republican

who glibly supports a decision

that may have the consequence of

shedding blood.

And there is no Democrat or Republican

who would ever seek to jeopardize

the national security of this country

by refusing to engage a threat that is

looming.

The decision to go to war cannot,

must not, ever be a function of politics.

In 1996, I warned that Osama bin

Laden was a threat to this country. Bin

Laden’s activities had been of concern

to a few prior to this. But, in that year,

a number of interviews and articles

with this man led me to conclude that

he had large and evil intentions. I believed

that he would distinguish himself

from other terrorists by taking his

grievances out of his homeland and his

region and that some day—at a time

we could not predetermine—he would

be a threat to this country.

I cannot raise this point with any

pride. I warned about bin Laden, and

many good people in the intelligence

and law enforcement agencies began to

respond to this growing threat.

For reasons the historians will someday

study, based in part on the inquiries

we have already begun, we did not

stop bin Laden. And he brought the terrorism

war home to us.

Two years later after I first warned

about bin Laden, he attacked two U.S.

embassies in the same morning, destroying

buildings, and killing American

diplomats and their families, as

well as hundreds of Africans in Nairobi

and Dar es Salaam.

A few days later, the President addressed

the Nation, telling us he had

responded to the Africa attacks by bin

Laden with cruise missiles against

Sudan and Afghanistan.

While some raced to criticize him for

‘‘wagging the dog’’ trying to distance

himself from the unfolding drama of

his personal troubles I personally

spoke out and approved of the President’s

initiative.

I was in Salt Lake at the time. Because

I had raised bin Laden so many

times and had become thoroughly involved

in trying to help the President

with some of his problems, they interviewed

me there, and I said at that

time that he did the right thing, but I

also said he should follow up and not

just do it once.

We were attacked and the U.S. had to

respond, because if we did not respond,

our passivity would invite further attacks.

I also urged the President not to let

that be a single set of strikes. I knew

that any response we made short of

eliminating the threat of bin Laden

would embolden bin Laden.

Since the days after September 11, I

have often thought of those key moments

in the late 1990s. I do so not to

cast blame. The lives lost in New York,

at the Pentagon, and in that Pennsylvania

countryside will always be a reminder

of how we failed to anticipate,

failed to respond, failed to eliminate a

threat we knew was out there.

But let these not be lessons lost.

The lives lost in New York, Washington,

Pennsylvania, and in our campaign

in Afghanistan demonstrate that

if we are not prepared to engage an

enemy before he strikes us then we

must accept that we will pay a cost for

pursuing him afterward.

To me and to many Utahns and citizens

throughout the Nation, the lesson

of September 11 is: do not wait for your

enemy to attack—especially when he

has access to weapons of mass destruction.

If you have evidence of your enemy’s

capabilities and with Saddam Hussein

we do and if you have evidence of his

enmity and with Saddam Hussein we

do—then do not err on the side of wishful

thinking. With enemies with the destructive

capabilities of Saddam Hussein,

we must be hard-headed.

The administration has argued that

Saddam’s Iraq poses a threat, a threat

that must be eliminated. If we cannot

eliminate the threat of weapons of

mass destruction through coercive,

thorough and comprehensive inspections

backed by the threat of force supported

by the international community—

then the U.S. must seek to build

our own coalition of willing nations to

disarm Iraq by force and allow for a regime

that will replace Saddam and return

Iraq to the community of nations.

I believe the President should continue

to work with the international

community to seek ways to disarm

Iraq short of military intervention.

Military force should never be our first

course of action.

But I will not support a resolution

that conditions our authorization on

actions by the United Nations.

Such a move would set a precedent

over sovereign decisions conducted by

this country to defend its national interests.

Supporting such language would, in

my opinion, infringe upon the constitutional

prerogative that resides with the

President to conduct and manage the

Nation’s foreign policy.

Congress must resist attempts to

micromanage a war effort.

The resolution we debate today is an

authorization. But, the timing and modalities

of action need to be—and must

be controlled by the administration,

with consultation wherever possible, so

long as that consultation does not

hamper the war effort.

Traditional geopolitics requires us to

think about national security in categories

of our interests.

Our vital interests are defined as the

security of our homeland and our way

of life; we must defend them at any

costs, and we must be willing to defend

them alone, if necessary.

There are areas of vital national interest

to this country, that if they

were threatened or succumbed to hostile

control, would jeopardize our

homeland or our way of life.

They are: the Western Hemisphere;

Japan; Europe; and the Persian Gulf.

Saddam Hussein continues to threaten

the stability of the Persian Gulf.

From this perspective, I believe that

the frightening capabilities of

Saddam’s chemical and biological

weapons pose a threat to the region,

and to the stability of the Gulf, and

therefore to our vital national interests.

In addition, nontraditional geopolitics

recognizes that international

phenomena other than nation states

must be considered when assessing the

national security of the United States.

Terrorism is the number one non-traditional

threat to the U.S. today. This

may seem obvious after September 11.

It was not obvious enough before September

11.

The American people know that we

are at war with al-Qaida.

The American people recognize that

never again can we be complacent

about threats to this country and our

interests.

And the American people understand

that this war on al-Qaida cannot be

used as an excuse to ignore other grave

threats, such as the threat that Iraq

continues to pose.

We should not assume that Saddam

Hussein will politely stand in line behind

al-Qaida.

With the questions remaining about

Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction,

with too many suggestions of Iraq’s

ties with terrorists, and with no question

about Iraq’s animosity to the

United States, and other countries as

well, including many in the Middle

East, should the United States consider

an option of doing nothing, or too little,

as we did with al-Qaida before September

11?

Perhaps, as a result of the diplomatic

pressure building on Saddam Hussein

in recent days, his regime will comply

with a forceful and comprehensive

international inspection regime.

However, we should not for a single

moment forget Saddam’s history of obfuscation

and delay. His record of noncompliance

is 100 percent. Any inspection

regime which we agree to support

must complete the actions required in

all Security Council resolutions, including

the ones being drafted now,

that would demand compliance with inspections

or face the use of force.

Some have suggested that a war on

Iraq would be the beginning of a radical

doctrine of preemption—that we

are now setting a precedent for unilateral

military action against regimes

that we find odious.

The idea of ‘‘preemption’’ is as old as

Grotius, the father of international

law, who wrote in the 17th century.

U.S. policymakers have never foresworn

the option of preemption, and

have never seen the U.N. Charter as restricting

the use of preemption in the

event of a threat to our national security.

There are many examples of this

thinking in both Republican and Democratic

administrations.

Recall that U.S. nuclear doctrine

never adopted a no-first-use policy.

Nor is the policy decision we are facing

today opening up a new, militaristic,

and unilateral approach to

dealing with other countries with

which we have conflicts.

Some have suggested that, if we authorize

the use of force against Iraq, we

are automatically implying that we

support the use of force against the

other two countries in the ‘‘axis of

evil’’ termed by the President.

Today, the administration is using

diplomacy to control the ongoing confrontation

on the Korean Peninsula.

And while Iran remains a geopolitical

threat, as it continues to fund terrorists

operating in the Middle East, and

is extending its influence in Afghanistan,

the political foment within Iran

is also providing a challenge to that Islamic

fundamentalist dictatorship, as

more and more Iranians seek to overthrow

their corrupt and repressive tyranny.

Despite some leftist revisionist histories,

America has always been reluctant

to use force overseas. As a democracy,

we are imbued with values of caution

and respect for human rights, reluctance

and a desire to let other nations

choose their own paths.

But the world changed for us on September

11, 2001.

The American people are patient, but

we should never let that patience be

used against us. As the President has

said, if we are to wait until we have

definite proof that Iraq intends to use

weapons of mass destruction against

us, then it may be too late.

For too long, we were hesitant to attack

al-Qaida, presuming that they

would never dare to attack us in the

heart of our financial center, at the

core of our defense establishment, in

the openness of our commercial airways.

We were wrong.

Can we accept the consequences of

being wrong with Saddam Hussein’s

Iraq?

If this Congress authorizes the use of

force, and if the President concludes

that force is the only option in removing

Saddam Hussein from power and

disarming Iraq of weapons of mass destruction,

then I believe that every

member of this body will fully support

our President and our Armed Forces.

Iraq has been in a dangerous geopolitical

limbo since Saddam Hussein

was ejected from Kuwait in 1991, and

then left to oppress his people over the

ensuing decade.

If the United States must act to remove

Saddam Hussein, we must be

committed to help reconstruct Iraq.

This will take sustained policy focus.

The U.S. will, once again, pay for a

large portion of the costs of war. We

would expect our allies to pay for a

large portion of the reconstruction.

U.S. policy must commit to the long term

stability of Iraq. We must work

with the various Iraqi ethnic groups to

build their own vision of a tolerant,

educated, modern Iraq. Many of the

Iraqi people have a history of valuing

education, modernity and multiethnic

society. We must commit to staying in

Iraq until the basic institutions that

will provide long-term stability are

built.

A stable, tolerant, modern Iraq may

transform the Arab Middle East. Other

traditional states will have to explain

to their own peoples why they hesitate

to grant democratic rights and privileges,

basic human rights, and respect

for women, if an Iraqi government were

to arise from the repression of Saddam

to blossom as an example of tolerance

and modernity.

If we commit to the liberation of the

Iraqi people, and we assist them in rising

out of decades of Saddam Hussein’s

depredations, the whole world will be

able to see that the Arab world is not

predestined to tyranny, radical regimes,

anti-Western hatred, willful ignorance.

I believe that this is President Bush’s

vision. The President understands that

the use of force against Saddam Hussein—

if it comes to this—will be the

beginning of the end—not just of that

dictator’s brutal reign, but also of

nearly a century of Arab despotism.

I pray that Saddam Hussein capitulates

to the international community

and allows unfettered and comprehensive

inspections, and that he removes

himself from power or is removed by

some brave Iraqi.

But if we are not so fortunate, I pray

Godspeed for our men and women in

the military when they, once again, go

beyond our shores to protect those of

us within them.

Mr. President, I again thank our very

fine leader on our side and others on

the other side for their efforts in this

regard, for the support they have for

this country, for our President, and for

doing what is right.

I personally respect the distinguished

Senator from Virginia very much. I

have watched him through the years

work with both sides, trying to bring

people together and to accomplish the

best things for our country. I personally

express my respect for him here

today.

I yield the floor.

I do. Our intelligence

shows that the Iraqi people know they

are repressed, that there are many of

them who wish things would change,

but there is such repression that they

are afraid to strike out, afraid to speak

out, or afraid to react in ways other

than the way the current leadership in

Iraq wants them to react.

This is a very important country. It

has tremendous resources, resources

that are fully capable of helping that

country to resuscitate itself, to reconstruct.

Those resources are being

ripped off of the Iraqi people right now

by Saddam Hussein and others around

him. They are being spent on matters

that really do not benefit the country

of Iraq, and they are being spent on

matters that do not uplift the aspirations

and hopes of the people in Iraq.

As we all know, there is no question

that if we could get rid of this repressive

regime, Iraq could become a real

player in the Middle East and help everybody

in the world to understand

that Islam is not a religion of destruction.

It is not a religion of warfare in

particular. It is a very good religion

with tremendous ethics and responsible

approaches towards life and towards

living in the world community.

Nor do I agree with some of our critics

in the evangelical movement in this

country who have been outspoken in

their criticism of Islam, blaming the

radical elements of Islam, who are not

the majority, for many of the things

that are going on, that are reprehensible,

including the Osama bin Laden

group, al-Qaida, and so many other terrorist

groups.

The Senator is absolutely right. We

believe, and our intelligence shows,

that Iraq could become a major player

in world affairs, a major construct for

good, if it had different leadership and

if the people had the privilege of democratic

principles.

I thank my colleague because he has

been pointing out all day, as he has

served here, very important nuances

upon which every one of us should take

more time to reflect.