Will the Senator yield

for a question?

I appreciate the remarks

of my friend, their tone, and

particularly the content that really

lays out the parameters of this debate.

I ask my friend from Connecticut: Did

the Senator have a chance to hear the

President’s address to the Nation last

night?

Was it clear to the Senator

that the President showed the

American people that every option is

being explored before a military option

is exercised? I ask this question because

I hear time and again from many

Americans, who either are opposed to

any military intervention or have not

made up their minds, that they seem

not to have confidence that the President

is exercising every option. He is

coming to Congress to get approval

from both Houses of Congress. We have

had significant debate, and we will

have significant debate.

We are working at the Security

Council level. We are making it absolutely

clear that tomorrow Saddam

Hussein, if he did away with his weapons

of mass destruction, destroyed the

laboratory and allowed complete and

comprehensive inspections, would

probably remove the threat he now

faces. It is Saddam Hussein who has

continued for the last 11 years.

My question to the Senator is, Do

you think the President’s speech last

night went some distance in convincing

the American people that neither the

President nor the Senator from Connecticut,

nor I, nor the Senator from

Virginia, nor the Senator from Indiana,

choose the military option? We are

sending young Americans into harm’s

way. As successful as this operation

may be, we will still lose some brave

young Americans’ lives. That is the reality.

That is why we avoid it at all

costs.

As we conduct this debate, we need

to talk about the fact that this is not

the preferred option for the President

of the United States or any Member of

this body. This is the last option. We

can make the case that it is obvious

that Saddam Hussein continues this

buildup of weapons of mass destruction,

including nuclear weapons. But

we are not the ones who are forcing

this issue. The President of the United

States in this resolution is not forcing

the issue. It is Saddam Hussein who is

forcing this issue.

We will, as we go through this debate

and the conversations at the United

Nations Security Council, make sure

we have exhausted every possible option.

This is a critical factor in getting

the American people behind this resolution

and behind the President of the

United States and behind the men and

women in the military.

The Senator from Indiana

indicated to me when we had discussions

about this resolution, introduced

by Senator LIEBERMAN, Senator

WARNER, the Senator, and myself,

about the fact that in his home State

there is great concern about going to

war. In fact, he mentioned to me that

was the majority of calls and communications

he had with the people of Indiana,

which he was privileged to serve

as Governor as well as a Senator. In

other words, the Senator has a fairly

good finger on the pulse of the people

he represents. That skepticism was

based on what concerns and what led

the Senator from Indiana to conclude

that it was important for him not only

to support this resolution but play a

role as a major sponsor of this legislation.

I think it is important for the

people of this Nation and our colleagues

to understand that, since his

State is part of the heartland of America,

as is Arizona. Many people feel

otherwise.

I am very interested in hearing what

the Senator from Indiana has viewed as

the factors leading him to play such a

visible, as well as important, role in

this resolution.

I have one additional

question for the Senator from Indiana.

He mentioned, as the Senator from

Connecticut has and as the Senator

from Virginia has, there is great concern

about this issue amongst our constituents.

Yet I have found in communications

with the people of my State,

both directly and from being on talk

shows and in speeches and things such

as that, that the reassurance given to

them that we are taking every possible

action by going to the Congress of the

United States and having this debate

on the resolution of approval, which

represents the people of this country in

both bodies, by going to the Security

Council and getting a very important

resolution through the Security Council—

which has not been achieved yet,

but I think is part of the very important

part of the process we are going

through—I find that people are far

more comforted and feel much more

supportive in a realization that this is

the last option and not the first option.

Perhaps some months ago the impression

was created that this was the

first option the President wanted to

pursue when, clearly, I think he has

displayed, by what he is doing and by

how he spoke last night, that that is

not the case. Has the Senator had that

feeling?

Madam President, I

thank the Senator from Indiana.

One of the reasons why I return to

this particular aspect of this issue is,

as the Senator from Virginia knows

well, or better than I—and others do,

too—we once embarked into a conflict

that the American people were not well

informed on and, over time, they did

not support. I believe this debate is important.

I respect and admire the views

of those who disagree with this resolution,

but we will not enter this conflict

without it being fully understood by

the American people, as to what is at

stake and why we are doing it. That is

why I continue to go back to this issue

of whether our constituents will be satisfied;

that if, as a last resort, we enter

into a conflict, it will not be because

they have not been informed.

Madam President:

So concludes a recent report by the

International Institute for Strategic

Studies.

I want to repeat that. The International

Institute for Strategic Studies

said:

The question facing all of us in this

body is whether Saddam Hussein’s aggressive

weapons development in defiance

of this gulf war cease-fire in the

decade of U.N. Security Council resolutions

can stand when the cost of inaction

against this gathering threat

could be intolerably high.

I am proud to join Senators

LIEBERMAN, WARNER, and BAYH in laying

down our amendment providing the

President the necessary authority to

defend the national security of the

United States against the continuing

threat posed by Iraq and enforce all

relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions

against Saddam Hussein’s regime.

I welcome this debate. I am confident

it will result in a resounding vote of

support for the President as he moves

to confront the threat we face in Iraq.

I also believe it will be a powerful signal

to the world that the American

people are united in their determination

to meet and to end this menace.

Our diplomacy at the United Nations

will benefit from a strong and bipartisan

congressional vote in favor of

this resolution. Our enemies will understand

that we are united in our resolve

to confront the danger posed by a

dictator whose possession of the worst

weapons and systematic defiance of

every norm the civilized world holds

dear threaten all who value freedom

and law.

Congress has already spoken on this

matter. On August 14, 1998, President

Clinton signed into law Senate Joint

Resolution 54 which declared that ‘‘the

Government of Iraq is in material and

unacceptable breach of its international

obligations’’ and urged the

President ‘‘to take appropriate action,

in accordance with the Constitution

and relative laws of the United States,

to bring Iraq into compliance with its

international obligations.’’

On October 31, 1998, then-President

Clinton signed into law the Iraq Liberation

Act which stated:

That was October 31, 1998, the Iraq

Liberation Act signed into law by the

President of the United States.

Then, as now, Democrats and Republicans

recognized the menace posed by

Saddam Hussein’s arsenal and his ambitions.

Unfortunately, after 4 days of

bombing Iraq in Operation Desert Fox

in December 1998—4 days of bombing—

the United States and the international

community effectively walked

away from the Iraq problem, freeing

Iraq from a weapons inspection regime

that, by that time, had become so compromised

by Saddam Hussein’s intransigence

as to be completely ineffective.

Nothing has taken place over the past

4 years, even as a porous sanctions regime

and illicit oil revenues have enriched

the regime. Over this time, Saddam

Hussein’s threat to the world has

grown without hindrance.

Regrettably, some of the very same

permanent members of the Security

Council whose vote for a new resolution

on Iraq we are now courting actively

conspired against rigorous weapons

inspections in Iraq during the

1990s, for reasons that had more to do

with their narrow commercial interests

than with the world’s interest in getting

rid of the menace posed by Saddam

Hussein’s weapons of terror.

The threat is not new. Saddam Hussein

has been in gross violation of the

terms of the cease-fire that ended the

Persian Gulf war since that war’s end,

as a host of United Nations Security

Council resolutions passed since 1991

can attest. As The Economist has written:

He has treated inspections as a continuation

of the Gulf War by other means.

After years of stymied efforts to enforce

the inspections regime, the international

community effectively sanctioned

Saddam’s impunity after it became

clear he would never allow intrusive

inspections, and once it became

apparent to many Americans that the

only way to end his defiance was to end

his regime. The withering under U.N.

Security Council auspices of the international

inspections regime over the

course of a decade, and Iraq’s decision

not to even consider renewed inspections

only under the threat of force

today, make clear that unvarnished

faith in the ability of the U.N. Security

Council or a new corps of inspectors to

disarm Saddam’s regime is misplaced.

Over the course of this debate, the

Senate will consider amendments that

would require Security Council authorization

before the United States could

act to enforce a decade of Security

Council resolutions, and that would

narrow the focus of American policy to

Iraq’s disarmament, rather than

against the range of Saddam’s offenses

against his people and his neighbors

and the continuing threat his regime

itself poses to American national security.

These debates will be important. I believe

the President’s position will prevail.

Congress cannot foresee the

course of this conflict and should not

unnecessarily constrain the options

open to the President to defeat the

threat we have identified in Saddam

Hussein. Once Congress acts on a resolution,

only the President will have to

make the choices, with American

forces likely deployed in the region to

carry out his orders, that will end the

threat Saddam Hussein’s weapons and

his ambitions pose to the world. Congress

should give the President the authority

he believes he needs to protect

American national security against an

often irrational dictator who has demonstrated

a history of aggression outside

his borders and a willingness to

use weapons of mass destruction

against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

This is not just another Arab despot,

not one of many tyrants who repress

their people from within the confines

of their countries. As New Yorker writer

Jeffrey Goldberg, who recently traveled

across northern Iraq, recently

wrote in Slate:

In light of Saddam Hussein’s record

of aggression, prohibited weapons deployment,

and consistent rejection of

every international obligation imposed

on him, I believe the burden of proof in

this debate must rest on those who believe

inspections could actually

achieve the disarmament of Iraq, rather

than on those of us who are deeply

skeptical that inspections alone could

accomplish our common goal. History

shows that we will most likely not disarm

Iraq without changing the regime

in Baghdad—a regime whose continued

existence is predicated on possession of

weapons of mass destruction. As arms

control experts Gary Milhollin and

Kelly Motz have noted:

Similarly, given the Security Council’s

failure to enforce its own article 7

resolutions against Iraq, which are

backed by the threat of force and have

the sanctity of international law, I believe

the burden of proof in this debate

must rest on those who can defend the

Council’s record with regard to Iraq

and can convince the rest of us that

the Council’s judgment, rather than

that of our Commander in Chief, should

be the final authority on a matter that

so directly affects American security.

Important participants in this debate

support the President’s determination

to use military force to bring about

Iraq’s disarmament but would constrain

the President’s authority to act

against Iraq to uphold Security Council

resolutions related to repression

within Iraq, Iraq’s support for terrorism,

and other issues. This approach

would limit the President’s authority

to achieving only Iraq’s disarmament

and would explicitly oppose a comprehensive

challenge to his tyrannical

regime. I believe those who hold this

view have an obligation to explain why

they would constrain the President’s

authority to use military force in ways

he believes would tie his hands and

raise unacceptably high the threshold

for ordering military action to defend

the national security of the United

States.

Others will argue that Saddam Hussein

can be deterred—that he is a rational

actor who understands that acting

on his ambitions will threaten his

regime. But deterrence has failed utterly

in the past. I fail to see how waiting

for some unspecified period of time,

allowing Saddam’s nuclear ambitions

to grow unchecked, will ever result in

a stable deterrence regime. Not only

would deterrence condemn the Iraqi

people to more unspeakable tyranny, it

would condemn Saddam’s neighbors to

perpetual instability. And once Iraq’s

nuclear ambitions are realized, no serious

person could expect the Iraqi

threat to diminish. Again, the burden

in this debate rests on those who believe

American policy has actually

been successful in containing the

threat Saddam’s regime poses to the

world.

There is no greater responsibility we

face as Members of this body than voting

to place the country on a course

that could send young Americans to

war in her defense. All of us must

weigh our consciences carefully. Although

we may hold different views of

how to respond to the threat posed by

Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, the very fact

that we are holding this free debate,

and that the fate of nations and peoples

other than our own will be determined

by the outcome of our actions,

serves as a reminder that we are a

great Nation, united in freedom’s defense,

and called once again to make

the world safe for freedom’s blessings

to flourish. The quality of our greatness

will determine the character of

our response.

I want to again thank my colleagues

for the introduction of this resolution.

I think it will take place at some time

within the next few minutes.

I yield the floor.