I thank the Chair.

Madam President, I thank and commend

all those Senators who have been

speaking in support of the resolution

that will soon come before the Senate

for a decision by the Senate. I think

they have rendered a service. I commend

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I commend Mr.

WARNER. And I commend those others

who are cosponsors of the resolution. I

commend them on their high level of

argumentation they have put forth.

This is what the country needs. The

country needs to hear more of this, and

I have only the utmost admiration for

those who feel as they do in support of

this resolution.

The Senate is the anchor of the Republic,

and it is here on this battlefield

many of the country’s great Senators

have expounded their views and taken

sides, one way or the other, on the

great issues that have come before the

Nation over this period of more than

200 years.

I have listened, as best I could, to the

various Senators who, for the most

part this morning, have spoken in support

of the resolution, S.J. Res. 45,

which will be at least soon attempted

to be amended by S.J. Res. 46.

Madam President, I am not against

just any and every resolution of this

nature. I could very well be for a resolution.

If this debate were to go on for

a while, or perhaps to go until after the

election, giving us time to debate it

thoroughly, giving Senators time to

amend it, modify it, to change it, it

might very well be I, too, could support

a resolution. After all, that is what we

should strive for. We should strive for a

national consensus.

If this country is going to engage in

a military conflict in the near future,

it should not be a slapdash resolution

that in its makeup looks, for all intents

and purposes, as though it were

just thrown together, it was a cut-and-paste

operation.

I would hope we could come to a conclusion,

after ample debate, that we

could join hands across the aisle, join

hands between the two parties, join

hands with the executive branch. I

would hope we could do that. And I do

not think that is beyond the realm of

possibility.

I think it would be possible to develop

a resolution which might get a

unanimous vote in this Senate, but it

would take time. It cannot be this resolution

which would be unanimous because

it will not be unanimous.

My concerns about this resolution

are, in the main, two—two concerns.

Getting into further detail, I can express

several concerns. But in the

main, I would say my concerns are two

in number.

One, this resolution authorizes the

President to determine and authorizes

the President to use military forces as

he will, when he will, how he will, and

wherever he will, as long as the thread

is tied to Iraq, and beyond that—I do

not have the resolution in front of

me—as long as it is tied, by the thread,

to ‘‘defend[ing] the national security of

the United States against the continuing

threat posed by Iraq; and (2)

enforc[ing] all relevant United Nations

Security Council Resolutions regarding

Iraq.’’

Madam President, I can talk in considerable

detail and at considerable

length with respect to the ‘‘whereas’’

clauses and with respect to the authorization

section, section 3. Suffice it to

say this is a blank check, this authorization

paragraph is a blank check,

given over to the Chief Executive, not

just this one but Chief Executives who

will succeed him. There is no sunset

provision. There is no termination

under this authorization. It can go on

and on and on until Congress sees fit to

terminate it.

So it is open-ended. It is a blank

check. And it cedes the decision making

power of the Congress under the Constitution

to declare war. It cedes that

to a Chief Executive—for the moment,

Mr. George W. Bush. Succeeding him,

who knows? But it is open-ended.

If Congress is going to waive that

part of the Constitution which gives

power to the Congress to declare war—

and I am not sure Congress can waive

that—but if it is going to, why don’t we

at least have a sunset provision? Why

don’t we at least have a cutoff at which

time the cession of that power is no

longer existent? Is that asking too

much?

No. 1, my opposition to this resolution

in the main is because Congress is

ceding—lock, stock, and barrel—its

power to declare war, handing that

over to a Chief Executive and, by its

own terms, as much as to say, that

President will determine that. He will

use the military forces of these United

States—that means the Marines, the

Air Force, the Army, the Navy, all the

military forces of this country—he

shall use all of the military forces of

this country in whatever ways he determines,

wherever he determines,

whenever he determines, and for as

long as he determines. That is the way

it is written—lock, stock, and barrel.

Congress might as well just close the

doors, put a sign over the doors and

say: ‘‘Going fishing.’’ Put a sign on the

Statue of Liberty up here: ‘‘Out of

business.’’ That is exactly, that is precisely

what we are about to do, if we

vote for this resolution as it is currently

written. If there is anybody who

disagrees with me, they can try to

show me that. But they cannot refute

the words written in this resolution.

All the ‘‘whereases’’ constitute nothing

more than fig leaves, beautifully

dressed, beautifully colored, pretty

fig leaves, with sugar on them.

My second objection in the main is

that Congress is being stampeded, pressured,

adjured, importuned into acting

on this blank check before Congress

goes out for the election. Doesn’t that

make this somewhat suspect? Recall, it

was only in late August, around August

23, I believe it was, I read in the newspaper

where the President was concerned

about the intensified talk that

was going on with reference to his

plans in respect to an attack on Iraq.

Secretary Rumsfeld, in that same

newspaper report, referred to it as a

‘‘frenzy.’’ So even the President, 6

weeks ago, was seeking to allay the

concerns of the people in Washington,

people all over the country, with respect

to any ‘‘plans’’ that he might

have to attack Iraq. In other words, he

was saying: Cool it.

Well, that was just 6 weeks ago. Then

all of a sudden, the whole focus of attention

in this country seems to be directed

several thousand miles away

from these shores to a country called

Iraq, to which the distinguished Senator

from Connecticut correctly alluded

as that great land between the

two great rivers, the old Biblical country

of Mesopotamia.

So those are my two concerns. Here

we are, with all of this pressure to act,

act now. I am somewhat mystified by

the rush pell-mell to embrace this resolution

which, as I understand it, is

pretty much the administration’s

handicraft, and the House may be

about to vote on the same.

I wonder what has gotten into our

Democratic leaders that they would

embrace this kind of thing. They have

a right to do that. Every Senator has a

right to vote any way he wants, any

way his good sense is directing him.

But I have been mystified at the rush,

at the frenetic activity on the part of

leaders of the Congress, of the other

body. They embraced this thing down

there on the White House lawn.

We should take more time. The

American people have questions that

they want answered. I have had more

than 9,000 telephone calls in the last 5

days that my office has been open,

more than 9,000 coming from all over

the country, virtually all urging the

Senate to slow down, to ask questions,

and to fully consider what we are about

to do. I hope more people will call.

They don’t need to call me. They know

what my position is. But I hope they

will call the Members of Congress, Senate

and House Members, Republicans

and Democrats, call all the Members.

Urge them to stop, look, and listen,

look at what we are about to do. We

are about to put beyond the reach of

Congress the decision to declare war.

I listened to the President’s speech. I

didn’t hear anything new. I didn’t hear

anything that I hadn’t already heard

prior to this time. He demonized Saddam

Hussein. That is quite all right

with me. I think Saddam Hussein is

lower than a snake’s belly myself. I

wouldn’t shed any tear if anything happened

to him. That is not the question.

We have known these things.

I asked the CIA Director myself,

within the last 2 or 3 weeks in my office

and in room 407: You are not a policymaker,

but you are the expert with

respect to intelligence. What is there

that you can tell me, what is there

that you can tell Congress that is new

that indicates we wait beyond this

election at our peril? What is it that is

new that we haven’t known? I am talking

to the Director of Central Intelligence.

I said: What is it that is new that we

haven’t known 2 months ago, 6 weeks

ago, 3 months ago? They don’t have

anything.

I asked Secretary Rumsfeld. And he

will say: Oh, I will tell you what is

new, September 11 of last year.

Well, of course, that is over a year

old. What is so new that it requires this

Senate and the House of Representatives

to vote before we go out for the

election? Why so much interest in the

election? That is not by my choice that

the administration is pushing for a

vote before the election. That is not

my choice; that is their choice. And I

am not sure but that this effort on

their part might be turned against

them in the election. I think if the

American people are fully aware of

what this administration is advocating,

fully aware of what we are

about to do, the people of this country

will rise up. They will let their voices

be heard.

They have questions. ‘‘What is this

going to cost me?’’ they will say. Mr.

John Q. Citizen will say: What is this

going to cost me? What about my son?

What about my daughter? What about

my grandson? How many American

lives are going to be lost if we invade

Iraq? What is going to be the cost?

What is going to happen to Iraq after

its defeat? Who is going to run the government

of Iraq then? Are we going to

have American fighting men and

women in Iraq for 2 months, 6 months,

a year, 2 years, 5 years, 10 years? Answer

these questions, Mr. Administration.

Tell me, also, what is going to happen

to homeland security. Already the

focus is being shifted away from homeland

security. I can see it.

Then what is the focus?

What about homeland security? What

might happen on the southern border,

on the northern border of this country,

in the ports of this country, at the airports

of this country? What might happen?

The American people today are

concerned about the safety right here

in this area, the safety of their own

schoolchildren. They are concerned

about these things that are going on

all around us. What is going to happen

to homeland security? I don’t hear

much about it over this last couple

weeks or more. This attack on Iraq we

have been talking about—the President

says: If you do not do it, I will. If you

don’t do it, we will. Well, this concerns

me.

What kind of a face are we going to

present to the world with this kind of

cowboy, macho attitude? What kind of

face are we presenting to the world?

Does the world still see us as a law abiding

Nation that lives by the rule of

law? Is that what we recommend to

other countries? Are we a country that

loves liberty, freedom, justice, the rule

of law, or is this going to make us look

like a bully? I used to play a tune on

my fiddle called ‘‘The Bully of the

Town’’—‘‘I am looking for the bully of

the town.’’ Is that the kind of face

Uncle Sam is going to present to the

world? It sounds like it when the President

says to the U.N.: If you don’t do

something, we will.

Madam President, I am simply saying

we ought not have this vote before

this election. This election is going to

distract members from concentrating,

from focusing on the question of war or

peace. It is already doing it. It is already

doing it.

So there are lots of questions the

American people want answered. What

about the economy? Is this going to affect

the American economy? What

about my job? What about my health

insurance? What about us older folks?

What about prescription drugs? You do

not hear much about that now. Everything

is tuned to Iraq. The American

people are being led to believe something

may happen tomorrow—and

something may happen right here within

our own shores. But they are being

led to believe Saddam is such a threat

we don’t dare wait until after the election.

Saddam doesn’t present that kind

of imminent threat to this country. He

doesn’t have these kinds of weapons

that he would level at this country before

the election. Now, something

could happen in our midst before the

election. It can happen tonight. It can

happen today. It has been happening in

this area over the past several days,

with a sniper taking six lives, and he

shot eight persons.

People are concerned about issues

here at home. We should not try to divert

their attention to a threat. I don’t

say Saddam is not a threat. I say he is

not the immediate threat the administration

is trying to make him out to be

at this point. We have some time. We

ought to utilize it. We cannot let Saddam

Hussein continue to have weapons,

such as biological and chemical weapons.

We cannot let him acquire weapons

of mass destruction. But there is

some time, and I think it is very important

we get the United Nations involved

here, and the President has

made a good start in that direction. He

made a fine statement when he spoke

to the U.N. He put the burden on them.

He laid it at their door. They have been

recreant in their duty.

We should utilize the time we have to

let the U.N. marshal its forces and try

to get other countries to assist this

country in carrying the burden. Eleven

years ago, the cost of that war was

$61.1 billion, and other countries helped

shoulder the expenses, with the exception

of about $7.5 billion. We ought to

be seeking to get others’ help.

We ought to let the inspectors go

back in and have restrictions such that

they will have a full and free opportunity

to inspect wherever they want,

wherever they think they should. So I

am for all that. I am not one who says

Saddam is not a threat; he is a threat,

but he has been a threat for many

years. I think it is a disservice to the

American people to insist their elected

representatives in the House and Senate

showdown on this fateful decision

before the election. Now, that is highly

suspect. To those who are pushing it, I

have to say it is suspect.

Why do they want this vote before

the election? I am not the one who determines

when the election will fall.

We know it is going to take place on

November 5. Where is the threat that is

so imminent to this country we have to

declare war here and now, before the

election? It is a distraction. Our Senators

and House Members need to be

concentrating on the matter, debating

it, debating other matters. There are

many more matters that cry out for

the attention of this country. Why

should we not be giving attention to

them and not be distracted in this vote

by what may happen to me on November

5, if I vote this way or that way?

That is not right. It is wrong. It is not

doing right by the people of this country.

They are entitled to better than

that.

So I have two main concerns. One, we

are ceding the constitutional authority

to declare war, and it is open-ended, a

blank check. Mr. President, here it is,

you can have it. We will just go fishing.

You take it and we are out of it. We are

out of business. We are out of business

for the next year or 2 years or as long

as this piece of paper—this blank

check—is in effect. You have it. We are

cheating the people back home when

we vote for that kind of resolution.

Madam President, I have much more

to say, but I told the Senator from Virginia

I would be glad to yield. I do that

now, without losing my right to the

floor.

The President indicated

he would lead a coalition, and I hope he

will. I hope he will continue to work

until he gets a solid coalition together.

But if, as the President claims, America

will lead a coalition against Iraq, it

certainly appears that we have much

work to do. The first article I read

from the Philadelphia Inquirer bears

out a clear message: We have asked the

United Nations to act and we should

give the United Nations that opportunity.

Last night, the President of the

United States asked Congress to fully

consider the facts in this debate, but I

believe that many of the facts are still

unclear. We have many questions that

demand answers, and we need the time

to find those answers.

So I suggest we try to get the facts,

and the representatives of the American

people in Congress need the facts,

the clear, unadulterated facts, before

Congress votes on the resolution.

The questions I have are the same

questions the American people have. A

poll published last Sunday in the New

York Times reports that a majority of

Americans think that Congress is not

asking enough questions about Iraq

policy. By a 2-to-1 margin, those polled

would prefer to see U.N. inspectors

have more time to do their job. Sixtyfive

percent of those polled think it is

better to wait for allies before any attack

on Iraq—in other words, not go it

alone.

Obviously, the American people are

far from convinced that we must attack

Iraq. I think as time goes on, if

this matter is fully debated, we will

find a reverse in the polls from what we

have been seeing lately. We are going

to find that the American people are

not all that ready to invade Iraq all by

themselves; not all that ready to put

the U.N. aside and say we will go it

alone—if you do not do it, we will—and

not all that ready to send their boys

and girls, their men and women, their

loved ones, to war in a foreign land

without leaving it up to Congress as to

when war should be declared.

I yield the floor.