Madam President,

before I give my reasons for my vote on

this resolution, I would like to point

out some ironies and inconsistencies in

some positions of some of my colleagues.

It is not unusual for Senators to be

inconsistent in positions taken, but in

recent weeks we have had some colleagues

blaming the administration for

not responding to the pre-9/11 warnings

of possible terrorist attacks on the

United States. I am talking about the

warnings of whether or not the CIA and

the FBI had information about that

and whether or not the President had

access to that information. The insinuation

is that maybe the President

knew more than what he did and, why

didn’t he do something about 9/11?

It seems to me the same colleagues

are now refusing to support the President’s

call to disarm Saddam Hussein.

The President is trying to preempt

Saddam Hussein from unleashing on

Americans his weapons of mass destruction.

Yet my colleagues who are

inconsistent in this way apparently

want the President to wait until we are

attacked again. I ask, if you were expecting

preemption before September

11, 2001, why wouldn’t you expect the

President to preempt an attack on the

United States today?

I come to the floor today to share my

thoughts concerning the resolution before

the Senate. Again we find ourselves

in the midst of an important debate

with one of the most important

decisions that many Senators will

make in our lifetime. The issue of war

and peace involves the threats to the

lives of the men and women we send to

battle. This issue may even involve

threats to the American civilian population,

as well.

It was just a little more than a decade

ago that many Members were here

making similar decisions in regard to

the Persian Gulf war.

As many of my colleagues may remember,

I was just one of two Senate

Republicans who opposed the resolution

authorizing military action

against Iraq in 1991. I voted against

that resolution because I questioned

the timing of military action while

diplomatic measures and economic

sanctions had just been started. I felt

they needed a chance to work. Opposing

the resolution was a difficult decision,

but one that I have never regretted.

While today’s decision is not one to

be taken lightly, it stands in stark contrast

to that of 1991. While I opposed

that resolution for the reasons I stated,

I intend to support the compromise

resolution before us because I believe

the time to hold Saddam Hussein accountable

is past due.

But, this is not the first time since

1991 that Congress has approved a resolution

approving military action

against Iraq.

In 1998, by unanimous vote by the

Senate and an overwhelming 407–6 vote

in the House, Congress approved a resolution,

and subsequently President

Clinton bombed Iraq in December of

1998.

Let us see how forthrightly the Senate

spoke at that time about the dangers

of Iraq and Saddam Hussein.

I speak from page 2 of the Iraq Liberation

Act of 1998. It says in section 3:

It is pretty clear we knew about the

threat of Saddam Hussein under a

Democratic President—President Clinton—

with a bipartisan action by consensus

of this body. Why should anybody

be surprised if President Clinton

and the Senate, in a bipartisan way,

would be expressing the same concern 4

years later?

What was the basis of that overwhelming

vote? Primarily, it was because

Iraq has kicked United Nations

weapons inspectors out, as they did in

1998. Today we have a lot of intelligence

information saying it is a far

more dangerous situation today, and

particularly for the United States.

Thousands of Americans were killed

in that 9/11 attack by terrorists.

Iraq is aligned with those terrorists,

and Iraq is building weapons of mass

destruction. We must, therefore, respond

appropriately.

One of the most pressing concerns expressed

by my constituents over the

past few months is that of timing. The

question: Why now? The question: Why

can’t we continue to pursue inspections

and other diplomatic measures? They

are legitimate questions. Many of my

colleagues will answer this differently

than I will. But the response for me is

quite simple. I believe the actions by

Saddam Hussein over the past 10 years

builds a strong case why firm action is

needed and why we cannot afford as a

Congress delaying a decision any

longer.

None of this precludes inspections or

diplomatic missions. But these alternatives

demand full cooperation by

Iraq if a military response is to be

withheld.

However, during the past 10 years,

the international community has

worked with Iraq through diplomatic

efforts, various inspection regimes,

economic sanctions, and even limited

military force in an effort to encourage

Saddam Hussein to abide by the very

resolutions he agreed to at the end of

the gulf war. He agreed to follow these

within the rule of law—the international

rule of law. We can legitimately

expect any person to agree to

follow those agreements.

Yet Saddam Hussein has consistently

and convincingly evaded and defied

those obligations he agreed to.

In the spring of 1991, the United Nations

Security Council agreed to Resolution

687, which required Saddam Hussein

to destroy his chemical and biological

weapons and to unconditionally

agree not to acquire or develop nuclear

weapons. That same resolution also demanded

Iraq not develop or acquire any

weapons of mass destruction. However,

the CIA reported Iraq is continuing to

develop and acquire chemical and biological

weapons.

The report states since the United

Nations weapons inspectors left in 1998,

Iraq has maintained its chemical weapons

effort and invested even more heavily

in biological weapons.

In addition, the CIA estimated Iraq

could develop nuclear weapons in the

near term with the proper supply of

material.

United Nations Resolution 687 also

required Saddam Hussein to end his

support for terrorism and to prohibit

terrorist organizations from operating

inside the borders of Iraq.

Yet there is clear evidence Iraq has

provided safe haven to a number of

prominent, international terrorists.

Iraq has provided assistance to terrorist

organizations whose sole purpose

is to disrupt and prevent peace efforts

in the Middle East.

Most importantly, fleeing al-Qaida

members now reside in Iraq. Of course,

it is only a matter of time before these

two enemies of the United States join

forces—and maybe they already have.

Altogether, Saddam has defied at

least 16 United Nations resolutions

during the past decade. He has manipulated

U.N. weapons inspectors, tortured

and repressed Iraqi people, supported

international terrorists, and violated

United Nations economic sanctions.

So he continues to thumb his nose at

the world, and particularly the rule of

law under the international regimes we

all respect.

The issue is as much about protecting

people as it is about enforcing

the international rule of law. But enforcing

international rule of law is one

way to eliminate chaos so people can

live peacefully.

Will the United Nations take a stand

in defense of their very own resolutions

and hold Saddam Hussein accountable?

Will the United Nations resolutions,

which seek to provide peace and security

in the region, continue to be unenforced?

This resolution before the Senate

then asks the United Nations: Does the

organization want to be relevant during

the 21st century, an instrument of

peace in this century, or does it somehow

want to fade away as the League

of Nations did because of its failures in

Abyssinia in the 1930s?

I want, and I hope all my colleagues

want, the U.N. to be relevant. I want

the U.N. to lead. Its moral leadership is

important. We have to discourage tinhorn

dictators from violating the rule

of law. The time for accountability is

right now.

According to former President Clinton,

in a speech on December 16, 1998:

That is what President Clinton said

in a speech on December 16, 1998.

Former President Clinton’s words are

very applicable to the situation now,

even 4 years later.

I have also heard concerns from people

who question this resolution, saying

that by supporting it, we are supporting

preemptive military action

against a sovereign nation. However,

for the last decade, the United States

and allied forces have patrolled no-fly

zones in northern and southern Iraq to

protect Kurdish and Shiite minority

populations from Saddam Hussein, and

all the while they have been fired upon

by Iraq’s military.

These are American pilots. Some of

them have been Iowans because over

the past 6 years the Iowa Air National

Guard has completed five 90-day missions

and will likely be needed for a

sixth mission before the end of this

year. And as the President stated earlier

this week, the American and British

pilots have been fired upon more

than 750 times. In a sense, we have

been involved in military action in

Iraq since the 1991 gulf war. So what is

contemplated by this resolution cannot

be described as preemptive.

Some of my constituents have also

questioned the effect this will have on

our war on terrorism. I believe that

forcing Iraq to disarm is part of the

war against terrorism and is consistent

with the war on terrorism. Iraq has already

been labeled by previous administrations

as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Iraq is one of seven nations to

be designated by our own State Department

as a state sponsor of terrorism.

And given Iraq’s support for international

terrorists and its support for

efforts to provide safe haven for al-

Qaida, it is clear that this effort should

not be seen as separate from the war on

terrorism but very much an integral

part of the war on terrorism.

It is because of our obligations to enforce

international law, and to disarm

this threat to our national security

and to the security of the entire world,

that I have decided to support the resolution

offered by Senator LIEBERMAN

and Senator WARNER.

A decade ago, as I said, I opposed war

with Iraq because I believed we had not

exhausted all alternatives available at

that time. Today, I support this resolution

because we have exhausted all

other remedies, unless somehow Saddam

Hussein has a change of heart.

After years of evasion, after years of

defiance, the time has come to stand

firm and enforce the resolutions to disarm

Iraq. Or, on the other hand, it is

time for Saddam Hussein to repent and

fully cooperate. But his track record in

that regard is not very promising.

It is important to keep in mind that

this resolution before the Senate does

not guarantee military action, nor do I

think it should. But it does authorize

the use of United States military

forces to defend the national security

of the United States against this continuing

threat posed by Iraq and to enforce

all relevant U.N. resolutions regarding

Iraq. In other words, this is as

much about enforcing the rule of law

as a policeman in Washington, DC,

would enforce the domestic rule of law

to prevent chaos and to encourage lawabiding

citizenry, as it is about military

action, at least from my standpoint.

Most importantly, this resolution

makes clear that if the United Nations

fails to ensure full compliance with

international law, we will not sit quietly

and let this tinhorn dictator ignore

the rule of law. At the same time, we

will be sending the message to other

tinhorn dictators around the world

that they had better not violate the

international rules of law.

The terrorist attacks on September

11, 2001, dispelled notions of America’s

invincibility, it placed greater demands

on our Government to protect

and defend American citizens, and it

put more demand on American citizens

themselves to look out for their own

safety, as a Jerusalem-type terrorist

bombing could happen in New York

City or Washington, DC, as much as it

happens in Jerusalem.

My resolve is stronger than ever to

win the war on terrorism, protect U.S.

citizens, secure the homeland, and,

most importantly, defend American

values and our way of life. By supporting

this resolution, we will send a

strong signal to the United Nations, as

well as our friends and allies around

the world, that we will not sit idly by

and allow a ruthless dictator to violate

international law and threaten the security

of that region and, in fact, impact

the whole world. This resolution

says to the world community that

America stands together, committed to

the rule of law and the security of all

nations.

So, Madam President, I urge my colleagues

to support this resolution offered

by our colleagues, Senator

LIEBERMAN and Senator WARNER.

I yield the floor.