Mr. President, I rise

today to express my concerns about

United States policy with regard to

Iraq. Through the national and international

news media and in consultations

with members of Congress, we

have been told time and again in the

past several weeks that the United

States is on the brink of waging a limited

but significant military strike

against Iraq and Saddam Hussein.

At the same time, Administration officials

and President Clinton have also

repeatedly stated they are hopeful for a

diplomatic solution.

It would appear, however, that Saddam

Hussein despite almost frantic revolving-

door diplomatic efforts from

Russia, China, France, Turkey and others,

will not agree to the resumption of

full and open U.N. inspections. So, we

have a standoff.

Mr. President, in regard to this latest

crisis in the Gulf, I commend to the attention

of my colleagues the remarks

made yesterday by the distinguished

Senator from Nebraska, Mr. HAGEL. His

remarks are both thoughtful and

thought provoking and they come from

a man who is a veteran with a most

distinguished record.

Senator HAGEL said this:

Senator HAGEL went on to say he was

disturbed about reports over the weekend

quoting high ranking Administration

officials and Congressional leaders

saying such things as:

‘‘We may have to face the reality

that we will not get U.N. inspection

teams back into Iraq;

‘‘Any military action would be to

just slow Saddam Hussein down;

‘‘We have to keep going back to bomb

him again;

‘‘Our allies support of us in Iraq may

be tied to our future commitment to

NATO’’ and other such disconcerting

remarks.

Senator HAGEL concluded by saying

we owe it to our country and the men

and women in uniform who will be

called upon to fight a war to do better

than just bomb Saddam Hussein.

He said:

Mr. President, that is straight talk

and I commend Senator HAGEL for his

candor and forthrightness.

And, Senator HAGEL is right. The policy

discussions regarding Iraq have indeed

been unique, if not bizarre. We

have seen more policy declarations,

more redefined policy declarations, and

more mixed signals than a coach signaling

his quarterback with the time

clock running out. That may well be

part of diplomatic carrot and stick efforts

but it certainly does not improve

public understanding or provide confidence

for a well defined and successful

military mission.

The latest comments by Administration

officials indicate the attack is

now only weeks away although there

has been considerable speculation that

the U.S. would not attack while the

Winter Olympics are being held. The

United States is a signatory to a U.N.

resolution that calls on all countries to

honor a cease fire during the Olympic

Games. International Olympic Games

President, Juan Antonio Samaranch

has made a public appeal to the United

States.

I do not mean to be disrespectful but

it occurs to me that a previous U.S.

President canceled U.S. participation

in the Olympics in response to one

country invading another. This time

we apparently will attack, but not

while the Olympics are being held.

In addition, while our strongest Arab

ally in the Gulf War, Saudi Arabia, has

refused the use of their country from

which to base an attack, they have expressed

strongly that any military

strike should be well over before the

beginning of the annual pilgrimage to

Mecca and Medina that is the high

point of the Islamic year. The Olympics

are over February 23 and the pilgrimage

begins March 20.

Such are the rather unique things

that military planners must factor into

their planning in this modern world of

limited and political military strikes.

Saddam Hussein doubtlessly can

pretty much figure out when the strike

is coming: all he has to do is read the

latest Time magazine for the latest

target and battle plan information and

the London Times for the Iraqi sites at

risk not to mention many other press

reports.

It goes without saying, this will be

no surprise attack.

Nevertheless, additional time will at

least afford us the opportunity to take

a hard look at what is being proposed,

especially as Senator HAGEL has

stressed in regard to how a limited

strike will fit into long term foreign

policy goals and the law of unintended

consequences.

First, I recommend to my colleagues

and the American public the comments

made by the Chairman of the Senate

Armed Services Committee, Senator

Richard Russell of Georgia almost 30

years ago to the date. The Senator

made his remarks in the midst of the

Vietnam war and during the month in

which the United States suffered over

2,000 casualties. He said this:

‘‘I for one am not afraid of the old

fashioned term, victory. We hear a

great deal about limited wars, but I

would point out that there is no such

thing as a limit on actual combat in

which our men are engaged. While it is

a sound policy to have limited objectives,

we should not expose our men to

unnecessary hazards to life and limb in

pursuing them.

The Senator went on to make the following

pledge:

I submit, Mr. President, that is a

most powerful statement of truth that

has direct application to the challenges

we face today in the Persian Gulf. The

only thing that has changed is that

today we refer to American men and

American women.

The question must be asked, just

where are we in regard to specific goals

regarding Iraq? Last week, in a press

conference with Prime Minister Blair

of Great Britain, President Clinton

‘‘clarified’’ Administration policy. He

said the goal of the proposed attack on

Iraq would be to, ‘‘substantially reduce

or delay Iraq’s ability to develop and

use weapons of mass destruction.’’

The President also ruled out the removal

of Saddam Hussein from power

or action designed to compel him to

halt obstruction of disarmament inspectors

from the U.N.

The President went on to say, ‘‘I

don’t believe we need to get into a direct

war with Iraq over the leadership

of the country. Do I think the country

would be better served if it had a different

leader? Of course I do. That’s

not the issue.’’

In making this statement, the President

has clearly narrowed the goals of

the proposed air strike. In fact, in my

opinion, he has narrowed them from

the goals articulated in previous

speeches by key administration officials

and from the goals outlined in

consultation with Members of Congress.

Secretary of State Albright, in a

speech given last year emphasized the

American strategy was to continue the

sanctions until there was a successor

regime. The President stated sanctions

would continue ‘‘until the end of time

or as long as he lasts.’’ That strategy

was changed however to one of trying

to accommodate Saddam with what

was described as ‘‘small carrots.’’ It

was the ‘‘small carrot’’ strategy that

many observers now say led to the current

crisis.

Just last week, members of Congress

were told there were two specific goals:

First, to set back Saddam Hussein’s

ability to deploy and deliver weapons

of mass destruction and,

Second, to preserve the ability of the

U.N. Security Council to respond to the

threat of proliferation of weapons of

mass destruction by enforcing the disarmament

resolutions that ended the

199l Persian Gulf war, specifically in

regard to unrestricted access for weapons

inspectors.

Now, with all due respect to the

President and his national security advisers,

I am concerned the first mission

may have a very limited success at

considerable risk to our men and

women in uniform and for all intent

and purpose, end whatever possibility

there is for achieving the second mission.

The bombing may not destroy

Saddam’s capacity to deploy and deliver

weapons of mass destruction but

it is almost a sure bet bombing Saddam

will NOT bring about open inspections.

This is especially significant in that

the current resolution of support being

crafted by our Senate leadership has

been premised on U.N. Security Council

Resolution 687 and four subsequent

resolutions demanding open inspections

by the U.N. inspection team. The

language mirrors the statement of the

distinguished Democratic Leader, Senator

DASCHLE who stated last week:

The Democratic Leader’s statement

is, in fact, clear and direct. The problem,

however, is that there is a follow

on goal articulated in the resolution

draft and it says:

We urge the President, in consultation

with the Congress, and consistent

with the U.S. Constitution and existing

laws, to take all necessary and appropriate

action to respond effectively to

the threat posed by Iraq’s refusal to

allow inspection.

The question is will the bombing be

effective? It may set back Saddam’s capability

to deploy and deliver biological

weapons and it may not. But one

thing for sure, after a week of bombing,

there will be no welcome mats for U.N.

inspectors.

In addition the resolution draft urges

the president to work with Congress to

further a long-term policy.

My colleagues it has not taken long

to discover that we do not have the

support of our allies, that we do not

have a long-term strategy and that if

we go ahead with the limited military

strike we will effectively end chances

for open inspection, which is precisely

the original stated goal of the administration

and the stated goal of the draft

resolution of support.

Now, in making these remarks, I realize

the current challenge posed by

Saddam Hussein is both difficult and

complex and that the situation in the

Gulf and our relations with the members

of the Gulf Coalition allies has

dramatically changed.

The President stated, ‘‘I don’t believe

we need to re-fight the Gulf war. It’s

history. It happened. That’s the way it

is.’’

The President is right. The way it

was is not the way it is and we have

been frantically trying to play catch

up in efforts to formulate a successful

response to Saddam’s latest threat.

Nevertheless, Administration officials

state today we have Saddam in a

box. To the contrary, after repeated efforts

to ‘‘lead’’ and convince our allies

in supporting the planned military action,

I do not see much ‘‘following’’ and

I wonder who has whom in a box.

It seems to me there are several obvious

disconnects:

First, other than Saddam simply behaving

like the international thug that

he is, we are told his primary reason

for closing down the inspections is to

somehow force an end to the economic

sanctions now in place, that the deprivation

now experienced in his country

is such that his continued rule is

threatened.

It is true that most of his 22 million

people are going through severe deprivation.

But, this is the man who has a

90,000 strong security force made up of

well trained, dedicated, fanatical professional

units that have maintained a

climate of terror. To the extent one

can be, he is both bomb and assassination

proof and simply gets rid of his opposition

even to the extent of using

weapons of mass destruction upon his

own people.

The argument is also being posed

that with France, Russia and China all

opposing military action, and his Arab

neighbors sitting on the fence, the

United States might then be willing to

lift the sanctions or at least increase

the oil for food and medicine program.

But, the United States already proposed

increasing the oil for food program

and Saddam refused it. And, he

has used oil revenue to further construct

the many palaces that now

house his weapons. In any case, this explanation

of his reasoning, if true, represents

a good argument against a

military strike.

In a paradox of enormous irony, it

could be argued that by withstanding

and suffering through the attack and

exploiting the obvious propaganda opportunity,

Saddam may actually gain

sympathy and support for ending the

sanctions from the very nations we are

asking for help!

Second, what if Saddam’s primary

reason for shutting the door to U.N. inspectors

was simply self preservation,

not from within but from Iran? In fact,

it was the attack from Iran several

months ago that precipitated the crisis.

Saddam, without his weapons of

mass destruction and Iran with that

capability and with a growing army

represents a self preservation crisis for

Saddam.

A military strike against Saddam

further weakens Iraq in relation to

their long standing enemy. Have we

thought through what the Mideast will

look like when Iran has the balance of

power?

Third, in proposing military action,

we do not have the support of the members

of the Security Council whose

credibility and effectiveness in enforcing

open inspection we are trying to

protect! We do not even have Security

Council or allied support for the continuation

of sanctions.

So much for a rational prospective

U.N. policy with reference to proliferation

of weapons of mass destruction.

France wants to sell Iraqi oil, China

wants to buy it and Russia desperately

needs the money that Iraq owes to Russia.

All three do not support military

action and have warned of dire consequences

should military action be

taken.

While trying to broker a diplomatic

solution (Lets see, how about eight palaces

open for inspection for 60 days

with x number of inspectors from this

country and y number of diplomats

from that country and on and on)

France is worried that American

bombs plus Iraqi casualties will only

consolidate domestic support for Saddam

and that the bombing does not

represent a long term answer. They

have a point.

The Chinese foreign minister, speaking

on television, said China is extremely

and definitely opposed to the

use of military force because it will result

in a tremendous amount of human

casualties and create more turmoil in

the region and could even cause more

conflict.

However, the winner of the Coalition

Cross Current Sweepstakes has to be

Russia. Foreign Minister Primakov has

seized an opportunity to climb back on

the world stage as the self declared pro

Muslim broker while Boris Yeltsin’s

comment that bombing could mean

‘‘world war’’ could well have been made

while pounding his shoe on a lectern.

But, the Iraq issue did not stop there.

Gennady Zyuganov, the Communist

leader stated the Russian Duma should

not ratify the START II treaty and

said Americans ‘‘act like drunk cowboys.’’

The ultra nationalist Vladmir

Zhirinovsky called for Yeltsin to put

Russian troops in Southwest Russia on

alert. Moderate members of the Russian

Duma have argued the United

States must get U.N. authorization before

any attack. We cannot simply dismiss

this sorry state of affairs as just

Russian bluff and bluster.

To say that these landmark changes

in policy amongst our former coalition

allies will have grave consequences is

an understatement to say the least.

Fourth, we do not have the support of

the Arab nations whose sovereignty

and freedom were are allegedly trying

to protect! With the exception of Kuwait,

no Arab nation has endorsed

American threats of military action.

Saudi Arabia, our closest Arab ally

and a major regional power provided a

crucial base for 500,000 American and

allied troops that routed Iraqi forces

back in 199l. Today, Saudi Arabia has

refused to support a military strike

upon Saddam Hussein and Secretary of

Defense Cohen and the Commander of

U.S. Forces in the Middle East, General

Anthony Zinni have been forced to

change battle plans.

The Saudi’s stance also undercuts political

support throughout the Arab

world sensitive to the view that the

United States has already excessively

punished the Iraqi people and that the

limited attack will not rid the Gulf region

of Saddam and that he will remain

as vengeful as ever.

In proposing limited strikes, the

United States is in the position comparable

to local law enforcement asking

a witness to testify against the

Mafia with no promise of incarceration

or protection. Those chances are slim

and none.

Like other staunch allies during the

Gulf war, Turkey is now putting its

own interests first regarding any confrontation

with Saddam. Their foreign

minister has also been one of the revolving

door diplomats trying to

broker a solution. Seen in the rest of

the Muslim world as a pawn of the

United States, having suffered economic

losses as a result of the Gulf

war, and having to fight Kurdish

rebels, the Turks have also refused the

use of air bases.

There is no doubt that most leaders

in the Muslim world would like to be

rid of Saddam Hussein. They view him

as a menace. But, the political reality

is that limited bombing with no plan

for getting rid of the menace will lead

to the perception of the United States

conducting a military exercise with innocent

civilians being killed on world

wide television with ominous repercussions

throughout the Muslim

world . . . including the trouble spots

of Bosnia and in Indonesia.

Our policy has also made Israel more

than a little nervous. Israeli leaders

have stated they reserve the right for

self protection and will act in accordance

with their defense interests. Once

again, we are trying to convince Israel

to forgo its right to self defense and retaliation.

A retaliatory attack upon

Israel in response to U.S. bombing may

be unlikely but it cannot be ruled out.

Such a missile exchange would have

devastating consequences.

Fifth, as a result of Arab denial to

use our bases in their countries, the

United States must now launch any attack

from aircraft located in neighboring

gulf states, from aircraft carriers

and from an Indian ocean island. The

USS *Independence* was supposed to be

decommissioned this coming September

but now, the oldest ship in the

fleet, is in the Gulf.

This renewed buildup of sea and air

forces in the Gulf and the corresponding

manpower and equipment gaps in

Europe and the Pacific is another example

of just how stressed and

stretched our U.S. military has become,

all in the wake of substantial

troop cuts and rising commitments to

various peacemaking and nation-building

missions such as Bosnia. We are already

experiencing serious problems in

regard to readiness, modernization,

procurement and military quality of

life.

If we sustain a three carrier force in

the Gulf, it will mean zero presence

somewhere else. Yet, Navy command

has mapped out plans for two carrier

presence through 1999. Our Air Force is

not structured as a mobile expeditionary

force. Accustomed to operating out

of large bases, the new operations and

personnel tempo has caused serious retention

problems.

The obvious budget, military readiness,

national security and foreign policy

repercussions will be far reaching.

Without question we cannot fund this

current buildup and prospective military

strike from within the current defense

budget. If this is, in fact, an

emergency requiring a military strike,

then it should be funded by an emergency

supplemental bill.

I must ask, has enough consideration

been given to the collective risks that

could well outweigh whatever benefit a

limited military strike might bring?

Can we really ascertain the extent of

Saddam’s air and missile defense?

Can we, with any degree of certainty

effectively target and destroy his most

deadly weapons and eliminate the

threat?

Do we have adequate protection for

the men and women who will conduct

the operation? Personnel recovery?

POW recovery?

Can this strike destroy most of

Saddam’s deployment and delivery capability?

Will this action end all chances of

further inspection? If this is true, what

happens next when his capability is restored?

Will this strike hurt or improve his

support within and without his country?

Will the strike prevent Saddam from

counter-attacking and using weapons

of mass destruction?

Will Iran attack a weakened Iraq?

What will be the response of the Muslim

nations throughout the world?

How will the attack change Saddam’s

conduct?

Are our forces adequately equipped

and protected against biological and

chemical agents?

Have we considered the possibility of

terrorist activities both in the Mideast

and in the United States?

There is almost no end to these kind

of questions and there is no question

that the President’s national security

team and Pentagon planners have studied

all of these questions and more

with great care and purpose. ‘

I can say as a member of the Armed

Services and Intelligence Committees,

I have great faith and a sense of personal

pride and trust in our military

and in our intelligence community.

But, I also know that too often in the

past military action has been rooted in

misguided policy and our military has

suffered the consequences.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff, General Shelton, has already

found it necessary to refute allegations

that the battle plan and targets in Iran

have been drafted and selected by the

executive as opposed to warfighters, a

charge that harkens back to the limited

and political decision making in

the Vietnam war. There is no question

that our military will obey their Commander

in Chief and will do an exemplary

job, no matter what the mission.

That is how it should be and is. Nevertheless,

I would be less than candid if I

did not say judging from the private

commentary from many within the

military and public questions from

those with expertise in military tactics

and national security that this proposed

strike may well be flawed and

counterproductive.

Administration spokesmen have stated

that this strike will attempt to destroy

as much of Saddam Hussein’s capability

to deploy and deliver chemical

and biological weapons as possible: not

the actual material mind you, but the

delivery means. But, we will not be

able to destroy all of that delivery

means.

So, at the end of the attack, at the

end of the day, when all is said and

done, with civilian and military casualties,

Saddam will still be in power,

his scientists will still be at work, his

military and the Republican Guard

still deployed, some of his weapons of

mass destruction and their delivery

means will still be intact. It strains

credibility that there will be any

chance of inspections. In a year or two

we may have to do it all over again.

In the meantime, we will have a continued

erosion of faith and confidence

with our allies, anti-American sentiment

throughout the Muslim world,

and the horrors of war on international

television courtesy of Saddam Hussein.

If our bombing does not kill innocent

civilians, then Saddam will.

This is not some kind of impersonal

therapy to correct Saddam’s behavior

we are contemplating. Too often we

refuse to recognize the reality and horrors

of war. In this regard, there is a

pretty good test. Imagine what you

would say to the loved one of an American

service man or woman who will be

put in harms way and may not return.

For what did that airman, soldier, sailor

or Marine die? Justify that loss.

Many times in our history we have

been able to do so with the knowledge

and comfort in knowing that our nation

and our individual freedoms were

protected. Tragically, there have been

other times we have not. We could not

in Vietnam. We could not in Beirut. We

could not in Somalia. Unleashing the

horrors of war can be justified only to

protect our vital national interests and

to get rid of a greater evil. I am concerned

the proposed military strike

may not do either.

Mr. President, before we consider S.

Con. Res. 71, these concerns should be

answered and other policy alternatives

should be considered.

I yield the floor.