Mr. President, President

Bush last night warned the American

people to brace for war with Iraq. In

his State of the Union Address, he

vowed that if Saddam Hussein does not

disarm, the United States will ‘‘lead a

coalition’’ to disarm him.

Although the President stopped short

of a declaration of war, his message

was clear: In his view, Saddam Hussein

constitutes an imminent danger to

peace and security in the world, and

the United States is prepared to wage

war, with or without the support of the

United Nations, to remove him from

power. The chain of events that President

Bush set into motion last year

when he inducted Iraq into what he

called the ‘‘axis of evil’’ appears on the

verge of spilling over into battle and

bloodshed.

The President’s remarks come amid a

firestorm of protest from some of our

closest allies in Europe and the Middle

East over the apparent willingness of

the United States to ride roughshod

over the United Nations and dictate to

the rest of the world the terms of Iraq’s

disarmament. The President in his

State of the Union speech once again

made clear that Iraq will be dealt with

on his timetable, at his hands, according

to his agenda.

Mr. President, I am fully cognizant of

the danger presented by the possibility

of chemical, biological, or nuclear

weapons in the hands of a ruthless dictator

like Saddam Hussein. I am fully

cognizant of, and frustrated by, the

fact that Iraq has consistently flouted

the United Nations mandates to disarm,

and has apparently shown only

token cooperation with the current inspection

regime. Iraq has much to answer

for, and the President is correct

in demanding that Iraq respond to the

United Nations.

What concerns me greatly, however,

is that this President appears to place

himself above the international mandates

of the United Nations. He has

turned a deaf ear to the concerns of

other nations and has vowed that the

United States will lead an assault on

Iraq regardless of the judgment of the

United Nations. President Bush has

made the overthrow of Saddam Hussein

a personal crusade, and in his zeal to

pursue his goal, he has failed to make

the case to the American people out

there and to our allies abroad that the

United Nations is dragging its feet,

that war is the only option left, and

that war cannot wait.

The President in his address alluded

to tantalizing evidence that Saddam

Hussein is in collusion with al-Qaida

and that Iraq possesses weapons of

mass destruction which it is hiding

from the United Nations weapons inspectors.

But the President has yet to

present that evidence to the public or

to demonstrate why it constitutes an

immediate cause for war. If the evidence

is as compelling as the President

indicates it will be, surely the member

states of the United Nations will close

ranks behind the United States and demand

the forcible disarmament of Iraq.

The President also set what appears

to be a new deadline for the United Nations.

On February 5, he said, the

United States will ask the U.N. Security

Council to convene to hear evidence

of Iraq’s illegal weapons programs

and its links to terrorist groups.

I look forward to learning the details

of that meeting. I wonder why the

President is holding back for another

week if he has such information today,

and perhaps has had it for some time.

I am confident that the U.N. weapons

inspectors would welcome such evidence,

not next week but today, so that

they could do their jobs more effectively.

I wonder why the Senate has

not been given this evidence. I wonder

why the American people, who are

being asked to send their sons and

daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers

and sisters into the battle zone,

have not been made privy to this important

evidence.

Perhaps the answer lies in the followup

comment by the President, when

he said:

Despite all his comments

to the contrary, it appears that the

President has predetermined that war

with Iraq is the only recourse left.

If war is the answer, the support of

the international community is essential.

I believe that it would be a grave

mistake for the United States to preempt

the work of the United Nations

weapons inspectors and initiate an invasion

of Iraq without first seeking the

express support of the Security Council.

The United States is already seen

by many as an aggressor in the Middle

East. Speculation is rife in Europe that

the United States is pressing to invade

Iraq to give the U.S. control of the

Iraqi oil fields. America’s reputation in

the court of world opinion is in tatters.

Unfortunately, the President’s State

of the Union speech did little to allay

the worries of the American people or

the international community. The

President signaled to the world that

America is ready for war with Iraq, but

he did not explain why Iraq suddenly

presents such ‘‘a serious and mounting

threat’’ to our country, our friends,

and our allies that war is the only option.

How is it that the threat from

Iraq is more serious than the threat

from North Korea? How is it that the

threat from Iraq appears to have

eclipsed the threat from al-Qaida to

our own country and the threat from

other terrorist organizations?

Nor did the President attempt to prepare

the American people for the possible

consequences of war with Iraq—

the terrible toll on the lives on innocent

Iraqis, the potential for hundreds

or thousands of battlefield casualties of

American service men and women, the

sharply increased threat of terrorist

attacks on America and its allies. The

President promised that the overthrow

of Saddam Hussein would liberate the

people of Iraq, but he made no mention

of what the American people could expect

from a postwar Iraq. The President

made no mention of the burden

the United States would have to bear

to ensure that a postwar Iraq did not

devolve into chaos.

In his State of the Union Address last

year, the President declared a global

war on terror, and he called on all nations

of the world to come together to

combat the curse of terrorism. In his

speech last night, the global war on

terror got remarkably short shrift.

the President said.

Unfortunately, having terrorists on

the run means that terrorists have escaped

our dragnet and, according to intelligence

assessments, are actively

plotting new attacks on the United

States and its allies. We still do not

know the fate of Osama bin Laden. We

may have him on the run, but we also

fear that he continues to pose a real

and imminent threat to the United

States. And unlike Saddam Hussein,

Osama bin Laden has demonstrated his

willingness to attack American citizens

at home and American interests

abroad.

But instead of rallying the international

community to the continued

need to cooperate in fighting global

terrorism, the President’s policies and

the President’s rhetoric are polarizing

the world.

Mr. President, I believe the Senate

has a duty to speak to the issue of war

with Iraq, and I believe that the United

States has a duty under international

law to work within the structure of the

United Nations charter. If we indict

Saddam Hussein on the grounds that he

has failed to disarm in accordance with

the United Nations resolutions, how

then can we turn around and act

against him without United Nations

support? What signal does the United

States send to the world regarding respect

for international law? The United

Nations is acting responsibly. Iraq, if

not fully cooperating, is at least

straitjacketed. America’s allies are

calling on us to give the inspectors

time to do their work. This is not the

time for precipitous action on the part

of the United States.

For these reasons, I am today introducing

a resolution urging that the

U.N. weapons inspectors be given sufficient

time to complete their work and

calling for the President to seek a

United Nations resolution specifically

authorizing the use of force before initiating

any offensive military operation

against Iraq.

Now, it may come to be that war is

the only way to subdue the malevolence

of Saddam Hussein. But that is

not a decision for the United States to

make unilaterally. President Bush, in

November, galvanized the United Nations

to act on the issue of Iraq. For

that, the President is to be commended.

Now he must follow through

on his pledge to work with the United

Nations. The United Nations has demonstrated

in the past 2 months that it

is willing to act responsibly and vigorously

in addressing the issue of Iraq’s

disarmament. No one could accuse

chief weapons inspector Hans Blix of

sugar-coating his interim report to the

U.N. Security Council on January 27.

He made clear that Iraq is not adequately

cooperating on matters of substance.

He made clear his frustration

with Iraq. But he did not slam the door

on the possibility of disarming Iraq

without resorting to war.

As long as that door remains open

even a crack, as long as Iraq is not actively

threatening its neighbors or the

United States, as long as the United

Nations can maintain a stranglehold

on Saddam Hussein’s ambitions, I believe

that we have a duty to the American

people to strive to find an alternative

to war. If war it must be, then it

should be a coordinated undertaking

authorized by Congress and sanctioned

by the member states of the United Nations—

not a preemptive strike initiated

by the President of the United

States.

Mr. President, the consequences of

war are incalculable. Before we take

such a momentous step, before we

place the lives of American military

personnel and innocent civilians in

harm’s way, we should stop to reflect

on the possible consequences, and we

should redouble our efforts to find a

peaceful solution to the disarmament

of Iraq. If war is the only recourse, it

must be a war endorsed and fully supported

by the United Nations.

Mr. President, if it must be war, we

may be lucky. I hope we will be. But we

may not be lucky. I think of the words

of Croesus, when he said to Cyrus the

Great of Persia:

There is a wheel on which the affairs of

men revolve and its movement forbids the

same man to be always fortunate.

Mr. President, I shall have more to

say as the days come and go on this

matter that is so vital to the American

people and to their futures and to the

futures of our children and grandchildren

and their children.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I thank

the very able Senator for his thoughtful

and gracious remarks. I thank him

also for his cosponsorship of the senseof-

the-Senate resolution which I have

just submitted. I thank him for his

contributions to that resolution.

It is my understanding he will be

submitting a resolution. We have discussed

that as well, and I hope he will

add my name to his resolution. He can

be sure that, the Lord willing, I will be

speaking on this matter from time to

time, and I know that he will join me,

as I hope others in this Senate will join

us. I think it is time for the American

people to hear more from the Senate. I

do not think they have heard enough

from the Senate on this matter that is

so vital to them, to their loved ones, to

their fortunes, and to their futures.

As far as the Lord enables me to do

so, I intend to have more to say on this

subject. I thank the Senator. I know he

will have more to say. Again, I thank

him for his remarks and for his cosponsorship

of the resolution.