Mr. President, if I

need additional time, I will take it

from my Senate leader allocation for

the day.

The Senate is now engaged in one of

the most consequential debates addressed

in this Chamber for many

years. We are confronting the grave

issues of war and peace. We are considering

how the United States should respond

to a murderous dictator who has

shown he will be bound neither by conscience

nor by the laws or principles of

civilized nations. And we are contemplating

whether and under what conditions

the Congress should authorize the

preemptive use of American military

power to remove the threat that he

poses.

These questions go directly to who

we are as a nation. How we answer

them will have a profound consequence

for our Nation, for our allies, for the

war on terror, and perhaps most importantly,

for the men and women in our

Armed Forces who could be called to

risk their lives because of our decisions.

There is no question that Saddam

Hussein is a dangerous man who has

done barbaric things. He has invaded

neighbors, supported terrorists, repressed

and murdered his own people.

Over the last several months, as the

world has sought to calm the violence

between Israelis and Palestinians, Iraq

has tried to inflame the situation by

speaking against the very existence of

Israel and encouraging suicide bombers

in Gaza and the West Bank.

Saddam Hussein has stockpiled,

weaponized and used chemical and biological

weapons, and he has made no

secret of his desire to acquire nuclear

weapons. He has ignored international

agreements and frustrated the efforts

of international inspectors, and his ambitions

today are as unrelenting as

they have ever been.

As a condition of the truce that

ended the gulf war, Saddam Hussein

agreed to eliminate Iraq’s nuclear, biological,

and chemical weapons and to

abandon all efforts to develop or deliver

such weapons. That agreement is

spelled out in U.N. Security Council

Resolution 687. Iraq has never complied

with the resolution.

For the first 7 years after the gulf

war, it tried to deceive U.N. weapons

inspectors, block their access to key

sites, and make it impossible for them

to do their jobs.

Finally, in October of 1998, the U.N.

was left with no choice but to withdraw

its inspectors from Iraq. As a result,

we do not know exactly what is

now in Iraq’s arsenal. We do know Iraq

has weaponized thousands of gallons of

anthrax and other deadly biological

agents. We know Iraq maintains stockpiles

of some of the world’s deadliest

chemical weapons, including VX, sarin,

and mustard gas. We know Iraq is developing

deadlier ways to deliver these

horrible weapons, including unmanned

drones and long-range ballistic missiles.

And we know Saddam Hussein is

committed to one day possessing nuclear

weapons.

If that should happen, instead of simply

bullying the gulf region, he could

dominate it. Instead of threatening

only his neighbors, he could become a

grave threat to U.S. security and to

global security.

The threat posed by Saddam Hussein

may not be imminent, but it is real, it

is growing, and it cannot be ignored.

Despite that, like many Americans, I

was concerned by the way the administration

first proposed to deal with that

threat. The President’s desire to wage

war alone, without the support of our

allies and without authorization from

Congress, was wrong. Many of us,

Democrats and Republicans, made it

clear that such unilateralism was not

in our Nation’s best interest. I now

commend the administration for

changing its approach and acknowledging

the importance of working with

our allies. I also commend it for recognizing

that under our Constitution, it

is Congress that authorizes the use of

force, and for requesting a resolution

providing such authority.

I applaud my colleagues, Democrats

and Republicans in the House and in

the Senate, for the improvements they

have made to the administration’s

original resolution. Four changes were

especially critical.

First, instead of giving the President

broad and unfocused authorization to

take action in the region, as the administration

originally sought, this

resolution focuses specifically on the

threat posed by Iraq. It no longer authorizes,

nor should it be used to justify,

the use of force against other nations,

organizations, or individuals

that the President may believe threaten

peace and stability in the Persian

Gulf region. It is a strong and focused

response to a specific threat. It is not

a template or model for any other situation.

Second, the resolution expresses the

deep conviction of this Congress and of

the American people that President

Bush should continue to work through

the United Nations Security Council in

order to secure Iraqi compliance with

U.N. resolutions. Unfettered inspections

may or may not lead to Iraqi disarmament,

but whether they succeed

or fail, the effort we expend in seeking

inspections will make it easier for the

President to assemble a global coalition

against Saddam should military

action eventually be needed.

Third, this resolution makes it clear

that before the President can use force

in Iraq, he must certify to the Congress

that diplomacy has failed, that further

diplomatic efforts alone cannot protect

America’s national security interests,

nor can they lead to enforcement of the

U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Fourth, this resolution protects the

balance of power by requiring the

President to comply with the War Powers

Act and to report to Congress at

least every 60 days on matters relevant

to this resolution.

This resolution gives the President

the authority he needs to confront the

threat posed by Iraq. It is fundamentally

different and a better resolution

than the one the President sent to us.

It is neither a Democratic resolution

nor a Republican resolution. It is now

a statement of American resolve and

values. It is more respectful of our Constitution,

more reflective of our understanding

that we need to work with our

allies in this effort, and more in keeping

with our strong belief that force

must be a last resort, not a first response.

Because this resolution is improved,

because I believe Saddam Hussein represents

a real threat, and because I believe

it is important for America to

speak with one voice at this critical

moment, I will vote to give the President

the authority he needs, but I respect

those who reach different conclusions.

For me, the deciding factor is

my belief that a united Congress will

help the President unite the world, and

by uniting the world we can increase

the world’s chances of succeeding in

this effort and reduce both the risks

and the costs America may have to

bear. With this resolution, we are giving

the President extraordinary authority.

How he exercises that authority

will determine how successful any

action in Iraq might be.

In 1991, by the time the President’s

father sought congressional support to

use force against Iraq, he had secured

pledges of military cooperation from

nearly 40 nations and statements of

support from scores of others. He had

already secured the backing of the

United Nations, and he had already developed

a clear plan of action. In assembling

that coalition, the legitimacy

of our cause was affirmed, regional stability

was maintained, the risks to our

soldiers were lessened, America’s burden

was reduced, and perhaps most importantly,

Iraq was isolated.

At this point, we have done none of

those things. That is why, unlike in

1991, our vote on this resolution should

be seen as the beginning of a process,

not the end. For our efforts in Iraq to

succeed, the President must continue

to consult with Congress and work

hard to build a global coalition. That is

not capitulation, it is leadership. And

it is essential.

In my view, there are five other crucial

steps the administration must

take before any final decision on the

use of force in Iraq is made. First and

foremost, the President needs to be

honest with the American people, not

only about the benefits of action

against Iraq but also about the risks

and the costs of such action. We are no

longer talking about driving Saddam

Hussein back to within his borders, we

are talking about driving him from

power. That is a much more difficult

and complicated goal.

There was a story in this past Sunday’s

Philadelphia Inquirer that top officials

in the administration ‘‘have exaggerated

the degree of allied support

for a war in Iraq.’’ The story goes on to

say that others in the administration

‘‘are rankled by what they charge is a

tendency’’ by some in the administration

‘‘to gloss over the unpleasant realities’’

of a potential war with Iraq.

A report in yesterday’s Washington

Post suggests ‘‘an increasing number of

intelligence officials, including former

and current intelligence agency employees,

are concerned the agency is

tailoring its public stance to fit the administration’s

views.’’

I do not know whether these reports

are accurate. We do know from our own

national experience, however, that public

support for military action can

evaporate quickly if the American people

come to believe they have not been

given all of the facts. If that should

happen, no resolution Congress might

pass will be able to unify our Nation.

The American people expect, and success

demands, that they be told both

the benefits and the risks involved in

any action against Iraq.

Second, we need to make clear to the

world that the reason we would use

force in Iraq is to remove Saddam Hussein’s

weapons of mass destruction. I

would have preferred if this goal had

been made explicit in this resolution.

However, it is clear from this debate

that Saddam’s weapons of mass destruction

are the principal threat to

the United States and the only threat

that would justify the use of the

United States military force against

Iraq. It is the threat that the President

cited repeatedly in his speech to the

American people on Monday night. It

may also be the only threat that can

rally the world to support our efforts.

Therefore, we expect, and success demands,

that the administration not

lose sight of this essential mission.

Third, we need to prepare for what

might happen in Iraq after Saddam

Hussein. Regime change is an easy expression

for a difficult job. One thing

we have learned from our action in Afghanistan

is that it is easier to topple

illegitimate regimes than it is to build

legitimate democracies. We will need

to do much better in post-Saddam Iraq

than the administration has done so

far in post-Taliban Afghanistan. Iraq is

driven by religious and ethnic differences

and demoralized by a repressive

government and crushing poverty.

It has no experience with democracy.

History tells us it is not enough merely

to hope that well-intentioned leaders

will rise to fill the void that the departure

of Saddam Hussein would leave.

We must help create the conditions

under which such a leader can arise

and govern. Unless we want to risk seeing

Iraq go from bad to worse, we must

help the Iraqi people build their political

and economic institutions after

Saddam. That could take many years

and many billions of dollars, which is

another reason we must build a global

coalition. The American people expect,

and success demands, that we plan for

stability and for economic and political

progress in Iraq after Saddam.

Fourth, we need to minimize the

chances that any action we may take

in Iraq will destabilize the region.

Throughout the Persian Gulf, there are

extremists who would like nothing

more than to transform a confrontation

with Iraq into a wider war between

the Arab world and Israel or the

Arab world and the West. What happens

if, by acting in Iraq, we undermine

the government in Jordan, a critical

ally and a strategic buffer between

Iraq and Israel? What happens if we destabilize

Pakistan and empower Islamic

fundamentalists? Unlike Iraq,

Pakistan already has nuclear weapons

and the means to deliver. What happens

if that arsenal falls into the hands

of al-Qaida or other extremists?

We can tell the Arab world this is not

a fight between their nations and ours.

But a far better way to maintain stability

in the gulf is to demonstrate

that by building a global coalition to

confront Saddam Hussein. That is why

the administration must make every

reasonable effort to secure a U.N. resolution

just as we did in 1991. With U.N.

support, we can count a number of

Arab countries as full allies. Without

U.N. support, we cannot even count on

their airspace. We expect, and success

demands, that any action we take in

Iraq will make the region more stable,

not less.

Fifth, and finally, we cannot allow a

war in Iraq to jeopardize the war on

terrorism. We are fighting terrorist organizations

with global networks, and

we need partners around the globe.

Some, including the chairman of the

President’s own Foreign Intelligence

Advisory Board, doubt we can count on

this continued cooperation in the war

on terror if we go to war against Iraq.

I do not know if that is true. I do know,

however, that the military intelligence

and political cooperation we receive

from nations throughout the world are

critical to the war on terrorism.

Saddam Hussein may yet target

America. Al-Qaida already has. The

American people expect, and our national

security demands, that the administration

make plans to ensure that

any action we take in Iraq does not distract

or detract from the war on terror.

If they fail to do so, any victory we win

in Iraq will come at a terrible cost.

On Monday night in his speech to the

Nation, the President said: The situation

could hardly get worse for world

security and the people of Iraq.

Yes, it can. If the administration attempts

to use the authority in this resolution

without doing the work that is

required before and after military action

in Iraq, the situation there and

elsewhere can indeed get worse. We

could see more turmoil in the Persian

Gulf, not less. We could see more bloodshed

in the Middle East, not less.

Americans could find themselves more

vulnerable to terrorist attacks, not

less.

So I stress again, this resolution represents

a beginning, not an end. If we

are going to make America and the

world safer, much more work needs to

be done before the force authorized in

this document is used.

Some people think it is wrong to ask

questions or raise concerns when the

President says our national security is

at risk. They believe it is an act of disloyalty.

I disagree. In America, asking

questions is an act of patriotism. For

those of us who have been entrusted by

our fellow citizens to serve in this Senate,

asking questions is more than a

privilege, it is a constitutional responsibility.

The American people have serious

questions about the course of action on

which this resolution could set us.

Given the gravity of the issues involved

and the far-reaching consequences

of this course, it is essential

that their questions are answered. I

support this resolution. And for the

sake of the American people, especially

those who will be called to defend our

Nation, we must continue to ask questions.

On one point, however, I have no

question. I believe deeply and absolutely

in the courage, the skill, and the

devotion of our men and women in uniform.

I know that if it becomes necessary

for them to stand in harm’s way

to protect America, they will do so

with pride and without hesitation and

they will succeed. They are the finest

fighting force the world has ever

known. For their sake, for the sake of

all Americans, for the world’s sake, we

must confront Saddam Hussein. But we

must do so in a way that avoids making

a dangerous situation even worse.

I yield the floor.