Mr. President, I thank

Senator CARL LEVIN for his amendment.

I thank the State of Michigan

for sending Senator LEVIN to the Senate.

His independence, his courage, his

clear thinking, his love of country are

evident in the work he has put behind

this important amendment. I believe

his answer to Iraq’s challenge is, indeed,

the right course for this country.

To me, the issue of Iraq should be approached

in the following way. Iraq

must be held to its word that it will

submit to thorough inspections and

dismantlement of weapons of mass destruction.

Let me repeat that: Iraq

must be held to its word that it will

submit to thorough inspections and

dismantlement of weapons of mass destruction.

The United Nations should pass an

updated resolution ensuring unfettered

inspections and disarmament, and that

should take place or there will be dire

consequences for Iraq. The weapons

they have are a threat to the world.

The world must respond. If we handle

this matter correctly, the way Senator

LEVIN is suggesting, I believe the world

will respond. If we handle it wrong—

and I think the underlying resolution

is the wrong approach—if our allies believe

we have not made the case, they

believe somehow this is a grudge

match, or if they believe they are being

manipulated for domestic political reasons,

that is going to hurt our Nation

and that is going to isolate us.

Indeed, this rush to pass unilateral

authority—I have never seen anything

quite like what has happened in the

Senate. The rush to pass unilateral authority,

the rush to say to the President,

go it alone, don’t worry about

anybody else, is hurting this debate,

and this debate looks political. It looks

political.

If there are those in the administration

who believe this debate could hurt

Democrats, they may be surprised.

Democrats do not walk in lockstep. We

are independent thinking. I believe the

people want that.

Remember, this administration

started out thumbing its nose at the

Constitution and the role of Congress

in terms of war and peace. This administration

did not want to bring the debate

on this war to Congress. We have

many quotes I have already put in the

RECORD on that subject. They did not

want the President to go to the United

Nations. Indeed, they said he did not

have to go there; he did not have to

come here; he did not have to do anything.

Also, as the Presiding Officer

knows, they wanted a resolution that

gave the authority far beyond Iraq.

They wanted to give the President authority

to go anywhere in the world.

Now that idea is gone from the underlying

Lieberman resolution. So

checks and balances do work. I think

what we ought to do is continue those

checks and balances by passing the

Levin amendment.

The Levin amendment puts America

front and center in a way that will win

over the civilized world. This is what it

does.

No. 1, it urges the U.N. Security

Council to quickly adopt a resolution

for inspections of Iraq’s weapons of

mass destruction and the dismantlement

of those weapons.

No. 2, this new U.N. Security Council

resolution urges that we will back up

the resolution with the use of force, including

the United States. And the

President gets that authority in Senator

LEVIN’s resolution.

No. 3, it reaffirms that, under international

law and the United Nations

Charter, the United States has the inherent

right to self-defense. So anybody

who says, my God, we are giving

everything over to the U.N., has not

read the resolution.

Last, it states the Congress will not

adjourn sine die so that in a moment’s

notice we can return if the President

believes we need to go it alone.

Some have said that the Levin

amendment, again, gives veto power to

the U.N. Security Council. That is not

true. Again, under the Levin amendment,

if the President cannot secure a

new U.N. resolution that will ensure

disarmament of Iraq, he can come

back, he can lay out the case and answer

the questions that have not been

answered.

I have looked back through history. I

never have seen a situation where the

President of the United States asked

for the ability to go to war alone and

yet has not told the American people

what that would mean. How many

troops would be involved? How many

casualties might there be? Would the

U.S. have to foot the entire cost of

using force against Iraq? If not, which

nations are ready to provide financial

support? Troop support? What will the

cost be to rebuild Iraq? How long would

our troops have to stay there? What if

our troops become a target for terrorists?

We have seen in Kuwait, a very secure

place for our people; we have had

terrorist incidents already against our

young people there.

Will weapons of mass destruction be

launched against our troops? Against

Israel? If you read the CIA declassified

report—declassified report—they are

telling us that the chance that he will

use them is greater if he feels his back

is up against the wall. Everybody

knows the underlying resolution implies

regime change. It implies regime

change. What I think is important

about the Levin resolution is that it

goes to the heart, the core of the matter,

which is dismantlement of the

weapons of mass destruction.

If Saddam knows his back is against

the wall, he will use these.

I thank the President.

So let’s be careful. Why not take the

conservative approach, the two-step

approach of the Levin resolution, when

it comes to the life and death of our

people? There are more questions that

have not been answered, and I have put

them in the RECORD. Yet the President

wants the authority to go it alone and

he has not answered even one of those

questions to Members of this Senate,

let alone to the American people.

I cannot vote for a blank check for

unilateral action. I cannot vote for a

go-it-alone approach before any of

these fundamental questions have been

answered. Twice in the past 4 years I

voted to use force: once against

Milosevic, once after September 11. So

it is not that this Senator will never

vote for force, but in this case, when

the President is proposing to go it

alone, I think we have the right on behalf

of the people we represent to have

the questions answered.

In closing, the Levin resolution gives

us that two-step approach. It says to

this President: If you want to go as

part of a world force and make sure

that we get the dismantlement of these

weapons, we give you the authority and

the blessing. If not, come back and ask

us and we will debate then and we will

vote then. I hope we will vote for the

Levin resolution.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, in 1991,

just prior to the Persian Gulf war, I

was the author of legislation that

would have allowed one parent of a

dual military couple to receive a waiver

from deployment to areas where

combat is imminent.

I remain very concerned about this

issue and fear that if the President decides

to use force against Iraq, minor

children may face a situation in which

both parents are deployed. The Military

Family Resource Center estimates

that there are approximately 35,000

dual military couples with children

serving in the military today.

According to the Department of Defense,

request for combat exceptions

can be submitted at any time and military

personnel may apply for reassignment

for humanitarian or compassionate

reasons. However, there are no

specific policies restricting both parents

from being assigned to a war zone.

I hope the Senator from Virginia, the

ranking member of the Armed Services

Committee, will join me in urging the

Secretary of Defense to do everything

possible to see that dual military couples

are not deployed concurrently to a

war zone.