I ask that I be recognized

for up to 20 minutes.

and must not be

waged.

Mr. President, over 3

months ago, I worked with Senators

LIEBERMAN, WARNER, and BAYH to manage

the resolution authorizing the use

of military force against Iraq on the

floor of the Senate. Over the course of

8 days, we held a thorough, comprehensive,

and honorable debate that allowed

all sides to express their views quite

thoroughly. Seventy-seven Senators

then voted to authorize the President

to use our Armed Forces to ‘‘defend the

national security of the United States

against the continuing threat posed by

Iraq’’ and ‘‘enforce all relevant United

Nations Security Council resolutions

regarding Iraq.’’

The resolution, which now has the

force of law, was entitled the ‘‘Authorization

for Use of Military Force

Against Iraq Resolution of 2002.’’ One

provision stated, ‘‘Consistent with . . .

the War Powers Resolution, the Congress

declares that this section is intended

to constitute specific statutory

authorization within the meaning of

section 5(b) of the War Powers Resolution.’’

Congress has spoken, and its

message could not be clearer.

The Senator from Massachusetts

spoke repeatedly and at length over

the course of the Congressional debate

on Iraq. He spoke eloquently and passionately,

in the great tradition of the

Senate. At the end of the day, his views

did not prevail, but he made an important

contribution to the debate.

That debate is over. After a monthslong

period in which the Bush administration

went to the Security Council—

as the Senator called for last fall, secured

a new Council resolution demanding

Iraqi compliance with it s disarmament

obligations—as the Senator

called for last fall, and pursued patient

diplomacy while educating the American

public about the threat Iraq poses

to our interests—as the Senator called

for last fall, I agree with him that

‘‘much has changed in the many

months since Congress last debated

war with Iraq.’’

What has changed is that the Administration

has pursued the careful diplomacy

the Senator had urged on it and

has refrained from using force unilaterally

against Iraq. The President has

worked to make the case for Iraqi disarmament

to America and the world.

The administration was able to unite

the Security Council behind our demand

that Iraq disarm or be disarmed.

And the administration has worked

diligently to assemble a coalition that

will stand with us in the event military

action is necessary.

Iraq has provided more evidence of

its intentions, and its defiance, by its

failure to provide anything resembling

an honest declaration of its arsenal of

banned weaponry, and its failure to cooperate

substantively with the U.N. inspectors,

as Hans Blix has stated. By

its own actions, Iraq has placed itself

before the world in material breach of

the Security Council resolution the

Senator from Massachusetts demanded

the administration seek, and honor, in

the congressional debate last fall. I

agree with the Senator, much has

changed.

As the President said last night,

The

price of his deception, if allowed to

continue unchecked, could have catastrophic

consequences for the United

States which none of us, no matter how

we voted on the Iraq resolution, could

ever countenance.

The Senator from Massachusetts apparently

believes we should revoke the

President’s authority as Commander in

Chief to order our Armed Forces to defend

American national security

against the threat posed by Iraq, as enshrined

in the Constitution and authorized

in law by Congress, unless and

until there is clear evidence of an imminent

Iraqi threat of attack on the

United States. But in the world we live

in, there is no such thing as knowledge

of imminence of attack. Had we known

what was to happen to our country you

September 11, 2001, there is no American

leader who would not have acted

to prevent it.

Every one of us in this body had contemplated

what could have happened

had the September 11 terrorists employed

weapons of mass destruction.

We cannot abide a world in which outlaw

regimes deeply hostile to American

are free to develop weapons which, in

the hands of dictators and terrorists,

would be used against us. As long as

those dictators reign, and as long as

terrorists plot to strike us, the threat

can be understood to be imminent, because

we don’t know when the next attack

will happen—and as long as we

don’t act we can say with certainty

that there will be another attack.

Speaking of the nexus between rogue

states with deadly arsenals and the terrorists

with whom they conspire, the

President said,

While I respect my colleague’s differences

with the administration and

with a substantial majority of the Congress

on the matter of Iraq, I believe

the case for action to disarm Saddam

Hussein has only become more compelling

since Congress debated the authorization

to use force against Iraq last

fall.

When I heard earlier today—as the

word gets out around here—that the

Senator from Massachusetts might

come to the floor and propose another

resolution to be debated, I must say I

was of two minds. I thought this would

be another marvelous opportunity to

debate this amendment, this entire situation,

because in the intervening

months, as I have stated, Saddam Hussein

has proven he is not in compliance

not only with the Security Council resolutions

but going all the way back to

1991 when he was required, according to

Security Council Resolution 687, to

comply within 15 days and has not. He

has violated some 12 or 13 Security

Council resolutions. I thought this

would be a great opportunity because

there is no doubt in my mind we would

prevail again if a vote were held.

I also, on the other side of the coin,

believe if we start a debate all over

again that lasts for another week or 2

weeks, or whatever it is, surely we

would be plowing the same ground. But

also, would we be sending a signal that

the American people are not united?

Would the outcome of the vote be basically

the same? Would Senator

LIEBERMAN or Senator BAYH decide to

vote against the resolution that they

so fervently and eloquently supported

on the floor of the Senate? I don’t

think so.

Another thing about this terrible and

difficult decision the President may

have to make—which is the most difficult

that any President of the United

States is faced with, the dispatch of

young Americans into harm’s way—the

President knows full well that even

though we will win an overwhelming

victory, young Americans will lose

their lives.

I believe that conflict will be short. I

believe that in 1991 when I debated this

same situation where we contemplated

previously the subject of military action

against Iraq, colleagues on the

other side of the aisle, including Senators

who will speak and have spoken

in opposition, said: It will be another

Vietnam; the body bags will be coming

back; we should not do this; this is terrible;

let’s delay; let’s give peace a

chance.

The conflict was short. We freed the

nation of Kuwait, and for a period of

time we had peace in the Middle East

without significant threats to the

United States national security. Now

we have to finish the job, perhaps.

I say two things. One, I regret and

grieve the loss of any American lives

that might occur as a result of this

military action. But our interests are

threatened, as the President said last

night.

I also want to say a word about post-

Saddam Iraq, since that has been referred

to continuously by those who

oppose any military action under any

circumstances.

The people of Iraq are subjected to

one of the most brutal, repressive, Godawful

regimes in the world today. Last

week’s New York Times told stories of

warehouses where people were hung

from hooks, of rape, of torture, of murder.

Claire Shipman did an interview

with one of Saddam Hussein’s previous

mistresses. He derived some kind of

pleasure watching films of people being

tortured.

These are bad people, a bad regime

that has killed and oppressed its own

people; a complete and total police

state. Where are the advocates for

human rights?

I promise you there are many of us,

at the time of the fall of Saddam Hussein,

who will devote American effort

and treasure to the construction of a

democratic, freely elected, free society

in Iraq, and give those people a chance

to enjoy the human rights that it is

our fundamental belief is the endowment

of all men and women.

As far as the expense is concerned, I

am sure any new Iraqi Government

could cover those expenses. But

shouldn’t we give those people an opportunity

to enjoy their God-given

rights rather than continue under the

dictatorship of this brutal, mad dictator?

He is the only one I know of who

has used weapons of mass destruction

on his own citizens.

Yes, I will admit, if he wasn’t constructing

these weapons of mass destruction,

and his relentless pursuit of

them, we probably wouldn’t do anything

about it. But this is an interesting

nexus of our national interests

and our national values. Our values are

that all men and women are created

with certain inalienable rights. Our interests

are threatened by the certain

knowledge that, sooner or later, Saddam

Hussein would acquire these weapons

and use them. There has been no

evidence that would indicate the contrary.

I sort of regret we are coming to the

floor to begin a debate that may last

for some days, whether the Senator

from Massachusetts withdraws his resolution

or not. I hope not. I hope the

Senator from Massachusetts will recognize

that time was over 3 months ago,

and the process moved on, a process of

constant consultation with the American

people, and with the United Nations

Security Council, and a speech

that I think was remarkably eloquent

last night to the American people by

the President of the United States.

But I want to say I believe some time

from now we will be pleased as Americans

that we placed this responsibility

in the hands of the President of the

United States; that he acted with maturity;

that he acted with great and

sound judgment, and the world some

time from now will be a far better

place—not only for Americans but also

for Iraqi citizens.

I yield the remainder of my time and

I yield the floor.