Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I

have sought recognition to discuss the

present grave concern in the United

States, and for that matter, around the

world, about the menace posed by Saddam

Hussein and Iraq.

I am pleased to note that the President

has announced his intention to

come to Congress to seek authorization

before there is any military action

taken by the United States as to Iraq.

Senator HARKIN and I had introduced a

resolution back in July asking that

congressional authority be obtained before

any military action. The President,

as Commander in Chief, under the

Constitution certainly has the authority

to act in times of emergency. When

there is time for discussion, deliberation,

debate, and decision, then under

the Constitution, it is the authority of

the Congress to act.

The events are moving very fast.

There have been briefings of Members

of the Congress by the Administration

and there is a great concern, which I

have personally noted in my State,

Pennsylvania, on a series of town

meetings across the State. Everywhere

I traveled there was concern as to what

action would be taken as to Iraq.

There was no doubt that the United

States has learned a very bitter lesson

from 9/11; we should have taken preemptive

action against Osama bin

Laden and al-Qaida. We had evidence

against civilians in Mogadishu in 1993,

and embassy bombings in 1993. In all of

those events, bin Laden was under indictment.

We knew about his involvement

in the USS *Cole* and his proclamation

for a worldwide jihad; preemptive

action should have been taken.

Taking preemptive action against a

nation-state would be a change in policy

for the United States. It is my view

that we ought to exhaust every alternative

before turning to that alternative—

economic sanctions, inspections,

diplomacy.

We have seen a number of people very

close to President Bush and to the first

President Bush, come out and caution

against action. We have seen General

Brent Scowcroft, the national security

adviser to President George Herbert

Walker Bush, come out and raise a

great many concerns about taking action

without support from our allies.

We have seen former Secretary of

State James Baker raise an issue about

going to the United Nations for inspections,

which I think is a very sound

point.

It is my hope that President Bush

will go to the United Nations and will

press to have inspections of Iraq proceed.

The obligation for Iraq to submit

to those inspections is an obligation

which runs to the United Nations.

Iraq’s commitments to the UN have

been flouted.

Former Secretary of State Baker

makes the cogent suggestion that the

United Nations ought to be called upon

to take military action to enforce

those inspection rights, if Saddam Hussein

does not acquiesce. Certainly, if

Saddam Hussein continues to stiff the

UN, to thumb his nose at the UN, and

thumb his nose at the international

community, then there will be a

stronger basis for the United States to

act, if we decide that our national interests

compel us to do so.

There is an obvious difficulty in communicating

to the American people all

that President Bush and the intelligence

agencies know about the threat

posed by Iraq and posed by Saddam

Hussein. There is a problem, as we have

seen from our experience, in telling the

Congress, even in closed session, even

in top secret briefings, where that information,

regrettably, is disclosed to

the press. Leaks in Washington are epidemic.

However, if the Congress is to

discharge its duty to pass on the question

of what is tantamount to a declaration

of war, a resolution authorizing

the use of force, we have to know

the basis on which we are acting.

There have been strong suggestions

that there is very substantial evidence

pointing to a clear and present danger

now. We do know Saddam has chemical

weapons. We do know he has used them

on his own people, the Kurds. We do

know he has used them in the Iran-Iraq

war. There is substantial evidence

about weapons of mass destruction and

biological weapons. As best we know,

Saddam Hussein does not yet have nuclear

weapons, but how long it would

take him to develop them is a question.

For the Congress to act, we really

have to have this information, and the

President has intimated, really suggested,

that more information will be

coming to the Congress. So far, I do

not think we have seen the indicators

of a clear and present danger, but that

is something which will have to be

taken up.

This is an issue which is now, obviously,

on the front burner. There are

indications that the President will

seek a vote by the Congress before we

adjourn. So it is a matter which will

require very intensive consideration

and analysis. However, it is my hope

that when the President makes his

speech at the United Nations next

week, he will call on the UN to enforce

the UN’s inspection rights.

Recently, Senator SHELBY and I made

a trip to Africa. Included in that trip

was a visit to the Sudan. I had attempted

to go there in the past and

was advised against it because of the

civil war, which has been raging in

that country. We talked to U.S. intelligence

personnel in the Sudan and

found that they have worked out an arrangement

with the Government of

Sudan to make surprise inspections of

weapons manufacturing locations and

also on laboratories—going in with no

notice, breaking locks, and taking photographs.

They have concluded that, as

to the installations they had identified

and inspected, they were satisfied that

there were no weapons of mass destruction

being pursued by the Government

of Sudan.

That could be a model to go after as

to inspections in Iraq. Of course, it still

leaves open the possibility that there

are some locations about which we do

not know. It leaves open the possibility

that some of the weapons of mass destruction

could be transported, could

be moved around. However, I think it

would be a very significant step. Then,

if Saddam and Iraq refused to honor

their commitments, it would put us on

the high ground to take action in our

own national interest.

I yield the floor. In the absence of

any other Senator seeking recognition,

I suggest the absence of a quorum.