Mr. President, I recognize

there has been a good deal of discussion

in the last day or two with respect

to Iraq; much of it, of course, as

a result of the President’s State of the

Union Message the other evening, and,

of course, it is a legitimate discussion

about where we are with respect to

Iraq and terrorism.

I believe the President’s message was

very complete. I thought he spelled out

exactly what his plans are and the reasons

for them. I think he has pursued

the proper course over a period of time.

Certainly, there is no one here who

wants to have to go to war. No one here

wants active military intervention if

that can be avoided. On the other hand,

this is a progressive situation that has

to be resolved, which started back in

1991, and has not yet been resolved. So

I think the only legitimate, reasonable

course for us is to go through all we

can to avoid military action, but if we

do not get the results that need to be

had, then that is our alternative.

I think we have been on the right

course. And we are not finished. Certainly

we are not finished. There is all

kinds of evidence that things that were

promised or ordered to be done have

not been done.

I think one of the things we need to

consider is times have changed. Times

have changed since September 11.

Years ago, when there were threats of

war, what it involved, of course, was

tanks and divisions landing and all

kinds of very obvious military activities.

Now the real threat is not that, it

is terrorism; it is for things that could

happen in this country similar to what

happened on September 11—without all

that preparation, without all that

warning. It just happened in very terrible

kinds of incidents. So I think in

protecting our country, we need to understand

the situation is quite different

than it was.

There has been a great deal of talk

about smoking guns. Frankly, I do not

believe you need to see a smoking gun

if you go back to the beginning of this

whole enterprise. Go back to 1991, when

there was a cease-fire arrangement

after the gulf war, after Saddam had

been driven out of the country he had

invaded. And there was a legal basis for

it. There was a cease-fire, an agreement,

and a succeeding U.N. resolution

which was the sound basis for our action

in Iraq.

The Council Resolution 687 was

adopted in 1991. At the heart of it was

a disarmament obligation from Iraq.

Then you remember we had inspectors

there up until 1998. There was very little

cooperation during all that time,

and the evidence they had accumulated

then is still available. This was all

done under international supervision.

But nothing was completed. There was

not success in forcing Saddam to disarm.

So that is where we are at this

time.

I think the policy we have to take

takes into account what should have

been done, what has not been done—

this irresponsible activity on the part

of Iraq’s leadership—and, therefore, we

are in the position to have to be prepared

to do whatever is necessary to

make that happen.

I certainly hope that can happen.

And I presume there is going to be

some more time for inspectors. Hopefully,

based now on another U.N. resolution,

which, of course, was done in

November of last year, we can put on

more pressure to have him comply with

that resolution.

The key to this situation, I hope everyone

remembers, is to disarm—not

necessarily to attack, not to go into

Iraq if we can get disarmament. That,

obviously, is the thing we are set up to

do.

I believe we ought to continue to follow

the vote we took in the Senate. I

think it was 77 votes supporting the

President to do what he has to do.

Now there are suggestions of having

to go back and do that again. I do not

understand that, frankly. The basis for

that vote is still the basis for where we

are today. The authority there is the

authority to finish the job that is very

threatening to everyone and, indeed,

must be completed.

I certainly support the President and

his team in terms of trying to come to

a resolution on this situation, being

prepared to do what we have to do—

hopefully, not having to do it—but to

be sure we do everything we can to protect

Americans, to protect the world,

to establish the responsibility that

countries have with respect to the U.N.

If we are going to have a U.N., if we are

going to have U.N. resolutions, then

they should be enforced, and they

should be expected to comply.

I believe that is where we are. All of

us hope for the best and continue, I

hope, to support the President to do

what is necessary to protect us from

another September 11.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and

suggest the absence of a quorum.