Mr. President, I rise

to speak in support of the Levin

amendment in terms of determining

our action in Iraq.

As a graduate of West Point, the Presiding

Officer knows how great a decision

it is for the U.S. Congress to decide

about war. Now this Senate is considering

the gravest decision we will

ever be called upon to make, which is

to give the President unlimited authority

to go to war, to make a decision to

send American military men and

women in harm’s way. I say to my constituents,

to the people of this country,

and to the military, I take this responsibility

very seriously.

I have listened to the President and

his advisers make their case. I have

consulted with experts and wise heads.

I have participated in hearings and

briefings as a Member of the Senate,

and particularly as a member of the Intelligence

Committee. I have listened

very intently to my own constituents.

I know that the decision we are about

to make will affect the lives of America’s

sons and daughters, and the future

of the United States of America.

But first, let me say a word about our

troops. Each and every member of our

military is part of the American family.

Their service is a tremendous sacrifice

and also a great risk. These are

ordinary men and women, often called

upon to act in a very extraordinary

way, and they have never failed us.

Whatever the Nation asks them to do,

I know they will do it with bravery,

fortitude, and gallantry.

Therefore we, all Americans, owe

them a debt of gratitude. But we owe

them even more. The Congress owes it

to them to choose the wisest, most prudent

course in this matter. As Senators,

we must keep in mind the men

and women of our military.

That is why I support Senator

LEVIN’s resolution on Iraq. I support

that because it meets my principles.

Have all diplomatic and other nonmilitary

means been exhausted? The

Levin resolution turns to the United

Nations and its Security Council to

make a decision in terms of the enforcement

of its own resolutions. It

calls for international legitimacy,

international cooperation, international

support, and, I might add,

international resources. It urges the

Security Council to fill President

Bush’s request to demand Iraqi disarmament

and to authorize the use of a

multinational military force if Iraq refuses

to comply. If the U.N. refuses to

act under the Levin amendment, Congress

would then promptly consider

whether America should act alone.

Senator LEVIN’s is not the only resolution

before the Senate. As I have

looked at all of them, I asked questions.

First, what really is Saddam

Hussein’s intent?

Second, does he have the means to

accomplish this intent? Does he have

weapons of mass destruction: chemical,

biological, and nuclear?

Third, how grave and imminent is

the threat? Is the Iraqi threat best met

by a unilateral approach or a vigorous

international response?

Finally, what are the consequences of

our action? What will our military face

in Iraq? What will be the impact on

Iraq and the Middle East? What does

this mean to the war on terrorism?

These are the kinds of questions I am

asking myself so I can make a wise decision.

But make no mistake, I firmly believe

that Saddam Hussein is

duplicitous, deceptive, and dangerous. I

despise him. Saddam is a brutal, totalitarian

dictator and history shows us

how dangerous Iraq is under his rule.

He invaded Kuwait and used chemical

weapons against his own people. I do

believe he has developed chemical and

biological weapons, and I also believe

he is pursuing nuclear weapons,

defying the will of the international

community and also denying the agreement

that he made at the end of the

gulf war.

I also really do not believe Saddam is

going to change. The question then is,

what does this mean for the future? I

think Iraq does have the grim and

ghoulish means to carry out its evil

plans. I think if we look at declassified

CIA reports and the British white

paper, we can see that Iraq does continue

to develop and produce and

stockpile chemical and biological

weapons, and is trying to get the technology

and materials to produce nuclear

weapons. So these threats cannot

and must not be ignored.

Therefore, what is the best way to

proceed? My analysis further indicates

that Saddam Hussein just doesn’t

threaten the United States or our assets

or our people abroad. He threatens

the entire region. He also threatens

treasured allies. And because the

threat is greater than ourselves, we

must bring the international community

with us, to share the responsibility

and the burden of stopping these

threats.

This is why I support the Levin

amendment. It is our best chance to

forge a vigorous international response,

and to also have the backing of

a multinational military response.

The Levin amendment requires four

things. It urges the U.N. Security

Council to promptly adopt a resolution

demanding access to U.N. inspectors to

destroy Iraq’s missiles and weapons of

mass destruction. We know that works.

When the inspectors were in Iraq, they

destroyed more weapons of mass destruction

than we did during the gulf

war.

The Levin amendment authorizes

member states to use necessary and appropriate

force if Iraq refuses to comply.

I understand the use of force might

be necessary. It also very clearly asserts

and affirms the U.S. right to selfdefense.

It authorizes the President to use

armed force to fulfill the U.N. Security

Council resolution, provided the President

determines that diplomacy was

tried and exhausted first. It also tells

us not to adjourn so Congress can further

consider action if the U.N. fails.

That is what we are looking at. The

consequences of committing American

troops to war in Iraq are very serious

and they must be carefully reviewed.

The question is, will our American

troops be welcomed with flags or will

they be welcomed with land mines? Our

troops could face an Iraqi military entrenched

in cities instead of the open

desert warfare of the gulf war. Iraq

could use chemical and biological

weapons right on our troops as we are

engaged in battle. They could also do

this against their own Iraqi civilians.

This is why I believe America should

not face these threats alone. If we go

in, we should not go in by ourselves. If

the threat is so real, the world should

take it seriously and then vote to be

able to come with us.

When I finish, yes.

America cannot face this situation

alone. The support and cooperation of

allies would enable us to share the

risks and the cost. We need international

legitimacy, international support,

and international manpower.

What happens when we win the war?

Military victory is only the start of

U.S. engagement in Iraq. Fostering a

new regime could take decades. Most

people don’t realize that Iraq is an artificial

construct, formed in 1920 by a

League of Nations mandate after the

first World War. Iraq has no unifying

history or culture or religion or language:

Its population is deeply divided

on ethnic and religious lines.

The end of Saddam Hussein could

mean the start of a civil war. Fostering

the creation of new government in Iraq

will not be easy. There is no real opposition

group ready to take over because

Saddam’s totalitarian regime does not

tolerate opposition.

If Saddam is overthrown—we have to

be prepared for what happens next. Will

American troops become an army of

occupation or will Iraq fall into chaos

and civil war?

America cannot face this situation

alone. The support and cooperation of

allies would enable us to share the

risks and the costs.

War on Iraq could also have unintended

consequences for the Middle

East. Some optimists see war in Iraq

leading to democratization and peace

in the Middle East. They predict the

overthrow of undemocratic regimes in

Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria and other

countries. But there is a real risk that

attacking Iraq would unify Arab countries

and the wider Muslim world

against us. We are already seeing signs

of cooperation between Sunni and Shi

’ite extremists and terrorist groups.

A mandate from the United Nations

would mean the international community

against Saddam instead of the

United States against Iraq. Other countries

in the region would join our coalition,

rather than obstructing or opposing

us.

I also worry that unilateral action

could undermine the war on terrorism.

Some special forces are already being

withdrawn from the efforts to hunt al-

Qaida in Afghanistan. Intelligence resources

would be re-directed to cover

Iraq, reducing our focus on Afghanistan

and Pakistan. Arab and Muslim

states may reduce their intelligence

cooperation against al-Qaida and other

terrorist groups. The focus of our top

military and civilian leaders could

shift away from bin Laden and al-

Qaida. There are other issues.

An international coalition helps address

the impact of war in Iraq on the

war on terrorism. By sharing the burden

during and after a war, more of our

troops and resources can pursue the

war on terrorism by keeping together

the global coalition against terrorist

groups.

I want to conclude by thanking

President Bush for engaging in intensive

diplomacy at the U.N. I know the

Bush administration is being aggressive

at the U.N. and in the key states,

including Russia, China, and France. I

applaud the President for this.

President Bush also made it clear

that the U.N. has a responsibility to

address Iraq’s threat to international

peace and security. I absolutely agree

with him on this. But also I agree we

have to get the United Nations Security

Council authorization to form an

international coalition.

We cannot fail to act if action is necessary,

but we must take the time to

see if we can minimize the danger and

also build a coalition to share the risk.

An international coalition would do

that.

The Senate faces difficult decisions

on how to address the Iraqi threat. I

believe the Levin amendment is by far

the strongest option. It endorses the

President’s speech to the United Nations,

strengthening the U.S. position

in multilateral diplomacy and authorizing

the use of force only if authorized

by the U.N. Security Council without

ruling out the possibility that Congress

will authorize the unilateral use of

force if that decision becomes necessary.

Most importantly, the Levin

resolution presents the best hope for

the United States to achieve international

support and a multinational

military coalition to address the Iraqi

threat to peace and security.

Therefore, I look forward to voting

for the Levin amendment. I urge my

colleagues to join me in doing that because

I believe the way to deal with

this issue is international support and

a multinational military coalition,

should force be necessary.

Before I yield the floor, I turn to the

Senator from Colorado, who had a

question.

I say to the Senator,

I did not hear his comments at the

press conference.

I applaud Secretary Powell. I think

his is a vigorous effort to try to resolve

the situation through diplomatic

means, to send a message to Saddam

that he should voluntarily disarm and

let the inspectors in.

That might not work. But it is then

up to the U.N., as the President said

when he spoke to them, to take responsibility;

to therefore authorize action

to enforce their own resolutions so the

United States of America is not doing

this all by ourselves. It is not America

versus Saddam. It should be the international

community against Saddam

because, I think you would agree, he is

a despicable cad.

I see. I thought you

were talking about sending a message

to Saddam. No. I understand. I believe

the Levin amendment is a pretty muscular

amendment, saying back to the

U.N., you passed those resolutions, you

should really step up to those resolutions,

and putting the pressure back on

them; and also saying, we are not going

to adjourn until we hear what you are

going to do. And we will be ready to respond

promptly.

So I think the Levin amendment is a

fairly muscular amendment.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.