Madam President, the

Senate is, by design, a deliberative institution.

Over this past week, we have

witnessed thoughtful debate and commentary

on how to meet the challenge

of Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. Ours is not

an academic exercise; debate informs

our decision whether to authorize the

President to use force if necessary to

enforce U.N. Security Council resolutions

dealing with Iraqi disarmament.

There are no easy answers in Iraq.

The decision to commit our troops to

war is the most difficult decision Members

of Congress make. Each course of

action we consider in Iraq leads us into

imperfect, dangerous, and unknown situations.

But we cannot avoid decision

on Iraq. The President cannot avoid decision

on Iraq. The risks of inaction are

too high. We are elected to solve problems,

not just debate them. The time

has come to chart a new course in Iraq

and in the Middle East.

History informs our debate and our

decisions. We know tyranny cannot be

appeased. We also know our power and

influence are enhanced by both a nobility

of purpose and the support of allies

and institutions that reinforce an

international commitment to peace

and prosperity. We know war has its

own dynamic, that it favors neither

ideology, nor democracy, nor tyranny,

that men and women die, and that nations

and individuals who know war

are never again the same.

President Bush has rightly brought

the case against Iraq back before the

United Nations. Our problems with

Iraq, as well as terrorism and the

worldwide proliferation of weapons of

mass destruction, are not America’s

alone. Israel, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia,

Kuwait, Iraq’s own Kurdish population,

and other nations and peoples

are on the front lines of Saddam Hussein’s

ambitions for weapons of mass

death.

The United Nations, with American

leadership, must act decisively to end

Saddam Hussein’s decade-long violations

of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

America’s best case for the possible

use of force against Iraq rests with the

American and international commitment

to enforcing Iraq’s disarmament.

The diplomatic process is not easy, and

we face the competing interests and demands

of Russia, France, China, and

others, whose interests in Iraq may not

always be the same as ours. A regional

and international coalition is essential

for creating the political environment

that will be required for any action we

take in Iraq, and especially for how we

sustain a democratic transition in a

post-Saddam Iraq. We cannot do it

alone.

America—including the Congress—

and the world, must speak with one

voice about Iraqi disarmament, as it

must continue to do so in the war on

terrorism.

Because the stakes are so high,

America must be careful with her rhetoric

and mindful of how others perceive

her intentions. Actions in Iraq must

come in the context of an Americanled,

multilateral approach to disarmament,

not as the first case for a new

American doctrine involving the preemptive

use of force. America’s challenge

in this new century will be to

strengthen its relationships around the

world while leading the world in our

war on terrorism, for it is the success

of the first challenge that will determine

the success of the second. We

should not mistake our foreign policy

priorities for ideology in a rush to proclaim

a new doctrine in world affairs.

America must understand it cannot

alone win a war against terrorism. It

will require allies, friends, and

partners.

American leadership in the world will

be further defined by our actions in

Iraq and the Middle East. What begins

in Iraq will not end in Iraq. There will

be other ‘‘Iraqs.’’ There will be continued

acts of terrorism, proliferating

powers, and regional conflicts. If we do

it right and lead through the U.N., in

concert with our allies, we can set a

new standard for American leadership

and international cooperation. The perception

of American power is power,

and how our power is perceived can either

magnify or diminish our influence

in the world. The Senate has a constitutional

responsibility and an institutional

obligation in this effort.

Federalist Paper No. 63 specifically

notes the responsibilities of the Senate

in foreign affairs as follows:

Remarkable words. The resolution

before us today should be tried in that

same light as the Federalist Papers

points out. The original resolution proposed

by the Bush administration, S.J.

Res. 45, would have been a setback for

this institution. It did not reflect the

best democratic traditions of either

Congressional-Executive relations, or

the conduct of American foreign policy.

S.J. Res. 46, sponsored by Senators

LIEBERMAN, WARNER, MCCAIN, and

BAYH, is a far more responsible and accountable

document than the one we

started with 3 weeks ago. I congratulate

my colleagues, especially Senators

LUGAR, BIDEN, and DASCHLE, and the

four sponsors of this resolution, for

their efforts and leadership in getting

it to this point.

S.J. Res. 46 narrows the authorization

for the use of force to all relevant

U.N. resolutions regarding Iraq, and to

defending our national interests

against the threats posed by Iraq. It includes

support for U.S. diplomatic efforts

at the U.N.; a requirement that,

before taking action, the President formally

determines that diplomatic or

other peaceful means will not be adequate

in meeting our objectives; reference

to the war powers resolution requirements;

and periodic reports to

Congress that include those actions described

in the section of the Iraq Liberation

Act of 1998 regarding assistance

and support for Iraq upon replacement

of Saddam Hussein. This resolution

recognizes Congress as a coequal partner

in dealing with the threat from

Saddam Hussein’s Iraq.

If disarmament in Iraq requires the

use of force, we need to consider carefully

the implications and consequences

of our actions. The future of

Iraq after Saddam Hussein is also an

open question. Some of my colleagues

and some American analysts now speak

authoritatively of Sunnis, Shiites, and

Kurds in Iraq, and how Iraq can be a

test case for democracy in the Arab

world.

How many of us really know and understand

much about Iraq, the country,

the history, the people, the role in the

Arab world? I approach the issue of

post-Saddam Iraq and the future of democracy

and stability in the Middle

East with more caution, realism, and a

bit more humility. While the people of

the Arab world need no education from

America about Saddam’s record of deceit,

aggression, and brutality, and

while many of them may respect and

desire the freedoms the American

model offers, imposing democracy

through force in Iraq is a roll of the

dice. A democratic effort cannot be

maintained without building durable

Iraqi political institutions and developing

a regional and international

commitment to Iraq’s reconstruction.

No small task.

To succeed, our commitment must

extend beyond the day after to the

months and years after Saddam is

gone. The American people must be

told of this long-term commitment,

risk, and costs of this undertaking.

We should not be seduced by the expectations

of ‘‘dancing in the streets’’

after Saddam’s regime has fallen, the

kites, the candy, and cheering crowds

we expect to greet our troops, but instead,

focus on the great challenges

ahead, the commitment and resources

that will be needed to ensure a democratic

transition in Iraq and a more

stable and peaceful Middle East. We

should spend more time debating the

cost and extent of this commitment,

the risks we may face in military engagement

with Iraq, the implications

of the precedent of United States military

action for regime change, and the

likely character and challenges of a

post-Saddam Iraq. We have heard precious

little from the President, his

team, as well as from this Congress,

with a few notable exceptions, about

these most difficult and critical questions.

We need only look to Afghanistan

where the Afghan people joyously welcomed

our liberation force but, months

later, a fragile transition government

grapples with rebuilding a fractured

political culture, economy, and country.

However, Iraq, because of its resources,

geography, capabilities, history,

and people, offers even more complications

and greater peril and, yes,

greater opportunities and greater

promise. This is the vast unknown, the

heavy burden that lies ahead.

The Senate should not cast a vote in

the hopes of putting Iraq behind us so

we can get back to our campaigns or

move on to other issues next year. The

decision to possibly commit a nation to

war cannot and should not ever be considered

in the context of either party

loyalty or campaign politics. I regret

that this vote will take place under the

cloud and pressure of elections next

month. Some are already using the

Iraq issue to gain advantage in political

campaigns. It might have been better

for our vote to have been delayed

until after the elections, as it was in

1990. Authorizing the use of force

against Iraq or any country for any

purpose should always be weighed on

its own merits, not with an eye on the

politics of the vote or campaign TV

spots. War is too serious, the human

price too high, and the implications

unforeseen.

While I cannot predict the future, I

believe that what we decide in this

Chamber this week will influence

America’s security and role in the

world for the coming decades. It will

serve as the framework, both intentionally

and unintentionally, for the

future. It will set in motion a series of

actions and events that we cannot now

understand or control.

In authorizing the use of force

against Iraq, we are at the beginning of

a road that has no clear end. The votes

in Congress this week are votes for an

intensification of engagement with

Iraq and the Middle East, a world of

which we know very little and whose

destiny will now be directly tied to

ours.

America cannot trade a new focus on

Iraq for a lesser effort in the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict. The bloodshed between

Israel and the Palestinians continues,

and the danger mounts. Stability

in Afghanistan is not assured.

We must carry through with our commitment.

Stability in this region depends

on it. America’s credibility is at

stake, and long-term stability in central

and South Asia hangs in the balance.

We must also continue to pay close

attention to North Korea where there

is no guesswork about nuclear weapons.

There on the Korean peninsula reside

nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles,

and 37,000 American troops. Despite

setting the right course for disarmament

in Iraq, the administration

has yet to define an end game in Iraq

or explain the extent of the American

commitment if regime change is required,

or describe how our actions in

Iraq might affect our other many interests

and commitments around the

world.

I share the hope of a better world

without Saddam Hussein, but we do not

really know if our intervention in Iraq

will lead to democracy in either Iraq or

elsewhere in the Arab world. America

has continued to take on large, complicated,

and expensive responsibilities

that will place heavy burdens on all of

us over the next generation. It may

well be necessary, but Americans

should understand the extent of this

burden and what may be required to

pay for it and support it in both American

blood and trade.

As the Congress votes on this resolution,

we must understand that we have

not put Iraqi issues behind us. This is

just the beginning. The risks should

not be understated, miscast, or misunderstood.

Ours is a path of both peril

and opportunity with many detours

and no shortcuts.

We in the Congress are men and

women of many parts. For me, it is the

present-day Senator, the former soldier,

or concerned father who guides

my judgment and ultimate vote? It is

pieces of all, for I am pieces of all. The

responsibilities of each lead me to support

the Lieberman-McCain-Warner-

Bayh resolution, for which I will vote.

In the end, each of us who has the

high honor of holding public office has

the burden and privilege of decision

and responsibilities. It is a sacred trust

we share with the public. We will be

held accountable for our actions, as it

must be.

Madam President, I yield the floor.