Mr. President, President

Bush described in Cincinnati in detail

the threat that the Saddam Hussein regime

poses. I have relatively few differences

with that description, and I

believe if Saddam Hussein continues to

refuse to meet his obligation to destroy

his weapons of mass destruction and

his prohibited missile delivery systems,

that the United Nations should

authorize member states to use military

force to destroy those weapons

and systems and that the United States

Armed Forces should participate in and

lead a United Nations authorized force.

That is what my amendment provides.

The issue that is in dispute is whether

unilateral force should be authorized

by Congress at this time in case the

United Nations does not act—whether

we should authorize the President now

to go it alone without U.N. authorization

if the United Nations does not act.

How we answer that question could

have a profound and lasting effect on

the safety of our children and grandchildren

for decades to come because

the difference between attacking a nation

with the support of the world community

or attacking it without such

support is fundamental.

The President answers the question

by seeking a resolution from Congress

that gives him the authority to use

force under the auspices of the United

Nations or to go it alone if the United

Nations fails to act. He seeks this unilateral

authority even though he does

not condition its use on the threat to

the United States by Saddam as being

imminent.

Indeed, the President stated in the

national security strategy that was released

by the White House last month

that preemptive attacks to forestall or

prevent hostile acts by our adversaries

can now be undertaken although a

threat is not imminent.

The new strategy the President has

adopted explicitly states:

The President’s Iraq resolution and

the national security strategy, therefore,

both take the position that an imminent

threat is no longer required as

a basis for our military action in selfdefense.

The President is explicitly

seeking to modify the traditional concept

of preemption by deleting the

need for ‘‘imminent’’ and substituting

that of ‘‘sufficient threat’’ in the strategy

document and ‘‘continuing threat’’

in the proposed resolution—dropping

the requirement for ‘‘imminent’’—that

the threat be imminent—and substituting

something far less—‘‘sufficient’’

or ‘‘continuing.’’

That the President is seeking authorization

for a unilateral preemptive attack

without U.N. authorization or requirement

of imminent threat is at the

heart of the Senate debate that is presently

taking place.

Under the traditional international

law concept of preemption in self-defense,

the United States would be justified

in acting alone in the case of a serious

threat to our Nation that is imminent.

In a case where a threat is not

imminent, military action would also

be justified if it were carried out pursuant

to the authorization for the use of

force by member states of the United

Nations.

The choice facing the Senate is

whether Congress should now, at this

time, give the President the authority

to go it alone, to act unilaterally

against Iraq if the United Nations fails

to act.

Congress is being presented with this

issue at the very same time our Secretary

of State is trying to get the

United Nations to back a tough new

resolution authorizing member states

to use military force to enforce Iraqi

compliance with inspections and disarmament.

On Monday, the President said:

I have asked Congress to authorize use of

America’s military if it proves necessary to

enforce U.N. Security Council demands.

That sounds like my alternative, but

in fact the White House resolution asks

for much more.

The resolution the White House seeks

is not limited to the use of force if the

United Nations authorizes it. On the

contrary, it specifically authorizes now

the use of force on a unilateral, go-italone

basis, that is, without Security

Council authorization. The President’s

rhetoric does not match the resolution

before us.

The White House approach also authorizes

the use of force beyond dealing

with Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction

and their means of delivery, which

is also a difference from my resolution.

The resolution which I offer on behalf

of those cosponsors and myself is consistent

with how I think most Americans

want us to proceed. It emphasizes

the importance of dealing with Iraq on

a multilateral basis, and it withholds

judgment at this time on the question

of whether the United States should go

it alone, that is, whether we should act

unilaterally against Iraq if the United

Nations fails to act.

This resolution I am offering does the

following: First, it urges the United

Nations Security Council to adopt a

resolution promptly that demands unconditional

access for U.N. inspectors

so Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction

and prohibited ballistic missiles may

be located and destroyed, and within

that same U.N. resolution authorizes

the use of necessary and appropriate

force by U.N. member states as a

means of enforcement in the event that

Iraq refuses to comply.

Our resolution also specifically authorizes

use of United States Armed

Forces pursuant to that U.N. Security

Council resolution if Iraq fails to comply

with its terms and the President

informs the Congress of his determination

that the United States has used

appropriate diplomatic and other

peaceful means to obtain Iraqi compliance

with such a U.N. resolution. Our

resolution affirms that under international

law and under the U.N. charter,

especially article 51, the United

States has at all times the inherent

right to use military force in self-defense.

This affirms the fact that there

is no U.N. veto over U.S. military action.

I repeat that because some of our colleagues

have suggested otherwise about

our resolution. The resolution we are

offering explicitly affirms the fact

there is no U.N. veto over U.S. military

action because we state explicitly the

United States has at all times an inherent

right to use military force in

self-defense. Our resolution also provides

Congress will not adjourn sine die

so that Congress can return to session,

if necessary, and promptly consider

proposals relative to Iraq if, in the

judgment of the President, the U.N. Security

Council does not promptly act

on the resolution I have described

above.

Our resolution therefore supports the

President’s appeal to the United Nations

and it approves now the use of

our Armed Forces to support the action

of the United Nations to force

compliance by Saddam Hussein with

inspections and disarmament. However,

it does not authorize now, before

we know whether or not we have the

world community on our side, U.S.

Armed Forces going alone. Should we

need to consider that possibility at a

future time, the resolution provides for

the immediate recall of Congress to do

so.

Our resolution does not, on the matter

of war and peace, life and death, exceed

the grant of authority needed by

the President at this time.

If Congress instead endorses the

White House approach, allowing the

unilateral use of force at this time,

even in the absence of a U.N. authorization,

we will be sending an inconsistent

message. We will be telling the

United Nations that if they do not act,

we will, at the same time we are urging

them to act. We would be taking the

U.N. off the hook if we adopt the go-italone

resolution. We would be telling

the United Nations they are not particularly

relevant at the same time we

are urging them to be very relevant. If

we want the United Nations to be relevant

and credible, if we want the

United Nations to succeed, if we want

the United Nations not to be limited to

humanitarian and disaster relief and

other tasks that are mighty useful but

not essential—and I think most of us

do—then we have to focus our efforts

there and give those efforts a chance to

succeed.

If we act wisely, authorizing the use

of our forces pursuant to a U.N. resolution

authorizing member States to use

force, we will not only unite the Congress,

ultimately we will unite the

world community on a course of action

that will seek the elimination of Saddam

Hussein’s ability to threaten the

world with weapons of mass destruction.

That is where our focus should be,

uniting the world, not dividing it.

Moreover, a going-alone approach, in

which we attack Iraq without the support

and participation of the world

community, entails serious risks and

could have serious consequences for us

in the Middle East and around the

world. It makes a difference, when deciding

to use force, whether that use of

force has the support of the world community.

It makes a difference for us in

the current situation involving a possible

attack on Iraq. If we go it alone,

will we be able to use air bases, ports,

supply bases, overflight rights in the

region? Those rights and capabilities

are important to the success of a military

operation against Saddam.

The Saudis have said publicly that

without the U.N. authorization, we will

not have access to important bases,

and that is just one country. Others

have said something very similar. If we

go it alone, will there be a reduction in

the broad international support for the

war on terrorism, including the law enforcement,

financial and intelligence

cooperation that is so essential? If we

go it alone, will that destabilize an already

volatile region and undermine

governments such as Jordan and Pakistan?

Could we possibly end up with a

radical regime in Pakistan, a country

which has nuclear weapons? If we go it

alone, will Saddam Hussein or his military

commanders be more likely to use

weapons of mass destruction against

other nations in the region and against

our military forces in response to our

attack? That would be the case if he

faced a U.N.-authorized coalition, particularly

if that coalition included

Muslim nations as the coalition did

during the gulf war.

If we go it alone, will we be undercutting

efforts to get other countries to

help us with the expensive and lengthy

task of stabilizing Iraq after Saddam is

removed? Beyond the current situation

relative to using force in Iraq, going it

alone without U.N. authorization,

based on a modified concept of preemption

that no longer requires the threat

to be imminent, will lead to a serious

risk to international peace and security.

If we act unilaterally, without

U.N. authority or an imminent threat,

that will create a dangerous situation

for international peace and stability in

the long term. We will be inviting

other nations to forego an important

rule of international law requiring a

serious and imminent threat before one

nation can attack another nation in

the name of self-defense.

India and Pakistan have a continuing

threat, in their view, from each other.

Even Greece and Turkey at times view

each other as a continuing threat. If

that becomes the test, and if we set the

precedent in this resolution to authorize

that kind of attack, in the absence

of an imminent threat, we will be setting

the world on a very different

course, and we must consider a long

time before doing that. That is what

we should be called back into session

to consider if the U.N. does not authorize

force.

By seeking a U.N. resolution that

will authorize U.N. member States to

use force if Iraq does not comply with

its terms, we are not giving the United

Nations a veto over the conduct of our

foreign policy. What we are doing is

getting from the United Nations

strength and international support

should military force be necessary. We

should be seeking to unite the world

against Saddam Hussein, not dividing

it. Our immediate objective should be

to get the United Nations to act, locate,

and destroy Iraq’s weapons of

mass destruction and the means of delivering

them. The threat Saddam presents

is real and we should deal with it.

But authorization for preemptive, unilateral

U.S. action in Iraq does not

need to, and should not be granted at

this time. If the U.N. does not act, Congress

can be called back promptly to

consider a request to authorize force

unilaterally and to consider the serious

and different risks involved in pursuing

the unilateral course.

Last Monday’s Washington Post carried

a story in which a senior European

official’s response to the U.S. going it

alone was:

For those who would agree to participate

militarily:

Javier Solana, former NATO Secretary-

General, currently the EU’s top

foreign policy official, in an address at

NATO headquarters last week stated:

Just last week, after hearing from

Prime Minister Blair and Foreign Minister

Straw, the ruling Labor Party’s

conference in Britain issued a formal

position on Iraq that included the following:

Just last Friday, Turkey’s Presidential

spokesman said his nation

would participate in a campaign

against Iraq only if the world body

blessed them, stating ‘‘an operation

not based on international law cannot

be accepted.’’

The best chance of having Saddam

Hussein comply with U.N. Security

Council resolutions is to make sure

when he looks down the barrel of a gun

that he sees the world at the other end,

not just the United States. I believe he

will not open up to inspections without

looking down the barrel of a gun. I

think only the credible threat of force

will, indeed, disarm Saddam Hussein.

But the question remains whether or

not we want that force to be the

world’s authorized, supported force, or

whether or not we at this time want to

say, well, if they don’t, we will. We will

go it alone. When we do not need to address

that issue at this time when the

President is going to the United Nations,

when it undermines our argument

at the United Nations that we

want them and need them to adopt a

strong resolution, to enforce it, to authorize

member states to use military

force to enforce it. That is the direction

we should be going, that is the

focus we should have, and it should be

strong and undiluted, the question of

whether we authorize at this time a goit-

alone approach, when that is not

what is needed at this time.

Congress should give the President

what he said in Cincinnati he was asking

for: The authority to use U.S. military

force to enforce U.S. Security

Council demands; not what the resolution

that is supported by the White

House provides, which is going-it-alone

authority. Our focus then would be

where it belongs, securing a United Nations

resolution that can unite the

world; that has the best chance of forcing

compliance and avoiding war; that

reduces the risk to our forces and to

our interests throughout the world;

that avoids to the maximum extent

possible the negative consequences if

force is required, including the loss of

cooperation on the war on terrorism.

That is the best chance of isolating

Saddam Hussein, rather than isolating

the United States.

I wonder how much time I have remaining?

I turn that into a question,

whether or not I agree. It seems

to me the opposite is true. We are asking

the United Nations to take action.

We want them to do it with one step.

My resolution urges one step—impose

the obligation on Saddam Hussein, and

authorize force to enforce that mandate.

It is one step in my resolution.

If we go to the U.N., as we are now

doing, and say we really need you, it is

really important we have United Nations

support, that is what we are saying,

the President said we want you to

be credible, it is totally inconsistent at

the same time in your resolution to

say, by the way, if you do not do it, we

will. It just takes the United Nations

off the hook. It sends the opposite message

to the U.N. from what we should

be saying to the United Nations and I

thought the President was saying to

the United Nations: We want you to be

credible. We need the world to come together

for Saddam Hussein.

The resolution that the Senator from

Virginia and the Senator from Connecticut

supports is basically to say, if

you do not do it, we will go it alone.

That is the wrong message to the

world for many reasons.

I think the circumstances

would determine the answer

to that question that exists at the

time. But the risks of going it alone

are so much greater than going multilateral

support. It seems to me we

should consider those risks before

reaching a decision. Tonight I have laid

out some of those risks which I believe

are serious risks of going it alone. That

is what I think we would all need to

consider at great length before authorizing

going-it-alone authority.

It is quite the opposite.

The good Senator from Connecticut

read the language which makes it clear

there is no veto. We can always have

the inherent right to use military force

in self-defense, period. We never will

yield that to the United Nations or to

anyone else.

My good friend from Connecticut was

the author of a resolution back in 1991.

He led the way on this authorization in

the gulf war. The Senator was correct

in his analysis, that we should move in

the gulf war, and my good friend from

Virginia was as well. That resolution

the Senator from Connecticut offered

to support military action in the gulf

war said the following: The President

is authorized, subject to subsection (b),

to use United States Armed Forces

pursuant to United Nations Security

Council Resolution 678.

The Senator from Connecticut and

the Senator from Virginia in the gulf

war resolution had language which was

adopted by a close majority, but nonetheless

adopted, which said the President

is authorized to use United States

Armed Forces pursuant to the United

Nations Security Council resolution.

Nobody suggested then that the Senator

from Connecticut was giving the

United Nations a veto over U.S. military

force. That was a grant of authority

to enforce a United Nations resolution.

That is the same language we are

using.

I will put that in the

form of a question.

I vehemently disagree. I urge the

Senator from Connecticut to read the

language, which flat out says: We affirm

‘‘the United States has at all

times the inherent right to use military

force in self-defense. . . .’’ We affirm

that.

The Senator from Connecticut, in the

resolution in 1991, did not even affirm

that. It just simply authorized the

President to use military force pursuant

to the United Nations Security

Council resolution. No one suggested

then that anyone was ceding the power

to use our force to the United Nations.

Yet in our resolution, the alternative

resolution, the multilateral resolution,

for some reason, the folks who are supporting

the go-it-alone resolution are

suggesting we are ceding something to

the U.N. when we explicitly reaffirm

our right to self-defense.