Mr. President, I do

think our distinguished Senator from

New Jersey stressed the sense of urgency

that is upon us right now when

he said perhaps the greatest decision

we will have to make during the terms

we are serving is going to be tomorrow.

I think that is probably right. Even

though I disagree with many of the

things he stated, I certainly respect

him for the commitment and belief he

has in his interpretation of the facts

and the course we should take.

I have been listening for quite a number

of hours now, and I quite frankly

have to say it has not been all that

easy. I believe tomorrow we will give

the President of the United States the

full support of this body in order to

send the right message to Saddam Hussein

and to terrorists all over the

world, and that message is this: The

United States of America will not live

in fear.

I have ended every speech I have

made since 1995 with one sentence, and

I feel compelled to start this speech

with that sentence. That sentence is

that we today are in the most vulnerable

and threatened position we have

been in in our Nation’s history.

In January 2002, our President gave a

magnificent State of the Union address.

He said:

The handwringers have already marshaled

their special interest groups to

delay this body from giving our President

the homeland security bill he

asked for way back in June. And just

like the homeland security bill, they

are trying to weaken the President’s

ability to protect this Nation with a

hollow resolution against Iraq.

We are going to have to give the

President the flexibility he needs to

protect this Nation. Making the potential

use of U.S. military force contingent

upon the current deliberations of

the U.N. Security Council is absurd.

Our national security must not be tied

to the actions of the ‘‘mother of all

handwringers,’’ the United Nations.

I keep hearing a grinding noise. It is

our forefathers turning over in their

graves. Can they really believe this Nation

would get into the position where

we would have to ask some multinational

organization before our President

had the right to defend America?

I think not. And why are we letting the

same groups of individuals that have

prevented us from getting a homeland

security bill, during a time of war, by

the way, from supporting the President

of the United States? What is next? Do

they want us to go to the United Nations

to get a homeland security bill?

The American people have to wonder

about this one simple question: Why do

those who oppose the President’s resolution

trust the United Nations more

than they trust the President of the

United States?

The United Nations did not stop in

1992 the threat of 100 servicemen in

Yemen. The United Nations did not

stop the 18 rangers from dying in Somalia

or their naked bodies from being

dragged through the streets of

Mogadishu. The United Nations did not

stop the World Trade Center, the first

bombing in 1993. They did not stop

Khobar Towers in 1996. They did not

stop the Embassy bombings of Kenya

and Tanzania in 1998. They did not stop

or prevent the loss of 17 sailors’ lives in

Yemen in 2000. The United Nations did

not stop the airplanes from flying into

the World Trade Center, into the Pentagon,

and the field in Pennsylvania.

The United Nations will not stop Saddam

Hussein from giving a nuclear device

to a terrorist, putting it on an airplane

and flying it into an American

city. Of course, this time, instead of

3,000 deaths, there could be hundreds of

thousands of deaths.

I often remember the television

scenes, the horrible scenes from New

York City of the airplanes hitting into

the World Trade Center. Then I

thought, if that had been the weapon of

choice of a terrorist—in other words, a

nuclear warhead on a missile—there

would be nothing left but a piece of

charcoal. We would not be talking

about 3,000 lives, we would be talking

about 2 or 3 million lives.

Why should the President of the

United States delegate his responsibility

of protecting this Nation to the

United Nations? We made a similar

mistake back in 1998. Look where it

has gotten us. In 1998, in an attempt to

get the Iraqi regime to comply with

the U.N. resolutions—doesn’t that

sound familiar—the administration

blessed Secretary Annan’s trip to

Baghdad, and in doing so let the United

Nations negotiate on behalf of the

United States, which proved to be a

very serious mistake. Part of that particular

agreement was the recognition

of the eight palaces as special sites.

And that compromise continues to

haunt us today. The administration

should not have let the United Nations

negotiate and compromise for the

United States in 1998. And the current

administration should not do it now

and will not do it now.

My distinguished colleague, the

chairman of the Armed Services Committee,

likes to say: Saddam is looking

down the barrel of a gun. He should be

looking at the international community

at the other end, not the United

States.

While I respect my friend and colleague

and admire his passion behind

his convictions, I could not disagree

more. Saddam Hussein has been looking

down the gun barrel of the international

community for 11 years. The

problem is that he knows the gun is

full of blanks. The Iraqi regime knows

the United States does not shoot

blanks, which is why they continue to

manipulate and deceive the United Nations.

I know our Secretary of State is

working very closely with the members

of the Security Council in order to get

a U.N. resolution against Iraq that is

not full of blanks. I hope he has already

expressed to the Security Council

this Nation is united, and with the

overwhelming support of the American

people and this Congress in the form of

support of the President’s resolution,

we choose to exercise our right to defend

ourselves. How unreasonable of us.

We have the right under international

law to defend ourselves. Article

51 of the United Nations Charter

states: Nothing in the present charter

shall impair the inherent right of an

individual or collective self-defense if

an armed attack occurs against a member

of the United Nations.

The current Iraqi regime has been

harboring and supporting terrorist networks

since the early 1990s. We know

that, maybe before that. We have been

under attack ever since. I challenge

any of my colleagues to tell any of our

brave soldiers who fly combat planes

over Iraq every day that the surface-toair

missiles Iraq has been firing is not

a hostile act. Iraq forces have fired on

U.S. and British pilots 1,600 times since

2000. Since September 18—remember

what happened on September 18 of this

year—hours after Saddam Hussein

promised to allow the return of U.N.

inspectors without conditions, he fired

on American and British pilots 67

times. That is 67 times since September

18 when he made the promise.

Is anyone home? What message are we

sending our brave men and women in

uniform if we only consider it a hostile

act when one of those missiles hits an

aircraft?

The message we must send our military,

our allies, the United Nations,

and those who support the current

Iraqi regime is that the United States

of America chooses not to live in fear

and we will defend ourselves. That message

will be sent with the overwhelming

passage of the President’s

resolution.

The Armed Services Committee recently

had a series of hearings with

former civilian and military leaders regarding

the Iraqi issue. My fellow colleagues

on the other side of the aisle

have been using some of the testimony

of witnesses to make their case that

the United States must wait for the

United Nations to make a decision. A

lot of people do not realize, but there

are over 4,000 retired generals floating

around the country today. They have

only found three who would agree with

them. So they went out and found the

three who said we have to continue to

wait for the United Nations to solve

the Iraqi issue.

The fourth member of that panel, not

quoted by any of my fellow colleagues,

disagreed with the other three generals.

Lieutenant General McInerney

had the following comments about the

suggestion of weakening the President’s

authority. Members have not

heard this from anyone, just the other

three generals.

He said: If you water this down—

talking about the President’s Iraqi resolution—

you are going to send a signal

to al-Qaida. You may not want to, but

you are going to send it to Saddam and

say, well, we don’t quite trust them.

The signal you want to send is this nation

is united. You want to send that

to the U.N. because I happen to believe—

which is different than General

Clark—I happen to believe this strong

signal will ensure that we have a better

chance of getting it through the United

Nations.

That is what General McInerney said

at the same time the other three generals

said we need to decide what fate

the United Nations will give this great

country.

Saddam Hussein is an evil man. He

butchered his own people. Everyone

agrees. He butchered members of his

own family, two of his own sons-in-law.

He must be stopped. He will be stopped.

Each day that goes by he gets stronger.

There are those who believe the President

has not made a strong enough

case. They say: Where is the evidence?

Why now? Additional inspections will

work, and we do not want another

Vietnam.

To them I ask, Are they more concerned

about a war that took place

over 30 years ago, or the tragic events

that took place on September 11?

As I stand here today, is there more

likely to be another Vietnam or another

September 11?

The President asked a critical question

the other night. He said, if we

know Saddam has dangerous weapons

today, and we do, does it make any

sense for the world to wait to confront

him as he grows even stronger and develops

even more dangerous weapons? I

know what the people of Oklahoma are

more concerned about. The people of

Oklahoma are well aware of what can

happen when evil people unleash weapons

of terror.

Go back and listen to the speeches

the President gave to the U.N. on September

12 and in Cincinnati on October

7. He has made his case. He has made it

to the United Nations, the Congress,

and most importantly to the people of

the United States. The threat is real.

And with every day of delay and deceit

the menace grows stronger.

The current Iraqi regime will continue

to use the United Nations as his

tool until he gets what he may be close

to having—a nuclear weapon. It may

have been the right decision not to go

after Saddam Hussein in 1991, just like

it may have been the right decision for

the previous administration not to go

after Osama bin Laden in the 1990s

when they had the opportunity to do

so. But is it right to go after them both

today? I believe it is.

The big question is does he have a

nuclear weapon? The scary thing is, no

one is able to say that he does not.

Does he have a delivery system? Nobody

is in a position to say that he

doesn’t. This Congress is going to do

the right thing. This Nation is united.

We will defend ourselves. This Congress

must once again unite as we did following

the tragic events of 9/11.

There is another statement a President

made following another tragic

event in our history. Some of you may

remember. The President was motored

from the White House to the Capitol

under heavy security. The American

people were full of emotions, from apprehension

to anger. After being greeted

by rounds of loud applause, the

President of the United States addressed

the Joint Session of Congress.

Here is a quote from that speech. You

have to listen to this, Mr. President.

This is a long quote. This is what the

President said:

The date of that speech was December

8, 1941. President Franklin Roosevelt

gave the speech. Pearl Harbor

and the war that followed led to the restructuring

of our national security

structure.

Today, more than 1 year since 9/11, an

ongoing war against terror, and a possible

conflict with Iraq, we, the Congress,

have not given the American

people a homeland security bill and

some Members of Congress want to put

the security of this country in the

hands of the United Nations.

I repeat, did our forefathers ever believe

we would have to go to a multinational

organization in order to defend

America?

The President of the United States

during a time of war has asked Congress

to give him support to show the

world that this Nation is united. He

has requested the Congress give him

the necessary flexibility to protect the

homeland, to protect the Nation. Telling

the President that he must first

bow to the will of the United Nations is

the wrong message. Here we are today,

just like with the homeland security

issue, letting the hand wringers drive

the debate in a direction that has nothing

to do with the task at hand.

We are going to have to and will give

the President an Iraqi resolution that

does not tie his hands. The Secretary

of Defense has said—and I think this is

so important for us to understand

today, for all of us, for all Americans

to understand. He said:

If the worst were to happen, not one of us

here today will be able to honestly say it was

a surprise. Because it will not be a surprise.

Mr. President, I remember so well—I

am old enough to remember World War

II. I was a very small child. I remember

going to a country schoolhouse named

Hazel Dell. It was way out in the country.

We had eight grades in one room

with a pot-bellied stove there and a

schoolteacher named Harvey Beam. He

was a giant of a man, but I suspect he

wasn’t quite as big as I thought he was

at the time.

I remember studying American history

and studying about how we won a

war and won the freedom in this country

against impossible odds, and how

the greatest army on the face of this

Earth was coming over from Great

Britain and marching toward Lexington

and Concord, and here we were,

a handful of hunters and trappers with

homemade weapons. We fired that shot

heard round the world.

A speech was made that I remember

so well, in the House of Burgesses,

when a tall redhead stood up and said:

At that time, we fired the shot heard

around the world. We knew we were

one nation depending on God to give us

the strength to win a battle that now

historians say could not have been

won. That was the sublime courage we

had in this country, and now the hand

wringers are back.

In 1996, we had an opportunity to end

this whole thing, to get Saddam Hussein.

I suggest to you, if George W.

Bush had been President in 1996, we

would not be here today. It is a nobrainer.

It would have been done.

We had the opposition, including

about 100,000 troops, well trained, and

the Kurds in the north ready to join us,

and we implied to them that we would

do that and we would together take out

Saddam Hussein. What did we do? We

turned our backs on them, and we

walked away. Several thousand Kurds

died as a result of that. Now they are

back. They are willing to join us again.

I wonder about this. Why is it that so

many of the people I have heard on the

floor of this Senate objecting to giving

the President the recognition he needs

to do what he has to do, what is his

constitutional obligation—where were

they in 1998, back when we had another

President, President Clinton, and he

wanted to go after Saddam Hussein?

They were in line, saying: That’s fine;

let’s go get him. Our distinguished majority

leader Senator DASCHLE said:

Senator BIDEN—I have the utmost respect

for him. He came down to the

floor, and he is now saying we don’t

want to move too fast. Then he said we

risk sending a dangerous signal to

other proliferators if we do not respond

decisively to Iraq’s intransigence. That

was 1998. What is different now? Nothing,

except Saddam Hussein is stronger.

Does he have the weaponry? Does he

have the weapons of mass destruction?

Does he have a nuclear warhead? We

don’t know for sure, but we don’t know

he does not.

Let’s go back to the Rumsfeld Commission.

This is 1998. The Rumsfeld

Commission was made up of, I don’t

know, 16 or 18 of the very top military

experts in this country. They said that

U.S. intelligence was shocked by a 1990

Iraqi test of a long-range booster rocket,

showing Iraq was involved in an extensive,

undetected, covert program to

develop nuclear capability ballistic

missiles with intercontinental range.

That was 1990.

People keep saying: Oh, no, this is

not going to happen; they don’t have

this. I remember in 1998, it was August

24 when our intelligence said that it

would be something like 5 to 15 years

before North Korea would have a multiple-

stage rocket. That was August 24,

1998.

Seven days later, on August 31, North

Korea fired one. We know when the

weapons inspectors came back in 1998

after Saddam Hussein kicked them out,

they came before our committee. I can

tell you exactly—I have the transcript

over here—what they said. By and

large, this was it. For the sake of time,

I say in response to our question, in

1998—this is the weapons inspectors

who were over there:

The answer was he could have it in 6

months. That was 1998. George Tenet at

that time said:

Unclassified intelligence told us that

China was transferring technology of

chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons

and missiles to Iraq.

On August 24, in the Washington

Times, it was revealed the intelligence

community warned President Bush

that weapons of mass destruction could

be on their way in a very short period

of time.

Just 2 weeks ago, 3 weeks ago, from

a satellite image, we were able to photograph

trucks, 60 trucks that were

moving around—a biological lab that

we knew was a weapons lab. They are

up to something. Every day something

has happened. The intelligence report

to the administration was that Saddam

Hussein is preparing to use weapons of

mass destruction.

On September 27, Rumsfeld said there

is solid evidence that Saddam Hussein

is negotiating for weapons of mass destruction

with al-Qaida—they are negotiating

with each other, I mean.

With all these things that we know

are going on today, why is it that we

are sitting around, wringing our hands?

We don’t know that he doesn’t already

have it, but we do know this. Every day

that goes by, every week that goes by,

he has a greater opportunity to have

these.

So, I look at this and I think that we

have to remember what Secretary

Rumsfeld said when he talked about

the consequences. He said:

I think tonight we have the Churchills

and the Chamberlains. Tomorrow

we are going to have a lot more

Churchills than Chamberlains and we

are going to stop the hand wringing. It

will all stop tomorrow, and we are

going to give the President of the

United States the resolution that he

knows he needs in order to have the

full support of Congress and the American

people behind him to do what he

knows he must do in defending America.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence

of a quorum.