

Text 1

BUSH: My opponent looked at the same intelligence I looked at and declared in 2002 that Saddam Hussein was a grave threat. He also said in December of 2003 that anyone who doubts that the world is safer without Saddam Hussein does not have the judgment to be president. I agree with him. The world is better off without Saddam Hussein. I was hoping diplomacy would work. I understand the serious consequences of committing our troops into harm's way. It's the hardest decision a president makes. So I went to the United Nations. I didn't need anybody to tell me to go to the United Nations. I decided to go there myself. And I went there hoping that, once and for all, the free world would act in concert to get Saddam Hussein to listen to our demands. I believe, when an international body speaks, it must mean what it says. Saddam Hussein had no intention of disarming. Why should he? He had 16 other resolutions and nothing took place. As a matter of fact, my opponent talks about inspectors. The facts are that he was systematically deceiving the inspectors. That wasn't going to work. That's kind of a pre-September 10th mentality, the hope that somehow resolutions and failed inspections would make this world a more peaceful place. He was hoping we'd turn away. But there were fortunately others beside himself who believed that we ought to take action. We did. The world is safer without Saddam Hussein.

LEHRER: New question, Mr. President. Two minutes. What about Senator Kerry's point, the comparison he drew between the priorities of going after Osama bin Laden and going after Saddam Hussein?