



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *107th* CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2002

Senate

AUTHORIZATION OF THE USE OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AGAINST IRAQ

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I come before the Senate this evening to join in this debate, to express my support for our Nation's effort to address the threat Saddam Hussein poses, and to lay out the concerns that I believe must be addressed if we are to succeed in disarming Iraq. The President has called upon Congress and the American people to support his administration in its effort to eliminate Saddam Hussein's hold on weapons of mass destruction. The Congress has responded by taking up this resolution authorizing the use of force, if needed, to strip Iraq of those weapons and the ability to deliver them. A number of serious questions have been raised in this historic debate. It is critical that President Bush and the Congress fulfill our obligation to all Americans, and to the international community, by ensuring that those questions are faithfully addressed.

Saddam Hussein has shown himself to be an implacable foe of the United States. It is essential that we confront the threat that he represents. The question is not whether we confront it, but how we confront it. We must make every effort to build a multilateral coalition. If we do so, we raise the likelihood of bringing a measure of stability to a turbulent part of the world. If we do so, we can minimize the impact of any conflict

on the Iraqi people, on Iraq's neighbors and on American and allied forces. And if we do so, we will serve to strengthen, not undermine, the international laws and institutions that have served us well in the years since World War II.

Leadership is a responsibility that cannot be taken lightly. Leadership in deciding whether to resort to military force requires the greatest deliberation and consideration. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, in recent testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, said that "no one with any sense considers war a first choice--it is the last thing that any rational person wants to do. And it is important that the issues surrounding this decision be discussed and debated."

It is clear to me that millions of Americans are discussing and debating the issues (that are before us this evening. I have heard from Delawareans throughout my state. I have heard from veterans who know the harsh realities of war. I have heard children who can scarcely imagine it. I am comforted by the fact that the American people, and their representative in Congress, have been thoughtful and deliberate in discussing the challenges that we face and how we might confront those challenges.

This is not the first time that I have faced the question of how we ought to deal with Saddam Hussein's intransigence in the facet of international law. As a Member of the House of Representatives, I voted in 1991, along with many members of this body, to authorize President George Herbert Walker Bush to use military force to expel the armed forces of Iraq from Kuwait. I am proud of that vote, and I am prouder still of the American and allied forces that went on to liberate Kuwait.

Having engaged in that debate, and witnessed Saddam Hussein's refusal to yield except when confronted with the threat of force, I have no illusions about the danger he poses to regional stability and international security today. I am concerned that Iraq remains in violation of more than a dozen Security Council resolutions. I am alarmed that the regime of Saddam Hussein continues to develop weapons of mass destruction in violation of the international agreements it promised to comply with at the end of the gulf war. Above all, I feel strongly that we must not allow Saddam Hussein to develop the capacity to acquire or deploy nuclear weapons.

This past Monday night, President Bush addressed our Nation. He reminded us that there are significant risks to the United States both in acting and in not acting. If we choose not to act, we must remember that, in Saddam Hussein, we are talking about a man who has invaded his neighbors, showing a reckless disregard for the stability of a volatile region. We are talking about a man who has risked his own survival, and that of his regime, to indulge his own vengeance. Finally, we are talking about a man who has used weapons of mass destruction before, even against his own people.

The need for action, however, does not preempt the need for an objective and open debate on the course of action we choose and the consequences of our subsequent

actions. Bringing the weight of the world's disapproval to bear on Iraq; demanding unfettered inspections of every potential weapons site; and preparing for any military or diplomatic contingency offers us the best chance to face down our foe now and to ensure his permanent disarmament.

Like many in this chamber, I believe that it is essential for us to work closely with the international community to reinstate inspections that will lead to Iraq's disarmament. But it's imperative that such inspections be unhindered. Inspectors must have the freedom to go where they want, when they want. They must have the right to talk to whomever they wish and to provide immediate amnesty to any Iraqis who provide information that might place them at risk of reprisal from the regime. Inspections are only valuable if they are truly a means of stripping Saddam Hussein of his weapons of mass destruction and his ability to deliver them. If Saddam Hussein's regime is unwilling to accept this level of intrusion, both he and Iraq must be prepared to accept the consequences, including the likelihood of a war they will lose.

Looking back, one of the principal reasons we were so successful in the gulf war was because former President Bush and his administration did the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong international coalition before unleashing our military might. Our current President and his aides similarly did the hard work necessary to build such a coalition after the attacks on our country last fall. This up-front investment has paid off in the arrests of Al Qaeda operatives throughout the globe, as well as in the elimination of the regime that was harboring them in Afghanistan--though the war on terror is far from over. These are prime examples of America's global leadership in action at its very best. They are examples that we should emulate now.

If we fail to uphold our international leadership responsibilities, and act without regard to the views and interests of our allies, we invite our isolation in the world. We undermine our position as a preeminent force in global policy and order. We make more difficult the task of securing the assistance of the international community in helping Iraq to return as a responsible member of the community of nations. We invite additional terrorist attacks on Americans at home and abroad, as well as put the fragile governments of many Muslim nations further at risk. Moreover, if we are perceived to act without the sanction of international law or authorization of the United Nations, we further fuel anti-American resentment in the Arab world, thereby increasing the threat to Israel. On the other hand, if we make an effort to work in concert with our allies, we have the opportunity to strengthen the international institutions that will be critical in addressing future threats.

At a time when 24-hour news networks have made the images of war instantly accessible, our nation's recent military successes have made the awful realities of war appear ever more remote: images of laser-guided bombs falling on indistinguishable targets; missiles lighting up the night sky. For an entire generation of Americans, our military efforts have come to be seen almost as a casualty-free video game, where no one gets hurt and few families face the knowledge that their son or daughter will not be coming home.

But like a handful of my colleagues here in the Senate, I have known a different side to war, having seen it first-hand. During my 23 years in the Navy, including service in Southeast Asia, we witnessed soldiers, sailors, and airmen leaving for missions from which they would never return. I've met countless veterans who left part of

themselves on the battlefield. Some of those heroes serve in this very body today.

War can--and often does--enact a terrible price. It should be entered into as a last resort. So, the decision we face this week, which may lead to war, is not one that I take lightly. Nor do any of us.

For the past 11 years, people in this country and elsewhere have second-guessed the decision of former President Bush to stop short of entering Baghdad in 1991. I have never criticized that decision. That flat, open sands on which our soldiers fought and won is a far different--and less dangerous--terrain than the streets of major Iraqi cities. There, our enemy's tactical advantage likely would have enacted a far heavier toll on American lives.

If the course of events in this decade ultimately leads to another conflict with Iraq, and I hope it does not, the risks associated with urban warfare may well become a reality this time. Before they do, it is critical that we prepare ourselves, and the American people, for the losses we may endure in a military campaign of that nature.

We must also face head-on the fact that, if war should occur, liberating Baghdad from Hussein's power will not solve every problem in the region. It will, however, force us to find answers to a difficult set of new questions. Among them, how will we operate in Iraq after a military victory? A number of competing factions will vie for control if Saddam Hussein is removed from power. Who will we support? How will we convince them to work together? We will need a coherent policy to help Iraq make the transition to political and economic stability. We will also need a great deal of patience and fortitude. Otherwise, we risk creating a less stable and more explosive Iraq than we face today and, worse yet, an even more volatile region.

We have learned from our missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan that

bringing meaningful change to unstable nations requires enormous time, resources, and effort. We have been relatively successful in restoring stability in Bosnia and Kosovo, but it has not been without a painstaking commitment over many years. Indeed, the U.S. and our NATO allies continue to maintain a significant troop presence in both of those nations.

Afghanistan, on the other hand, has demonstrated how minimal troop commitments can impair efforts to restore peace in a war-ravaged nation. Hamid Karzai and his coalition government continue to express Afghanistan's ongoing need for adequate support and resources from the U.S. and other nations if the Afghan people are to realize the peace and democracy of which they dream.

In a post-war Iraq, the need for ongoing U.S. and allied intervention is likely to be far greater and far more costly. Experts in military operations maintain that creating a more stable Iraq will require the continued presence of between 50,000 to 100,000 troops. Not for a few weeks or months, but for several years.

There is another question that I believe must be addressed as we move forward: How will we bear the financial burdens of such a mission? It is impossible to place a price tag on the lives that might be saved by disarming Saddam Hussein. At the same time, it would be fiscally irresponsible to take on such an operation without at least considering the impact of a potential war on our already fragile economy. Over the past 2 years, we have watched the stock market plummet, making its sharpest decline in 70 years. The budget surplus that we worked so hard to achieve in the 1990's is gone. All the while, current estimates project the likely cost of U.S. military action in Iraq to be in the range of \$100 billion. These estimates do not include the prospect of long-term peacekeeping operations in the event of a

regime change. The presence of tens of thousands of U.S. troops for months--maybe years--once the fighting has ended will cost billions more. This is a cost we should not bear alone.

I believe the principles and questions I have laid out today were best embodied in, and addressed by, the bipartisan resolution drafted earlier this month by Senate Richard Lugar and my fellow Senator from Delaware, Joe Biden--two Senators of intellect and skill in the area of international diplomacy. The Biden-Lugar draft resolution focused on the most critical task at hand--disarming Saddam Hussein. Senators Biden and Lugar carefully crafted this resolution to give President Bush the flexibility he needs to garner international support now for a tough, new U.N. Security Council resolution. Their draft resolution also provided the President with the authority to unleash U.S. military force against Iraq should he determine that Iraq's continued intransigence makes such action necessary. I'm disappointed that we will not have the opportunity to vote on that alternative this week. Having said that though, I do believe that the Biden-Lugar proposal contributed appreciatively to the change in direction that this debate has taken in recent weeks, particularly in its emphasis on acting together with our allies. That change in tone was clearly evident in the address of President Bush to the American people this past Monday night. What he said encouraged me and served to reassure much of our nation.

The President spoke of the importance of working with the United Nations to craft a tough inspection regimen in Iraq. I agree with him. The President said that the U.N. must be "an effective organization that helps keep the peace." I agree with him. The President told the American people that our primary goal in this endeavor is to strip Saddam Hussein of his ability to

manufacture and deploy weapons of mass destruction. Again, I agree with him. We also heard the President state that he hopes the policy he has laid out will not require military action, although he acknowledged that it might. I hope it will not. We all share that hope in the Senate as members of this body prepare to cast our votes and to authorize the use of force if certain conditions are met.

In closing, let me say for much of our Nation's history, the United States has been an instrument for peace and justice and a better life for the people of many nations throughout the world. That is our heritage. It is one of which we can be proud.

There have been times in our history when we have had to go it alone. But history has shown that we have been most successful when we provided the leadership that compelled other nations to join us in a just cause--two World Wars, the Cold War, the Persian Gulf War, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and the war on terrorism. Stripping Saddam Hussein, once and for all, of the weapons that would enable him to create havoc and great loss of life is a just cause. Other nations know that, too.

If we make the case to them forcefully, skillfully, and persistently in the weeks ahead, they will join us. I am certain of it. The burden before us--disarming Iraq--is one we should not bear alone. If the President uses the powers inherent in this resolution authorizing the use of force with great skill and diplomacy, we will not have to bear this burden, and face this challenge, alone. An armada of nations, again, will join us, and together we will make this world, at least for a little while, a safer and saner place in which to live.