

**PREPARED TESTIMONY BY U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DONALD H. RUMSFELD
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON IRAQ
SEPTEMBER 19, 2002**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you today.

Last week, we commemorated the one-year anniversary of the most devastating attack our nation has ever experienced—more than 3,000 innocent people killed in a single day.

Today, I want to discuss the task of preventing even more devastating attacks—attacks that could kill not thousands, but potentially tens of thousands of our fellow citizens.

As we meet, state sponsors of terror across the world are working to develop and acquire weapons of mass destruction. As we speak, chemists, biologists, and nuclear scientists are toiling in weapons labs and underground bunkers, working to give the world's most dangerous dictators weapons of unprecedented power and lethality.

The threat posed by those regimes is real. It is dangerous. And it is growing with each passing day. We cannot wish it away.

We have entered a new security environment, one that is dramatically different than the one we grew accustomed to over the past half-century. We have entered a world in which terrorist movements and terrorists states are developing the capacity to cause unprecedented destruction.

Today, our margin of error is notably different. In the 20th century, we were dealing, for the most part, with conventional weapons—weapons that could kill hundreds or thousands of people, generally combatants. In the 21st century, we are dealing with weapons of mass destruction that can kill potentially tens of thousands of people—innocent men, women and children.

Further, because of the nature of these new threats, we are in an age of little or no warning, when threats can emerge suddenly—at any place or time—to surprise us. Terrorist states have enormous appetite for these powerful weapons—and active programs to develop them. They are finding ways to gain access to these capabilities. This is not a possibility—it is a certainty. In word and deed, they have demonstrated a willingness to use those capabilities.

Moreover, after September 11th, they have discovered a new means of delivering these weapons—terrorist networks. To the extent that they might transfer WMD to terrorist groups, they could conceal their responsibility for attacks. And if they believe they can conceal their responsibility for an attack, then they would likely not be deterred.

We are on notice. Let there be no doubt: an attack will be attempted. The only question is when and by what technique. It could be months, a year, or several years. But it will happen. It is in our future. Each of us needs to pause, and think about that for a moment—about what it would mean for our country, for our families—and indeed for the world.

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. We have connected the dots as much as it is humanly possible -- before the fact. Only by waiting until after the event could we have proof positive. The dots are there for all to see. The dots are there for all to connect. If they aren't good enough, rest assured they will only be good enough after another disaster—a disaster of still greater proportions. And by then it will be too late.

The question facing us is this: what is the responsible course of action for our country? Do you believe it is our responsibility to wait for a nuclear, chemical or biological 9/11? Or is it the responsibility of free people to do something now—to take steps to deal with the threat *before* we are attacked?

The President has made his position clear: the one thing that is not an option is doing nothing.

There are a number of terrorist states pursuing weapons of mass destruction—Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, to name but a few. But no terrorist state poses a greater and more immediate threat to the security of our people, and the stability of the world, than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

No living dictator has shown the murderous combination of intent and capability -- of aggression against his neighbors; oppression of his own people; genocide; support of terrorism; pursuit of weapons of mass destruction; the use of weapons of mass destruction; and the most threatening hostility to its neighbors and to the United States, than Saddam Hussein and his regime.

Mr. Chairman, these facts about Saddam Hussein's regime should be part of this record and of our country's considerations:

- Saddam Hussein has openly praised the attacks of September 11th.

- Last week, on the anniversary of 9-11, his state-run press called the attacks “God’s punishment.”
 - He has repeatedly threatened the U.S. and its allies with terror—once declaring that “every Iraqi [can] become a missile.”
- He has ordered the use of chemical weapons—Sarin, Tabun, VX, and mustard agents—against his own people, in one case killing 5,000 innocent civilians in a single day.
- His regime has invaded two of its neighbors, and threatened others.
 - In 1980, they invaded Iran, and used chemical weapons against Iranian forces.
 - In 1990, they invaded Kuwait and are responsible for thousands of documented cases of torture, rape and murder of Kuwaiti civilians during their occupation.
 - In 1991, they were poised to march on and occupy other nations—and would have done so, had they not been stopped by the U.S. led coalition forces.
- His regime has launched ballistic missiles at four of their neighbors—Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.
- His regime plays host to terrorist networks, and has directly ordered acts of terror on foreign soil.
- His regime assassinates its opponents, both in Iraq and abroad, and has attempted to assassinate the former Israeli Ambassador to Great Britain, and a former U.S. President.
- He has executed members of their cabinet, including the Minister of Health, whom he personally shot and killed.
- His regime has committed genocide and ethnic cleansing in Northern Iraq, ordering the extermination of between 50,000 and 100,000 people and the destruction of over 4,000 villages.
- His attacks on the Kurds drove 2 million refugees into Turkey, Syria and Iran.
- His regime has brought the Marsh Arabs in Southern Iraq to the point of extinction, drying up the Iraqi marsh lands in order to move against their villages—one of the worst environmental crimes ever committed.
- His regime is responsible for catastrophic environmental damage, setting fire to over 1,100 Kuwaiti oil wells.
- His regime beat and tortured American POWs during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and used them as “human shields.”
- His regime has still failed to account for hundreds of POWs, including Kuwaiti, Saudi, Indian, Syrian, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Bahraini and Omani nationals—and an American pilot shot down over Iraq during the Gulf War.
- His regime on almost a daily basis continues to fire missiles and artillery at U.S. and coalition aircraft patrolling the no-fly zones in Northern and Southern Iraq,

and has made clear its objective of shooting down coalition pilots enforcing UN resolutions -- it is the only place in the world where U.S. forces are shot at with impunity.

- His regime has subjected tens of thousands of political prisoners and ordinary Iraqis to arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, summary execution, torture, beatings, burnings, electric shocks, starvation and mutilation.
- He has ordered doctors to surgically remove the ears of military deserters, and the gang rape of Iraqi women, including political prisoners, the wives and daughters of their opposition and members of the regime suspected of disloyalty.
- His regime is actively pursuing weapons of mass destruction, and willing to pay a high price to get them—giving up tens of billions in oil revenue under economic sanctions by refusing inspections to preserve his WMD programs.
- His regime has amassed large, clandestine stockpiles of biological weapons—including anthrax and botulism toxin, and possibly smallpox.
- His regime has amassed large, clandestine stockpiles of chemical weapons—including VX, sarin, cyclosarin and mustard gas.
- His regime has an active program to acquire and develop nuclear weapons.
 - They have the knowledge of how to produce nuclear weapons, and designs for at least two different nuclear devices.
 - They have a team of scientists, technicians and engineers in place, as well as the infrastructure needed to build a weapon.
 - Very likely all they need to complete a weapon is fissile material—and they are, at this moment, seeking that material—both from foreign sources and the capability to produce it indigenously.
- His regime has dozens of ballistic missiles, and is working to extend their range in violation of UN restrictions.
- His regime is pursuing pilotless aircraft as a means of delivering chemical and biological weapons.
- His regime agreed after the Gulf War to give up weapons of mass destruction and submit to international inspections—then lied, cheated and hid their WMD programs for more than a decade.
- His regime has in place an elaborate, organized system of denial and deception to frustrate both inspectors and outside intelligence efforts.
- His regime has violated UN economic sanctions, using illicit oil revenues to fuel their WMD aspirations.
- His regime has diverted funds from the UN's "oil for food" program—funds intended to help feed starving Iraqi civilians—to fund WMD programs.
- His regime violated 16 UN resolutions, repeatedly defying the will of the international community without cost or consequence.

- And his regime is determined to acquire the means to strike the U.S., its friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction, acquire the territory of their neighbors, and impose their control over the Persian Gulf region.

As the President warned the United Nations last week, "Saddam Hussein's regime is a grave and gathering danger." It is a danger to its neighbors, to the United States, to the Middle East, and to international peace and stability. It is a danger we do not have the option to ignore.

The world has acquiesced in Saddam Hussein's aggression, abuses and defiance for more than a decade.

In his UN address, the President explained why we should not allow the Iraqi regime to acquire weapons of mass destruction—and issued a challenge to the international community: to enforce the numerous resolutions the UN has passed and Saddam Hussein has defied; to show that Security Council's decisions will not to be cast aside without cost or consequence; to show that the UN is up to the challenge of dealing with a dictator like Saddam Hussein; to show that the UN is determined not to become irrelevant.

President Bush has made clear that the United States wants to work with the UN Security Council to deal with the threat posed by the Iraqi regime. But he made clear the consequences of Iraq's continued defiance: "The purposes of the United States should not be doubted. The Security Council resolutions will be enforced... or action will be unavoidable. And a regime that has lost its legitimacy will also lose its power."

The President has asked the Members of the House and the Senate to support the actions that may be necessary to deliver on that pledge. He urged that the Congress act before the Congressional recess. He asked that you send a clear signal—to the world community and the Iraqi regime—that our country is united in purpose and ready to act. Only certainty of U.S. and UN purposefulness can have even the prospect of affecting the Iraqi regime.

It is important that Congress send that message as soon as possible—before the UN Security Council votes. The Security Council must act soon, and it is important that the U.S. Congress signal the world where the U.S. stands before the UN vote takes place. Delaying a vote in the Congress would send a message that the U.S. may be unprepared to take a stand, just as we are asking the international community to take a stand, and as Iraq will be considering its options.

Delay would signal the Iraqi regime that they can continue their violations of the UN resolutions. It serves no U.S. or UN purpose to give Saddam Hussein excuses

for further delay. His regime should recognize that the U.S. and the UN are purposeful.

It was Congress that changed the objective of U.S. policy from containment to regime change, by the passage of the Iraq Liberation Act in 1998. The President is now asking Congress to support that policy.

A decision to use military force is never easy. 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.

In recent weeks, a number of questions have been surfaced by Senators, Members of Congress and former government officials. Some of the arguments raised are important. Just as there are risks in acting, so too there are risks in not acting.

Those risks need to be balanced, and to do so it is critical to address a number of the issues that have been raised:

Some have asked whether an attack on Iraq would disrupt and distract the U.S. from the Global War on Terror.

The answer to that is: Iraq is a part of the Global War on Terror—stopping terrorist regimes from acquiring weapons of mass destruction *is* a key objective of that war. We can fight all elements of this war simultaneously.

Our principal goal in the war on terror is to stop another 9/11—or a WMD attack that could make 9/11 seem modest by comparison—*before* it happens. Whether that threat comes from a terrorist regime or a terrorist network is beside the point. Our objective is to stop them, regardless of the source.

In his State of the Union address last January, President Bush made our objectives clear. He said: “by seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases the price of indifference would be catastrophic.” Ultimately, history will judge us all by what we do now to deal with this danger.

Another question that has been asked is this: The Administration argues Saddam Hussein poses a grave and growing danger. Where is the “smoking gun?”

Mr. Chairman, the last thing we want is a smoking gun. A gun smokes *after* it has been fired. The goal must be to stop Saddam Hussein *before* he fires a weapon of mass destruction against our people. As the President told the United Nations last

week, "The first time we may be completely certain he has nuclear weapons is when, God forbid, he uses one. We owe it to... our citizens to do everything in our power to prevent that day from coming." If the Congress or the world wait for a so-called "smoking gun," it is certain that we will have waited too long.

But the question raises an issue that it is useful to discuss—about the kind of evidence we consider to be appropriate to act in the 21st century.

In our country, it has been customary to seek evidence that would prove guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt" in a court of law. That approach is appropriate when the objective is to protect the rights of the accused. But in the age of WMD, the objective is not to protect the "rights" of dictators like Saddam Hussein—it is to protect the lives of our citizens. And when there is that risk, and we are trying to defend against the closed societies and shadowy networks that threaten us in the 21st century, expecting to find that standard of evidence, from thousands of miles away, and to do so before such a weapon has been used, is not realistic. And, after such weapons have been used it is too late.

I suggest that any who insist on perfect evidence are back in the 20th century and still thinking in pre-9/11 terms. On September 11th, we were awakened to the fact that America is now vulnerable to unprecedented destruction. That awareness ought to be sufficient to change the way we think about our security, how we defend our country—and the type of certainty and evidence we consider appropriate.

In the 20th century, when we were dealing largely with conventional weapons, we could wait for perfect evidence. If we miscalculated, we could absorb an attack, recover, take a breath, mobilize, and go out and defeat our attackers. In the 21st century, that is no longer the case, unless we are willing and comfortable accepting the loss not of thousands of lives, but potentially tens of thousands of lives – a high price indeed.

We have not, will not, and cannot know everything that is going on in the world. Over the years, even our best efforts, intelligence has repeatedly underestimated the weapons capabilities of a variety of countries of major concern to us. We have had numerous gaps of two, four, six or eight years between the time a country of concern first developed a WMD capability and the time we finally learned about it.

We do know that the Iraqi regime has chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction and is pursuing nuclear weapons; that they have a proven willingness to use the weapons at their disposal; that they have proven aspirations to seize the territory of, and threaten, their neighbors; proven support for and cooperation with terrorist networks; and proven record of declared hostility and venomous rhetoric against the United States. Those threats should be clear to all.

In his UN address, the President said "we know that Saddam Hussein pursued weapons of mass murder even when inspectors were in his country. Are we to assume that he stopped when they left?" To the contrary, knowing what we know about Iraq's history, no conclusion is possible except that they have and are accelerating their WMD programs.

Now, do we have perfect evidence that can tell us precisely the date Iraq will have a deliverable nuclear device, or when and where he might try to use it? That is not knowable. But it is strange that some seem to want to put the burden of proof on us—the burden of proof ought to be on *him*—to prove he has disarmed; to prove he no longer poses a threat to peace and security. And that he cannot do.

Committees of Congress currently are asking hundreds of questions about what happened on September 11th—pouring over thousands of pages of documents, and asking who knew what, when and why they didn't prevent that tragedy. I suspect, that in retrospect, most of those investigating 9/11 would have supported preventive action to pre-empt that threat, if it had been possible to see it coming.

Well, if one were to compare the scraps of information the government had before September 11th to the *volumes* of information the government has today about Iraq's pursuit of WMD, his use of those weapons, his record of aggression and his consistent hostility toward the United States—and then factor in our country's demonstrated vulnerability after September 11th—the case the President made should be clear.

As the President said, time is not on our side. If more time passes, and the attacks we are concerned about come to pass, I would not want to have ignored all the warning signs and then be required to explain why our country failed to protect our fellow citizens.

We cannot go back in time to stop the September 11th attack. But we can take actions now to prevent some future threats.

Some have argued that the nuclear threat from Iraq is not imminent—that Saddam is at least 5-7 years away from having nuclear weapons.

I would not be so certain. Before Operation Desert Storm in 1991, the best intelligence estimates were that Iraq was at least 5-7 years away from having nuclear weapons. The experts were flat wrong. When the U.S. got on the ground, it found the Iraqi's were probably six months to a year away from having a nuclear weapon – not 5 to 7 years.

We do not know today precisely how close he is to having a deliverable nuclear weapon. What we do know is that he has a sizable appetite for them, that he has been actively and persistently pursuing them for more than 20 years, and that we allow him to get them at our peril. Moreover, let's say he is 5-7 years from a deliverable nuclear weapon. That raises the question: 5-7 years from when? From today? From 1998, when he kicked out the inspectors? Or from earlier, when inspectors were still in country? There is no way of knowing except from the ground, unless one believes what Saddam Hussein says.

But those who raise questions about the nuclear threat need to focus on the immediate threat from biological weapons. From 1991 to 1995, Iraq repeatedly insisted it did not have biological weapons. Then, in 1995, Saddam's son-in-law defected and told the inspectors some of the details of Iraq's biological weapons program. Only then did Iraq admit it had produced tens of thousands of liters of anthrax and other biological weapons. But even then, they did not come clean. UN inspectors believe Iraq had in fact produced two to four-times the amount of biological agents it had declared. Those biological agents were never found. Iraq also refused to account for some three tons of materials that could be used to produce biological weapons.

Iraq has these weapons. They are much simpler to deliver than nuclear weapons, and even more readily transferred to terrorist networks, who could allow Iraq to deliver them without fingerprints.

If you want an idea of the devastation Iraq could wreak on our country with a biological attack, consider the recent "Dark Winter" exercise conducted by Johns Hopkins University. It simulated a biological WMD attack in which terrorists released smallpox in three separate locations in the U.S. Within 22 days, it is estimated it would have spread to 26 states, with an estimated 6000 new infections occurring daily. Within two months, the worst-case estimate indicated one million people could be dead and another 2 million infected. Not a nice picture.

The point is this: we know Iraq possesses biological weapons, and chemical weapons, and is expanding and improving their capabilities to produce them. That should be of every bit as much concern as Iraq's potential nuclear capability.

Some have argued that even if Iraq has these weapons, Saddam Hussein does not intend to use WMD against the U.S. because he is a survivor, not a suicide bomber—that he would be unlikely to take actions that could lead to his own destruction.

Then why is Iraq pursuing WMD so aggressively? Why are they willing to pay such a high price for them—to suffer a decade of economic sanctions that have cost

them tens of billions in oil revenues—sanctions they could get lifted simply by an agreement to disarm?

One answer is that, as some critics have conceded, “he seeks weapons of mass destruction... to deter us from intervening to block his aggressive designs.” This is no doubt a motivation. But consider the consequences if they were allowed to succeed.

Imagine for a moment that Iraq demonstrated the capacity to attack U.S. or European populations centers with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. Then imagine you are the President of the United States, trying to put together an international coalition to stop their aggression, after Iraq had demonstrated that capability. It would be a daunting task. His regime believes that simply by possessing the capacity to deliver WMD to Western capitals, he will be able to prevent—terrorize—the free world from projecting force to stop his aggression—driving the West into a policy of forced isolationism.

That said, it is far from clear that he would not necessarily restrain from taking actions that could result in his destruction. For example, that logic did not stop the Taliban from supporting and harboring al-Qaeda as they planned and executed repeated attacks on the U.S. And their miscalculation resulted in the destruction of their regime. Regimes without checks and balances are prone to grave miscalculations. Saddam Hussein has no checks whatsoever on his decision-making authority. Who among us really believes it would be wise or prudent for us to base our security on the hope that Saddam Hussein, or his sons who might succeed him, could not make the same fatal miscalculations as Mullah Omar and the Taliban?

It is my view that we would be ill advised to stake our people’s lives on Saddam Hussein’s supposed “survival instinct.”

Some have argued Iraq is unlikely to use WMD against us because, unlike terrorist networks, Saddam has a “return address.”

Mr. Chairman, there is no reason for confidence that if Iraq launched a WMD attack on the U.S. it would necessarily have an obvious “return address.” There are ways Iraq could easily conceal responsibility for a WMD attack. They could deploy “sleeper cells” armed with biological weapons to attack us from within—and then deny any knowledge or connection to the attacks. Or they could put a WMD-tipped missile on a “commercial” shipping vessel, sail it within range of our coast, fire it, and then melt back into the commercial shipping traffic before we knew what hit us. Finding that ship would be like searching for a needle in a haystack—a bit like locating a single terrorist. Or they could recruit and utilize a terrorist network with similar views and objectives, and pass on weapons of mass

destruction to them. It is this nexus between a terrorist state like Iraq with WMD and terrorist networks that has so significantly changed the U.S. security environment.

We still do not know with certainty who was behind the 1996 bombing the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia—an attack that killed 19 American service members. We still do not know who is responsible for last year's anthrax attacks. The nature of terrorist attacks is that it is often very difficult to identify who is ultimately responsible. Indeed, our consistent failure over the past two decades to trace terrorist attacks to their ultimate source gives terrorist states the lesson that using terrorist networks as proxies is an effective way of attacking the U.S. with impunity.

Some have opined there is scant evidence of Iraq's ties to terrorists, and he has little incentive to make common cause with them.

That is not correct. Iraq's ties to terrorist networks are long-standing. It is no coincidence that Abu Nidal was in Baghdad, when he died under mysterious circumstances. Iraq has also reportedly provided safe haven to Abdul Rahman Yasin, one of the FBI's most wanted terrorists, who was a key participant in the first World Trade Center bombing. We know that al-Qaeda is operating in Iraq today, and that little happens in Iraq without the knowledge of the Saddam Hussein regime. We also know that there have been a number of contacts between Iraq and al-Qaeda over the years. We know Saddam has ordered acts of terror himself, including the attempted assassination of a former U.S. President.

He has incentives to make common cause with terrorists. He shares many common objectives with groups like al-Qaeda, including an antipathy for the Saudi royal family and a desire to drive the U.S. out of the Persian Gulf region. Moreover, if he decided it was in his interest to conceal his responsibility for an attack on the U.S., providing WMD to terrorists would be an effective way of doing so.

Some have said that they would support action to remove Saddam if the U.S. could prove a connection to the attacks of September 11th—but there is no such proof.

The question implies that the U.S. should have to prove that Iraq has *already* attacked us in order to deal with that threat. The objective is to stop him before he attacks us and kills thousands of our citizens.

The case against Iraq does not depend on an Iraqi link to 9/11. The issue for the U.S. is not vengeance, retribution or retaliation—it is whether the Iraqi regime

poses a growing danger to the safety and security of our people, and of the world. There is no question but that it does.

Some argue that North Korea and Iran are more immediate threats than Iraq. North Korea almost certainly has nuclear weapons, and is developing missiles that will be able to reach most of the continental United States. Iran has stockpiles of chemical weapons, is developing ballistic missiles of increasing range, and is aggressively pursuing nuclear weapons. The question is asked: why not deal with them first?

Iran and North Korea are indeed threats—problems we take seriously. That is why President Bush named them specifically, when he spoke about an “Axis of Evil.” And we have policies to address both.

But Iraq is unique. No other living dictator matches Saddam Hussein’s record of waging aggressive war against his neighbors; pursuing weapons of mass destruction; using WMD against his own people and other nations; launching ballistic missiles at his neighbors; brutalizing and torturing his own citizens; harboring terrorist networks; engaging in terrorist acts, including the attempted assassination of foreign officials; violating his international commitments; lying, cheating and hiding his WMD programs; deceiving and defying the express will of the United Nations over and over again.

As the President told the UN, “in one place—in one regime—we find all these dangers in their most lethal and aggressive forms.”

Some respond by saying, OK, Iraq poses a threat we will eventually have to deal with—but now is not the time to do so.

To that, I would ask: when? Will it be a better time when his regime is stronger? When its WMD programs are still further advanced? After he further builds his forces, which are stronger and deadlier with each passing day? Yes, there are risks in acting. The President understands those risks. But there are also risks in further delay. As the President has said: “I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world’s most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world’s most destructive weapons.”

Others say that overthrowing the regime should be the last step, not the first.

I would respond that for more than a decade now, the international community has tried every other step. They have tried diplomacy; they have tried sanctions and embargoes; they have tried positive inducements, such as the “oil for food”

program; they have tried inspections; they have tried limited military strikes. Together, all these approaches have failed to accomplish the UN goals.

If the President were to decide to take military action to overthrow the regime, it would be not the first step, it would be the last step, after a decade of failed diplomatic and economic steps to stop his drive for WMD.

Some have asked: why not just contain him? The West lived for 40 years with the Soviet threat, and never felt the need to take pre-emptive action. If containment worked on the Soviet Union, why not Iraq?

First, it's clear from the Iraqi regimes 11 years of defiance that containment has not led to their compliance. To the contrary, containment is breaking down—the regime continues to receive funds from illegal oil sales and procure military hardware necessary to develop weapons of mass murder. So not only has containment failed to reduce the threat, it has allowed the threat to grow.

Second, with the Soviet Union we faced an adversary that already possessed nuclear weapons—thousands of them. Our goal with Iraq is to *prevent* them from getting nuclear weapons. We are not interested in establishing a balance of terror with the likes of Iraq, like the one that existed with the Soviet Union. We are interested in stopping a balance of terror from forming.

Third, with the Soviet Union, we believed that time was on our side – and we were correct. With Iraq, the opposite is true—time is not our side. Every month that goes by, his WMD programs are progressing and he moves closer to his goal of possessing the capability to strike our population, and our allies, and hold them hostage to blackmail.

Finally, while containment worked in the long run, the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal prevented the West from responding when they invaded their neighbor, Afghanistan. Does anyone really want Saddam to have that same deterrent, so he can invade his neighbors with impunity?

Some ask: Why does he have to be overthrown? Can't we just take out the capabilities he has that threaten us?

While the President has not made that decision, the problem with doing it piecemeal is this: First, we do not know where all of Iraq's WMD facilities are. We do know where a fraction of them are. Second, of the facilities we do know, not all are vulnerable to attack from the air. Some are underground. Some are mobile. Others are purposely located near population centers – schools, mosques, hospitals, etc. -- where an air strike could kill large numbers of innocent people. The Iraq problem cannot be solved with air strikes alone.

Some have argued that, if we do have to go to war, the U.S. should first layout details of a truly comprehensive inspections regime, which, if Iraq failed to comply, would provide a casus belli.

I would respond this way: if failure to comply with WMD inspections is a *casus belli*, the UN already has it—Iraq's non-compliance with UN inspection regimes has been going on for more than a decade. What else can one ask for?

The U.S. is not close to inspections as an element of an effective response. But the goal is not inspections—it is disarmament. Any inspections would have to be notably different from the past. Given the history of this regime, the world community has every right to be skeptical that it would be. And that is why, in 1998, the U.S. began to speak of regime change.

Our goal is disarmament. The only purpose of any inspections would be to prove that Iraq has disarmed, which would require Iraq to reverse its decades-long policy of pursuing these weapons. Something they are unlikely to do.

There are serious concerns about whether an inspections regime could be effective. Even the most intrusive inspection regime would have difficulty getting at all his weapons of mass destruction. Many of his WMD capabilities are mobile and can be hidden to evade inspectors. He has vast underground networks and facilities to hide WMD, and sophisticated denial and deception techniques. It is simply impossible to "spot check" a country the size of Iraq. Unless we have people inside the Iraqi program who are willing to tell us what they have and where they have it—as we did in 1995 with the defection of Saddam's son in law, Hussein Kamel—it is easy for the Iraqi regime to hide its capabilities from us.

Indeed, Hans Blix, the chief UN Weapons inspector, said as much in an interview with the *New York Times* last week. According to the Times, (quote) " [Mr. Blix] acknowledged that there were some limitations to what his team could accomplish even if it was allowed to return. Mr. Blix said his inspectors might not be able to detect mobile laboratories for producing biological weapons materials, or underground storehouses for weapons substances, if the inspectors did not have information about such sites from the last time they were in Iraq or have not seen traces of them in satellite surveillance photography." (Unquote).

When UNSCOM inspectors were on the ground, they did an admirable job of uncovering many of Iraq's violations—which is undoubtedly why Iraq had them expelled. But despite the UN's best efforts, from 1991-1995 Saddam was able to conceal some of his nuclear program and his biological weapons program. Some aspects were uncovered after his son-in-law defected and provided information that allowed inspectors to find them. And even then, Iraq was able to hide many of

those activities from inspectors—capabilities he most likely still has today, in addition to what he has developed in recent years.

There is a place in this world for inspections. They tend to be effective if the target nation is cooperating—if they are actually willing to disarm and want to prove to the world that they are doing so. They tend not be as effective in uncovering deceptions and violations when the target is determined not to disarm. Iraq's record of the past decade shows the regime is not interested in disarming or cooperating. Their behavior demonstrates they want weapons of mass destruction and are determined to continue developing them.

Some ask: now that Iraq has agreed to "unconditional inspections," why does Congress need to act?

Iraq has demonstrated great skill at playing the international community. When it's the right moment to lean forward, they lean forward. When it's a time to lean back, they lean back. It's a dance. They can go on for months or years jerking the U.N. around. When they find that things are not going their way, they throw out a proposal like this. And hopeful people say: "There's our opportunity. They are finally being reasonable. Seize the moment. Let's give them another chance." And then we repeatedly find, at the last moment, that Iraq withdraws that carrot and goes back into their mode of rejecting the international community. And the dance starts all over again.

The issue is not inspections. The issue is disarmament. The issue is compliance. As the President made clear in his UN address, we require Iraq's compliance with *all 16 UN resolutions* that they have defied over the past decade. And, as the President said, the UN Security Council—not the Iraqi regime—needs to decide how to enforce its own resolutions. Congress's support for the President is what is needed to further generate international support.

Some have asked whether military intervention in Iraq means the U.S. would have to go to war with every terrorist state that is pursuing WMD?

The answer is: no. Taking military action in Iraq does not mean that it would be necessary or appropriate to take military action against other states that possess or are pursuing WMD. For one thing, preventive action in one situation may very well produce a deterrent effect on other states. After driving the Taliban from power in Afghanistan, we have already seen a change in behavior in certain regimes.

Moreover, dealing with some states may not require military action. In some cases, such as Iran, change could conceivably come from within. The young people and the women in Iran are increasingly fed up with the tight clique of Mullahs—they want change, and may well rise up to change their leadership at some point.

Some say that there is no international consensus behind ousting Saddam—and most of our key allies are opposed.

First, the fact is that there are a number of countries that want Saddam Hussein gone. Some are reluctant to say publicly just yet. But, if the U.S. waited for a consensus before acting, we would never do anything. Obviously, one's first choice in life is to have everyone agree with you at the outset. In reality, that is seldom the case. It takes time, leadership and persuasion. Leadership is about deciding what is right, and then going out and persuading others.

The coalition we have fashioned in the global war on terror today includes some 90 nations—literally half the world. It is the greatest coalition ever assembled in the annals of human history. It was not there on September 11th. It was built, one country at a time, over a long period of time. If we had waited for consensus, the Taliban would still be in power in Afghanistan today. The worldwide coalition was formed by leadership.

During the Persian Gulf War, the coalition eventually included 36 nations. But they were not there on August 2, 1990 when Saddam invaded Kuwait. They were not there on August 5th, when the President George H. W. Bush announced to the world that Saddam's aggression "will not stand." That coalition was built over a period of many months.

With his UN speech, President George W. Bush began the process of building international support for dealing with Iraq. The reaction has been positive. We will continue to state our case, as the President is doing, and I suspect that as he does so, you will find that other countries in increasing numbers will cooperate and participate. Will it be unanimous? No. Does anyone expect it to be unanimous? No. Does it matter that it will not be unanimous? No. But does the U.S. want all the support possible – you bet. Just as we have in the coalition supporting the Global War on Terrorism.

The point is: if our nation's leaders do the right thing, others will follow and support the just cause—just they have in the global war against terror.

Some say that our European allies may reluctantly go along in the end, but that U.S. intervention in Iraq would spark concern in the Arab world—that not one country in that regions supports us, and many are vocally opposed.

That is not so. Saddam's neighbors are deathly afraid of him—and understandably so. He has invaded his neighbors, used weapons of mass destruction against them, and launched ballistic missiles at them. He aspires to dominate the region. The nations of the region would be greatly relieved to have him gone, and that if Saddam Hussein is removed from power, the reaction in the region will be not outrage, but great relief. And the reaction of the Iraqi people will most certainly be jubilation.

Some ask, but will they help us? Will they give us access to bases and territory and airspace we need to conduct a military operation?

The answer is that the President has not decided to take military action, but, if he does, we will have all the support we need to get the job done. You can be certain of it.

Another argument is that military action in Iraq will be expensive, and will have high costs for the global economy.

That may be true. But there are also dollar costs to not acting—and those costs could well be far greater. Consider: the New York City Comptroller estimates that the economic costs of the Sept. 11 attacks to New York alone were between \$83 and \$95 billion. He further estimated that New York lost 83,000 existing jobs and some 63,000 jobs the city estimates would have been created had the attacks not happened. One institute puts the cost to the national economy at \$191 billion—including 1.64 million jobs lost as a direct result of the 9/11 attacks. Other estimates are higher—as much as \$250 billion in lost productivity, sales, jobs, advertising, airline revenue and the like. And that is not to mention the cost in human lives, and the suffering of those who lost fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers that day.

And we must not forget that the costs of a nuclear, chemical or biological weapons attack would be far worse. The price in lives would be not thousands, but tens of thousands. And the economic costs could make September 11th pale by comparison. Those are the costs that also must be weighed carefully. And this is not mention the cost to one's conscience of being wrong.

Some have suggested that if the U.S. were to act it might provoke Saddam Hussein's use of WMD. Last time, the argument goes, he didn't use chemical weapons on U.S. troops and allies because he saw our goal was not to oust him, but to push back his aggression. This time, the argument goes, the opposite would be true, and he would have nothing to lose by using WMD.

That is an important point. And the President made clear on March 13, 2002 the consequences of such an attack. He said: “we’ve got all options on the table because we want to make it very clear to nations that you will not threaten the United States or use weapons of mass destruction against us, our allies, or our friends.”

There are ways to mitigate the risk of a chem-bio attack, but it cannot be entirely eliminated—it is true that could be a risk of military action. But consider the consequences if the world were to allow that risk to deter us from acting. We would then have sent a message to the world about the value of weapons of mass destruction that we would deeply regret having sent. A country thinking about acquiring WMD would conclude that the U.S. had been deterred by Iraq’s chemical and biological weapons capabilities, and they could then resolve to pursue those weapons to assure their impunity. The message the world should want to send is the exact opposite. The message should be that Iraq’s pursuit of WMD has not only not made it more secure, it has made it less secure—that by pursuing those weapons, they have attracted undesired attention to themselves.

But if he is that dangerous, then that only makes the case for action stronger—because the longer we wait, the more deadly his regime becomes. If the world community were to be deterred from acting today by the threat that Iraq might use chemical or biological weapons, how will the UN feel when one day, when Iraq demonstrates it has a deliverable *nuclear* weapon? The risks will only grow worse. If we are deterred today, we could be deterred forever—and Iraq will have achieved its objective. Or will the world community be deterred until Iraq uses a weapon of mass destruction, and only then decide it is time to act.

But I would suggest that even if Saddam Hussein were to issue an order for the use chemical or biological weapons, that does not mean his orders would necessarily be carried out. Saddam Hussein might not have anything to lose, but those beneath him in the chain of command most certainly would have a great deal to lose – let there be no doubt. He has maintained power by instilling fear in his subordinates. If he is on the verge of losing power, he may also lose his ability to impose that fear—and, thus, the blind obedience of those around him. Wise Iraqis will not obey orders to use WMD.

If President Bush were to decide to take military action, the U.S. will execute his order and finish the job professionally—Saddam Hussein and his regime would be removed from power. Therefore, with that certain knowledge, those in the Iraqi military will need to think hard about whether it would be in their interest to follow his instructions to commit war crimes by using WMD—and then pay a severe price for that action. The United States will make clear at the outset that those who are not guilty of atrocities can play a role in the new Iraq. But if WMD is used all bets are off.

I believe many in the Iraqi Armed Forces despise Saddam Hussein, and want to see him go as much as the rest of the world does. Those who may not despise him, but decide they would prefer to survive, may desert and try to blend into the civilian population or escape the country. This is what happened in Panama, when it became clear that Noriega was certain to be on his way out.

Some say that Saddam might succeed in provoking an Israeli response this time — possibly a nuclear response—and that this would set the Middle East aflame.

We are concerned about the Iraqi regime attacking a number of its neighbors, and with good reason: Saddam Hussein has a history of doing so. Iraq has attacked Bahrain, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Iraq is a threat to its neighbors. We will consult with all of our allies and friends in the region on how to deal with this threat.

But the fact that they have blackmailed their neighbors makes the case for action stronger. If we do nothing, that blackmail will eventually become blackmail with weapons of mass destruction—with significantly new consequences for the world.

Some have said the U.S. could get bogged down in a long-term military occupation, and want to know what the plan is for a post-Saddam Iraq?

That is a fair question. It is likely that international forces would have to be in Iraq for a period of time, to help a new transitional Iraqi government get on its feet and create conditions where the Iraqi people would be able to choose a new government and achieve self-determination. But that burden is a small one, when balanced against the risks of not acting.

In Afghanistan, our approach was that Afghanistan belongs to the Afghans—we did not and do not aspire to own it or run it. The same would be true of Iraq.

In Afghanistan, the U.S. and coalition countries helped create conditions so that the Afghan people could exercise their right of self-government. Throughout the Bonn process and the Loya Jirga process, a new president was chosen, a new cabinet sworn-in, and a transitional government, representative of the Afghan people, was established to lead the nation.

If the President were to make the decision to liberate Iraq, with coalition partners, it would help the Iraqi people establish a government that would be a single country, that did not threaten its neighbors, the United States, or the world with aggression and weapons of mass destruction, and that would respect the rights of its diverse population.

Iraq has an educated population that has been brutally and viciously repressed by Saddam Hussein's regime. He has kept power not by building loyalty, but by instilling fear—in his people, his military and the government bureaucracy. I suspect that there would be substantial defections once it became clear that Saddam Hussein was finished. Moreover, there are numerous free Iraqi leaders—both inside Iraq and abroad—who would play a role in establishing that new free Iraqi government. So there is no shortage of talent available to lead and rehabilitate a free Iraq.

In terms of economic rehabilitation, Iraq has an advantage over Afghanistan. A free Iraq would be less dependent on international assistance, and could conceivably get back on its feet faster, because Iraq has a marketable commodity—oil.

Some have raised concerns that other countries elsewhere in the world might take advantage of the fact that the U.S. is tied up in Iraq, and use that as an opportunity to invade neighbors or cause other mischief.

There is certainly a risk that some countries might underestimate our capability to handle Iraq and stop their aggression at the same time. But let there be no doubt: we have that capability.

Last year, we fashioned a new defense strategy, which established that we will and do have the capability to near simultaneously:

- Defend the U.S. homeland;
- Undertake a major regional conflict and win decisively—including occupying a country and changing their regime;
- If necessary, swiftly defeat another aggressor in another theater; and
- Simultaneously conduct a number of lesser contingencies—such as Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

The United States can do the above, if called upon to do so.

Another argument is that acting without provocation by Iraq would violate international law.

That is untrue. The right to self-defense is a part of the UN Charter. Customary international law has long provided for the right of anticipatory self-defense—to stop an attack before it happens. In addition, he is in violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions. Those concerned about the integrity of international law should focus on their attention his brazen defiance of the UN.

Some ask: What has changed to warrant action now?

What has changed is our experience on September 11th. What has changed is our appreciation of our vulnerability—and the risks the U.S. faces from terrorist networks and terrorist states armed with weapons of mass destruction.

What has *not* changed is Saddam Hussein's drive to acquire these weapons. Every approach the UN has taken to stop Iraq's drive for WMD has failed. In 1998, after Iraq had again kicked out UN inspectors, President Clinton came to the Pentagon and said (quote):

"If [Saddam] fails to comply, and we fail to act, or we take some ambiguous third route which gives him yet more opportunities to develop his weapons of mass destruction... and continue to ignore the solemn commitment he made.... he will conclude that the international community has lost its will. He will conclude that he can go right on and do more to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction.... The stakes could not be higher. Some day, some way, I guarantee you, he'll use that arsenal."
(unquote)

At the time, the U.S. massed forces in the Persian Gulf, ready to strike. At the last minute, Iraq relented and allowed UN inspectors to return. But predictably, they kicked them out again ten months later. They have not been allowed to return since. He has not only paid a price for that defiance, he has been rewarded for his defiance of the UN by increased trade from a large group of UN member nations.

If, in 1998, Saddam Hussein posed the grave threat that President Clinton correctly described, then he most certainly poses a vastly greater danger today, after four years without inspectors on the ground to challenge his WMD procurement and development efforts. To those who still ask—that is what has changed!

Some have asked what are the incentives for Iraq to comply—is there is anything the Iraqi regime could do to forestall military action? Or is he finished either way?

Our objective is gaining Iraq's compliance. Our objective is an Iraq that does not menace its neighbors, does not pursue WMD, does not oppress its people or threaten the United States. The President set forth in his speech what an Iraqi regime that wanted peace would do. Everything we know about the character and record of the current Iraqi regime indicates that it is highly unlikely to do the things the President has said it must do. So long as Saddam Hussein is leading that country, to expect otherwise is, as the President put it, to "hope against the evidence." If Saddam Hussein is in a corner, it is because he has put himself there. One choice he has is to take his family and key leaders and seek asylum

elsewhere. Surely one of the one hundred and eighty plus countries would take his regime – possibly Belarus.

Some ask does the U.S. needs UN support?

The President has asked the UN Security Council to act because it is the UN Security Council that is being defied, disobeyed and made less relevant by the Iraqi regime's defiance. There have already been 16 UN resolutions, every one of which Saddam Hussein has ignored. There is no shortage of UN resolutions. What there is is a shortage of consequences for Saddam's ongoing defiance of those 16 UN resolutions. The President has made the case that it is dangerous for the United Nations to be made irrelevant by the Iraqi regime.

As the President put it in his address last week, "All the world now faces a test, and the United Nations a difficult and defining moment. Are Security Council resolutions to be honored and enforced, or cast aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?"

But the President has also been clear that all options are on the table. The only option President Bush has ruled out is to do nothing.

* * *

Mr. Chairman, as the President has made clear, this is a critical moment—for our country and for the world. Our resolve is being put to the test. It is a test that, unfortunately, the world's free nations have failed before in recent history—with terrible consequences.

Long before the Second World War, Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* indicating what he intended to do. But the hope was that maybe he would not do what he said. Between 35 and 60 million people died because of a series of fatal miscalculations. He might have been stopped early—at a minimal cost of lives—had the vast majority of the world's leaders not decided at the time that the risks of acting were greater than the risks of not acting.

Today, we must decide whether the risks of acting are greater than the risks of not acting. Saddam Hussein has made his intentions clear. He has used weapons of mass destruction against his own people and his neighbors. He has demonstrated an intention to take the territory of his neighbors. He has launched ballistic missiles against U.S. allies and others in the region. He plays host to terrorist networks. He pays rewards to the families of suicide bombers in Israel—like those who killed five Americans at the Hebrew University earlier this year. He is hostile to the United States, because we have denied him the ability he has sought to

impose his will on his neighbors. He has said, in no uncertain terms, that he would use weapons of mass destruction against the United States. He has, at this moment, stockpiles chemical and biological weapons, and is pursuing nuclear weapons. If he demonstrates the capability to deliver them to our shores, the world would be changed. Our people would be at great risk. Our willingness to be engaged in the world, our willingness to project power to stop aggression, our ability to forge coalitions for multilateral action, could all be under question. And many lives could be lost.

We need to decide as a people how we feel about that. Do the risks of taking action to stop that threat outweigh these risks of living in the world we see? Or is the risk of doing nothing greater than the risk of acting? That is the question President Bush has posed to the Congress, to the American people and to the world community.

The question comes down to this: how will the history of this era be recorded? When we look back on previous periods of our history, we see there have been many books written about threats and attacks that were not anticipated:

- "At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor"
- "December 7, 1941: The Day the Admirals Slept Late"
- "Pearl Harbor: Final Judgment"
- "From Munich to Pearl Harbor"
- "While England Slept"
- "The Cost of Failure"

The list of such books is endless. And, unfortunately, in the past year, historians have added to that body of literature—there are already books out on the September 11th attacks and why they were not prevented. As we meet today, Congressional committees are trying to determine why that tragic event was not prevented.

Each is an attempt by the authors to "connect the dots"—to determine what happened, and why it was not possible to figure out that it was going to happen.

Our job today – the President's, the Congress' and the UN's is to connect the dots *before* the fact—to anticipate vastly more lethal attacks *before* they happens—and to make the right decision as to whether we should take preventive action-- before it is too late.

We are on notice—each of us. Each has a solemn responsibility to do everything in our power to ensure that, when the history of this period is written, the books won't ask why we slept—to ensure that history will instead record that on

September 11th the American people were awakened to the impending dangers— and that those entrusted with the safety of the American people made the right decisions and saved our nation, and the world, from 21st century threats.

President Bush is determined to do just that.

##