

**Testimony of Richard L. Armitage
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Senate Foreign Relations Committee
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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee.

In October 2001, a single letter containing one teaspoon of anthrax threw this body into chaos. The offices next door were closed down for three months. Hundreds of your staff were subjected to emergency medical treatment. And two postal service employees died -- the building they worked in is still not open for business.

According to the United Nations Special Commission, which carried out inspections in Iraq for the better part of a decade, Iraq possesses some 25,000 liters of anthrax. That is, for the record, more than 5 million teaspoons of anthrax. And we have no idea where any of it is. Saddam Hussein has never accounted for one grain of it.

This is a matter of terrible urgency. I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you and this Committee the latest developments in the inspection process and what those developments mean for our commitment, as a country and as part of the world community, to see that Iraq is disarmed fully, finally and right now of all weapons of mass destruction and terror.

This has been a dramatic week. On Monday, Dr. Blix and Dr. El Baradei presented their reports to the UN Security Council. On Tuesday afternoon, the government of the United Kingdom stated that, based on that report, Iraq was in further material breach. On Tuesday evening, President Bush was unequivocal. "We will consult," he said, "But let there be no misunderstanding. If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm for the safety of our people, and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him."

This situation has just about reached a boiling point, and the entire world is watching. Rightfully so. This is what Monday's report told us: since the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1441, Iraq's last chance to disarm, Iraq has refused to hand over or destroy its chemical and biological weapons; Iraq has refused to identify the location and fate of its considerable stocks of anthrax, botulinum toxin, VX, sarin, and mustard gas; Iraq has refused to surrender its mobile biological capabilities, which are essentially germ laboratories tucked into the back of a Mack truck; and Iraq has refused to account for tens of thousands of empty -- and full -- chemical and biological warheads. And, mind you, these are just the materials and the weapons we know about, just some of what UNSCOM catalogued in 1999 after inspectors were kicked out of Iraq in 1998. We do not know what Saddam Hussein may have amassed in the years since.

This is not some abstract concern. This is a concrete and significant military capability -- one that Saddam Hussein has shown a willingness to use. And consider that the amount of biological agent that UN inspectors believe Iraq produced -- the 25,000 liters of anthrax and 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin -- is enough to kill tens of thousands of people. Perhaps far more, depending on how, when and where it is released. And consider that UNSCOM found more than just the evidence of bulk biological agents. The inspectors also found that Iraq had developed effective

and efficient means for dispersing these materials: unmanned aerial vehicles, spray devices, special munitions. We don't know where any of it is. And the last 60 days of new inspections have turned up no additional information that could allay any concerns about this military capability.

On Monday, Dr. Blix came to the conclusion that "Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance -- not even today -- of the disarmament, which was demanded of it and which it needs to carry out to win the confidence of the world and to live in peace." The Department of State shares this conclusion. Iraq has failed to cooperate actively, and without active cooperation, the peaceful disarmament of Iraq is not going to be possible. As you have heard us say, time is running out for the Iraqi regime to remedy this situation.

The implications are stark. For 12 years, the international community has demanded that Iraq disarm. And for 12 years, we have tried to limit the damage that Saddam Hussein could inflict on his neighbors and on his own people. But throughout this time, Saddam Hussein has constantly tested and correctly assessed that none of these measures has any real teeth. That he personally need not pay the price for any of it. That he need not change any of his behaviors or give up any of his ambitions. And so despite the international community's effort, and the inspectors' herculean effort, Saddam Hussein remains a threat.

In effect, the United Nations has tolerated defiance and allowed the Iraqi regime to retain its devastating military capability for far too long. Last fall, this situation compelled President Bush to challenge the international community to take a stand. And the UN Security Council responded by unanimously passing Resolution 1441, a resolution that dramatically broke with the past. It included tests that have to be passed and it had teeth.

With this resolution, the world put the burden of proof back where it belongs -- squarely on the shoulders of Saddam Hussein. Resolution 1441 found that Iraq has been and remains in material breach for its refusal to disarm but the resolution offered the Iraqi regime one last chance for a peaceful solution. The Security Council demanded immediate, full and verifiable disarmament of Iraq, the original terms of 1991 cease-fire (UNSCR 687). The first test of compliance was set as a full, currently accurate and complete accounting of Iraq's deadly programs. The second test was cooperation with the inspectors, "actively, immediately, and unconditionally." And both tests rested on an ironclad bottom line: Resolution 1441 warned that serious consequences would result from continued Iraqi noncompliance.

On Monday, after 60 days of inspections, the inspectors delivered bad news. Iraq has failed each test. My colleague, Ambassador Negroponte, will speak to this in more detail, but essentially, Iraq's declaration was a scurrilous 12,000-page waste of time. Not one member of the Council rose to defend it. The three-foot tall stack of papers is -- at best -- recycled information with a dash of new obfuscation. As for Iraqi cooperation, it has been neither active, immediate nor unconditional. In fact, it has been lacking altogether. Take, for example, aerial surveillance. Because of Iraq's interference, the inspectors are not supported by any fixed-wing aerial surveillance at this time, which is in direct defiance of the detailed terms of Resolution 1441. Let me tell you why that is important. We know from past experience that at times, Iraq has been tipped off as to where the inspectors are going, allowing Iraqi officials to remove or hide

documents and materials, sometimes literally going out the back door while inspectors are knocking on the front door. Overhead surveillance would help ensure that these tactics and tricks of the past could not confound today's inspections.

There is no sign, not one sign, that the Iraqi regime has any intent to comply fully with the terms of Resolution 1441, just as it has failed to comply with previous UN Security Council resolutions. The international community gave Iraq one final opportunity to disarm peacefully, and that opportunity has just about run its course. Dr. Blix told us on Monday that there has been no progress toward credible, verifiable disarmament.

There are those who say we still need to build our case, and that Secretary Powell will have to present convincing evidence when he appears before the Security Council on February 5th. But this is not about the United States, and what we can prove. This is about Saddam Hussein, and what he must prove. He is the one who owes us evidence. On Monday, Hans Blix gave us a vivid snapshot of how the situation stands right now. Next week, Secretary Powell will give us the bigger picture, the past record and the present realities. His presentation will include some intelligence and information the public has never heard before, but all of it will reinforce the message Dr. Blix conveyed.

There are those who say we need more time for inspections to "work." To this I respond that it is not a matter of how much time to give inspectors but of how much time we have already given Iraq. And in these 12 long years, the regime has yet to even accept disarmament in principle, according to Dr. Blix. At this point, giving Iraq more time may well be wishful thinking. Arguing for more time is essentially telling Saddam Hussein that the threat of "serious consequences" is hollow, just like every other threat made over the past 12 years. It does none of us any good to let Saddam Hussein think he can wear us down into his version of business as usual. As President Bush said on Tuesday; "if this threat is permitted to fully and suddenly emerge, all actions, all words and all recriminations would come too late. Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not a strategy and it is not an option."

Resolution 1441 was clear. One final chance to disarm peacefully. No second chance. That is not to say that it is too late for the Iraqi regime. I think we can all still hope for a peaceful solution in the next days and weeks. To that end, the United States will continue to offer the inspectors a variety of material and intelligence support. But for Iraq, the time for a peaceful outcome, an outcome where inspectors are able to verify Iraq's decision to disarm. That time is fast coming to a close.

The President was clear on Tuesday. He has not yet made a decision to resort to military action. But he has reached a decision that the international community has an obligation to see that Iraq is disarmed. Peacefully -- or forcibly, if necessary. When all 15 members of the Security Council voted to pass UN Security Council Resolution 1441, they agreed to this. They reaffirmed the authorities given in 1991 and they assumed the responsibility for putting their will behind their words. Moreover, Saddam Hussein's defiance is not just a clear and present threat to our mutual security and vital interests, it also challenges the relevance and credibility of the Security Council and the world community. President Bush, Secretary Powell, other Administration officials and I have begun consultations with other Security Council members,

friends and allies to discuss the implications of Iraq's choice and to consider how to best protect our interests and the interests of the international community. All states with an investment in the rule of law and international stability will have to consider some difficult questions. Will the world acquiesce and stand down if Iraq refuses to disarm? Will we allow our fear and reluctance to fight drive us into confusion and inaction, even in the face of such a threat? And what will this mean for the future, particularly in a world where Iraq is not the only nation with ambitions for such an arsenal? We expect to have a full and frank exchange of views in the coming weeks.

No one in this country or the international community wants war. For war is horrible. But no one wants a regime with no regard for the welfare of its own people or the borders of its neighbors and no regard for the will of the international community to possess weapons of mass destruction. We have to face the fact that if Iraq does not disarm peacefully, we will have to make a choice. We cannot have it both ways. If Saddam Hussein refuses to give up his lethal capabilities we can only conclude, as the President said, that Saddam Hussein is keeping these weapons in order to “dominate, intimidate, or attack.” It is our hope that the world community will choose to stand behind Resolution 1441 and as a great coalition act with clarity of purpose and strength of resolve to disarm Iraq and protect our peace and security.