

**Floor Statement**  
**Iraq**  
**January 29, 2003**

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise to continue the discussion which was obviously laid forth last night in definitively strong terms by the President of the United States on the issue of our national defense and how we address the terrorism and the linkage between terrorism and the Iraqi situation. The response to the President has been interesting. From some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, and others, it has been said that the President is too bellicose. In fact, I understand today that Senator Kennedy will bring forth a resolution which will essentially say that. Certainly we have heard from Members of the self-proclaimed peace movement, that is the case.

However, the President made a strong statement of facts that we as a nation are at risk. It is ironic that the Members who may subscribe to this self-proclaimed peace movement which might better be defined as an appeasement movement, that they appear to ignore the fact we are already at war. Approximately 3,000 people died in New York; hundreds died here in Washington; over 100 died on a plane in Pennsylvania; sailors were killed on a ship, the USS *Cole*, a U.S. military ship, in Yemen; Americans were killed at two embassies in Africa. We are at war.

The representation that we should not fight that war with all our resources and all our capabilities is, I believe, inappropriate.

How do you link Iraq into this war? If this were a period of the 19th century or even large portions of the 20th century, you would not worry about Iraq . You probably would not even worry about al-Qaida. They would be, in the case of Iraq , a government of a petty despot; in the case of al-Qaida, a group of murderers. The difference today is that this petty despot and these petty murderers have in their possession or may gain the possession of weapons which can kill not hundreds but can kill tens of thousands of people, weapons which would be used, undoubtedly, against Americans. They intend America harm.

They have shown that in their attacks to date where Americans have died. The President, as our Commander in Chief and the leader of our Nation and the leader of the free world, is unquestionably correct in pursuing the individuals who possess those weapons and who might use them or the individuals who might seek those weapons and use them across the globe.

There is absolutely no question but that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction, biological and chemical, and that it has an intention to obtain nuclear weapons. There is also virtually no question, at least among anyone willing to look at the facts, that Iraq is in communication with our enemies in al-Qaida.

The idea we should subjugate our national security to others is also one that I find inherently difficult to defend. Paris was not attacked. Berlin was not attacked. New York City was attacked. It is our national security, America's national security, that is at risk.

The President has made it abundantly clear that his purpose is to defend the homeland. He has every right--in fact, he has every obligation--to do that and to accomplish it. I believe he has laid out a case that, year in and year out, the Iraqi Government, led by a despot of inordinate inhumanity, who has killed thousands, who has used weapons of mass destruction, who has used gas on his own people, who has tortured, raped, and murdered his opposition--that that Government represents an imminent threat to us as a nation and to our allies. Until that Government disarms, it remains such a threat.

We have sought to disarm Iraq for 12 years through a process of inspections guided by the United Nations resolutions. At every turn, Iraq has essentially gamed the process and has retained its capacity to kill while denying that it has such capacity.

At every turn, it has obfuscated and attempted to subvert the efforts of the inspectors, denying them access, just in the most recent weeks, to legitimate needs that they have as inspectors, of overflights, of access to the scientists who produce the weapons of mass destruction, of accurate accounting of where the weapons are that we know are in existence, where the anthrax is, where the VX gas is, where the delivery systems are for those weapons.

There was another period in history when we confronted a time such as this, and that was in the late 1930s to the run-up to World War II. During that period, once again people of good intention said: Give Adolf Hitler a chance. Give him the benefit of the doubt. Appease him. Try to work with him. Neville Chamberlain, in his famous flight to Munich, attempted to accomplish that.

But with people such as Adolf Hitler, with people such as Saddam Hussein, you do not reason in a Western, rational way; you do not reach accommodations, because their purpose is not to accommodate; their purpose is to use their power aggressively and in a manner which will harm the people we consider our allies, and which may harm ourselves, our Nation.

So it is naive of us to presume we are going to succeed here if we follow such a course. We should look to history to confirm that naivete. The President has outlined a definitive purpose for our Nation and for the world. It is that we protect the rights of free nations to defend themselves from despots who have weapons of mass destruction and terrorists who would use such weapons to kill thousands of innocent people. We have that right. His words that "the liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world but is God's gift to humanity" ring with incredible accuracy and truth. We, as a nation have an obligation to protect that liberty.

Hopefully, working with the United Nations, we will be able to develop the coalitions necessary to accomplish that. It would still be appropriate to do it in a peaceful way. But that is not our call. We do not have the offense on that issue. Saddam Hussein's government has the offense on that issue. If they wish to proceed in a peaceful way to disarm, that course is sitting there for them. But they have shown no inclination to do that. In fact, just the opposite has been the course they have decided to pursue--one of obfuscation, one of deceit, one of continued commitment to possess and potentially use these weapons which kill thousands of people, innocent people, weapons which they have used in the past.

When the President calls our Nation together and asks us as a society to join to protect ourselves and to protect the liberty which God has gifted to humanity, I believe we have an obligation to follow and to respect that call. This Congress has voted twice, once under President Clinton and once under President Bush, to empower the President to use the necessary force, to take the necessary action to protect our Nation and to protect the liberty of the world. This President has stepped up to that charge. If he had failed to step up to that charge, he would not be doing his job as Commander in Chief and as President. I believe this Congress has an equal obligation to step up to that charge.

I hope as we move down this road, we will move united and recognize that this is a time when it falls on all of us to support the defense of freedom and liberty as defined by the President in his extraordinary speech last night.

Madam President, I reserve the remainder of our time and yield the floor.