

I suggest that Senators need not address their position on the constitutionality or wisdom of the line-item veto legislation itself to vote for this resolution. It was supported by 69 Senators last October, and I would hope it has at least that much support this afternoon when we vote on it again.

A vote for this measure is a vote against the administration's blatant exercise of power that was sloppy and rushed and resulted in many errors.

The subcommittee and full committee, as well as membership of both houses, labored over a period of several months to scrub the budget and add only those projects that were deemed worthy.

I hope that this measure will receive the strong support of the full Senate as it has in the past, and that this will be the end of this matter.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to proceed as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAQ AVERTED

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, it now appears that U.S. military action against Iraq will not be undertaken in the near future. All Americans, and I'm sure people all around the world, are pleased when military force can be avoided, when our men and women in uniform are not put in harm's way, and when innocent civilian lives are not put at risk.

But we must be clear: We cannot afford peace at any price—peace that could lead to a much more difficult conflict later on down the road.

It is always possible to get a deal if you give enough away. The central issue with regard to Iraq is whether an agreement furthers American interests.

The deal negotiated by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan with Iraq does not adequately address the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. After years of denying that Saddam Hussein had any right to determine the scope of inspections or the makeup of inspection teams, this agreement codifies his ability to do both. It is, to quote one diplomat, "the beginning of the unraveling of the inspection process." This accord sets up a new inspection regime under the control of the Secretary General of the so-called "eight palace residences." He appoints "senior diplomats" to the group. He names the head of the group.

And it is not clear to me, although others I am sure are getting clarification on this, who that person would be. Would it be one of the UNSCOM inspectors? Would it be some diplomat?

The group will have its own rules. And we don't know exactly what they are because they have not yet been developed. I know questions are being asked about this by Ambassador Richardson. I know he is trying to get clarifications. I also know that he is concerned about what he is learning.

The Secretary General is calling the shots. The United States is not. Secretary Albright earlier this week objected to my characterization of this episode as "contracting out U.S. foreign policy." With all due respect, I stand by that comment, because it appears that in fact is what has happened.

Because of the central role of the U.N. Secretary General, it is important to understand his approach and his conclusions.

Before and after his mission to Baghdad, Secretary General Annan stopped in Paris. He briefed the French government before he met personally, as I understand it, with any senior U.S. official. I find it of great concern that the French are, frankly, accorded a privilege denied to the United States.

The Secretary General has now briefed the Security Council and the press on his trip.

Let's look at what he has said. "Saddam can be trusted." "I think I can do business with him." "I think he was serious." These are all direct quotes. The Secretary General told reporters he spent the weekend building a "human relationship" with Saddam Hussein.

The Secretary General thinks that he can trust the man who has invaded his neighbors, who has used chemical weapons ten times, and who tried to assassinate former President George Bush. This is folly. I cannot understand why the Clinton Administration would place trust in someone devoted to building a "human relationship" with a mass murderer.

According to the Washington Post, Secretary General Annan described UNSCOM inspectors "as 'cowboys' who had thrown their weight around and behaved irresponsibly." He also "passed along without comment on Iraqi complaint—denied by [UNSCOM] as a paranoid delusion—that some of the most aggressive U.N. inspectors were seeking to hunt down Iraqi President Saddam Hussein so he could be assassinated. . . ."

The Secretary General of the U.N. starts describing the inspectors as "cowboys," when, as a matter of fact, I had the impression, and it was universally agreed, that they had been very professional. These are people with expertise on biological and chemical weapons. These are people that have come from the international atomic agencies. They know what they are doing. Mr. Butler, the Brit, was in charge of the inspectors, has been very

diligent, and very circumspect. As a matter of fact, I understand that one of the most aggressive and most effective inspectors is a Russian. Why in the world would the Secretary General use this kind of wording? Why would he come up with, or even pass along, this ridiculous suggestion that they were being used to hunt down Saddam Hussein?

These comments are outrageous. They reflect someone bent on appeasement—not someone determined to make the United Nations inspection regime work effectively.

The Secretary General has greatly harmed the credibility of the United Nations by cutting what appears to be a special deal with the most flagrant violator of United Nations resolutions, probably in history. Instead of standing on principle, he sat with the unprincipled—and gave him what he wanted.

The United States has not yet formally announced its support for the deal negotiated by Secretary General Annan. It is not too late to reject a deal if it leaves Saddam Hussein rejoicing and leaves UNSCOM out in the cold.

I yield the floor, Mr. President.

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I wanted to make some remarks about the situation in Iraq as well.

Is this a time that has been set aside within the MilCon debate, or should I ask consent?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair would entertain a request from the Senator that she might proceed as if in morning business.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. President. I ask unanimous consent to proceed as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE SITUATION IN IRAQ

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I appreciate very much the leadership that Senator LOTT has provided in the ongoing discussions that we have had in Congress on the situation with Iraq.

I was very pleased that in the 2 weeks previous to this, when the President came to consult with Congress, that Senator LOTT stated that we needed a plan, that it was important that the President have, indeed, in an aftermath certainly the acknowledgment that there might be a retaliation, and asking the President to tell us what the response would be. I think this set in motion, on the part of the President and the President's advisers really the awareness and the reality of the situation—that it is not an immediate situation that is going to be set aside and not visited again. In fact, I think all the indicators point to the fact that we are going to revisit this again—that perhaps we have a reprieve, that we

have a window of opportunity. And this window of opportunity should be taken to lay out a long-term strategy—a long-term strategy that would, once and for all, make clear what our policy is in dealing with Saddam Hussein.

For whatever else you say about Saddam Hussein, his objectives are clear. He has been very clear in his actions and in his words that he intends to make weapons of mass destruction, that he intends to abuse his people to be able to keep them, that he does not intend to be part of the community of nations. And I think it is time that America be just as clear with Saddam Hussein as he has been with us and with the world.

It crystallized I think for the American people a higher-stake universe—not the rabble rousing by the people who were protesting the war. They would protest the war, no matter what. The people who would protest the war for the integrity and the security of the United States are not the mainstream of America. But who was the mainstream of America? It is that veteran, who spoke with a cracked voice, who said, "I fought in a war. My son fought in a war." And he asked the question that the American people and the Congress ask. And that is: What are you going to do? What is the plan? If you are going to put our troops in harm's way, are we going to have the guts to stick with it when the going gets tough? That was his question. He was so sincere. He captured the heart of America in that moment. And he captured the essence of what Congress has asked the President to do; that is, to submit a plan. If our troops are going into harm's way, if we are going to have an altercation with another country, let's be specific about what the mission is.

The time has come to stop status quo with Saddam Hussein. The majority leader just mentioned that Saddam Hussein has quite a record. He plotted the assassination of our former President Bush. He used chemical weapons on his own people. He used chemical weapons on the Iranian people. He went into Kuwait, and tried to take over another country. This is not a man that we can deal with very easily. And business as usual has not worked for the last decade with Saddam Hussein.

So I believe that the time has come for Congress and the President to work together to address this issue of Saddam Hussein. I hope the President will continue to consult with Congress, because I think in the last 2 weeks there has been a good understanding of where Congress is and where the American people are. Now is the time to put forth a plan. A group of our former Secretaries of State and Secretaries of Defense have made some suggestions. This is not to say that this is the only thing we could do. But certainly having a strategy is something that America has been able to do in the past, and should be able to do today.

I think it is important that we look for another Iraqi Government that we

could support—one that wants to be part of the community of nations. We could look at lifting sanctions in liberated areas of Iraq and communicate directly with the Iraqi people. Let them know the dangers of the chemical weapons that are being housed in their country and tell them there is another way. We want to help the Iraqi people. We want to give them the food and medicine for their children that we would like for them to have that every parent in the world wants for his or her children.

We should target relief supplies to those Iraqi people who are in need. We need to delegitimize Saddam Hussein. And we need to be ready with enough troop force to make the threat and live up to it. That, if Saddam Hussein does not live up to this potential agreement that is laid before the Security Council today, we will be ready to act with force swiftly and go for what will be a destabilization of Saddam Hussein; that is, the military regime.

That brings up another question. Are we ready to lead the forces we need for that kind of strength in the area of the Persian Gulf? Are we ready? That brings up the issue of what we are doing in other parts of the world. Is that bringing our forces down to the extent that we are not going to be able to do what we need in the Persian Gulf where everyone I think would agree we have a security interest? Right now we have some pretty alarming statistics. Last year the military had its worst recruiting year since 1979. The Army failed to meet its objectives to recruit infantry soldiers—the single most important specialty in the Army. More than 350 Air Force pilots turned down the \$60,000 bonuses they would have received to reapply for the Air Force for 5 more years. That was a 29 percent acceptance rate. Mr. President, 59 percent of the pilots offered that bonus accepted last year and 81 percent in 1995. This is an alarming trend. This is something that we must address as we look at the issues of the use of our force and where they are.

I come back to the need for a policy of when we are going to send American troops into harm's way. I think we must be very careful, because they are stretched so thin, that they are not going to be able to establish in the Persian Gulf a major presence in addition to our responsibilities in Korea and in Europe, and then with responsibilities that we have taken on for the United Nations in places like Haiti and Somalia. We have to have a policy. I would ask this administration to look very clearly at drawing down our readiness at the same time we are asking our troops to do more.

So, these issues are before us. I think the administration should step back and use the window of opportunity to have a clear policy in Iraq. As we go into the discussion of Bosnia, I hope the President will also look at the fact that we have 500,000 fewer soldiers today than we did in Desert Storm, and

that we are having a tough time keeping our good people in the military. Let's have a policy that will use our military when there is a U.S. security interest, but be very careful about dissipating our resources in places where we do not. That is causing us to lose many of our best people in the military.

The young men and women who sign up to protect our freedom deserve the support of the U.S. Congress and the President—the support, the training, the quality of life, the equipment to do their job—because their job is protecting our freedom, and there can be nothing as important.

I ask the administration to address these issues as we are looking at Iraq, as we are looking at Bosnia, as we are looking at our responsibilities in a global sense. Let's start acting like the superpower that we are and target our defense dollars for our readiness and our national security. Let's have policies where, when the United States speaks, everyone knows that we will be a reliable ally and a formidable enemy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, what is the pending business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are on the veto message of H.R. 2631.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed in morning business for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SHELBY. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. SHELBY pertaining to the introduction of S. 1675 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

CANCELLATION DISAPPROVAL ACT—VETO

The Senate continued with the consideration of the veto message.

Mr. BUMPERS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, I yield to no Senator, with the possible exception of ROBERT C. BYRD from the great State of West Virginia, in my contempt for and disdain for the line-item veto bill that we passed in the 104th Congress and which two district courts have held to be unconstitutional. But I intend to vote to sustain the President's veto.

I stood on this floor day after day, year after year, saying that the line-item veto was a lousy idea, an unconstitutional idea. When I think of the abuse that I and Senator BYRD and the people who stood fast on the floor of the Senate against the line-item veto—when I think of the abuse we took, the political abuse we took for resisting what was a palpable political idea, that still rankles me. Like so many ideas that have been floated through this body in the past 23 years that I have