

would still have a pretty sorry record. But we could improve somewhat this dismal performance on the current President's nominations for circuit court.

I hope we will have some action at the end of the session on at least one of the four nominees who could be acted upon by the full Senate. It is not too late to at least partially fix and improve a very sad situation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW). The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I want to give the rest of what time we have left to the Senator from Oregon, Mr. WYDEN.

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

IRAQ

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I rise to address our policy in Iraq. The situation remains fluid. Administration officials are engaged in negotiations at the United Nations over what approach we ought to take with our allies to disarm the brutal and dictatorial Iraqi regime.

The debate we will have in the Senate today and in the days to follow is critical because the administration seeks our authorization now for military action, including possibly unprecedented, preemptive, go-it-alone military action in Iraq, even as it seeks to garner support from our allies on a new U.N. disarmament resolution.

Let me be clear: Saddam Hussein is a brutal, ruthless dictator who has repressed his own people, attacked his neighbors, and he remains an international outlaw. The world would be a much better place if he were gone and the regime in Iraq were changed. That is why the United States should unite the world against Saddam and not allow him to unite forces against us.

A go-it-alone approach, allowing a ground invasion of Iraq without the support of other countries, could give Saddam exactly that chance. A preemptive, go-it-alone strategy toward Iraq is wrong. I oppose it. I support ridding Iraq of weapons of mass destruction through unfettered U.N. inspections which would begin as soon as possible. Only a broad coalition of nations, united to disarm Saddam, while preserving our war on terror, is likely to succeed.

Our primary focus now must be on Iraq's verifiable disarmament of weapons of mass destruction. This will help maintain international support and could even eventually result in Saddam's loss of power. Of course, I would welcome this, along with most of our allies.

The President has helped to direct intense new multilateral pressure on Saddam Hussein to allow U.N. and International Atomic Energy Agency weapons inspectors back in Iraq to conduct their assessment of Iraq's chem-

ical, biological, and nuclear programs. He clearly has felt that heat. It suggests what can be accomplished through collective action.

I am not naive about this process. Much work lies ahead. But we cannot dismiss out of hand Saddam's late and reluctant commitment to comply with U.N. disarmament arrangements or the agreement struck Tuesday to begin to implement them. We should use the gathering international resolve to collectively confront this regime by building on these efforts.

This debate must include all Americans because our decisions finally must have the informed consent of the American people who will be asked to bear the cost, in blood and treasure, of our decisions.

When the lives of sons and daughters of average Americans could be risked and lost, their voices must be heard in the Congress before we make decisions about military action. Right now, despite a desire to support our President, I believe many Americans still have profound questions about the wisdom of relying too heavily on a preemptive go-it-alone military approach. Acting now on our own might be a sign of our power. Acting sensibly and in a measured way, in concert with our allies, with bipartisan congressional support, would be a sign of our strength.

It would also be a sign of the wisdom of our Founders who lodged in the President the power to command U.S. Armed Forces, and in Congress the power to make war, ensuring a balance of powers between coequal branches of Government. Our Constitution lodges the power to weigh the causes of war and the ability to declare war in Congress precisely to ensure that the American people and those who represent them will be consulted before military action is taken.

The Senate has a grave duty to insist on a full debate that examines for all Americans the full range of options before us and weighs those options, together with their risks and costs. Such a debate should be energized by the real spirit of September 11, a debate which places a priority not on unanimity but on the unity of a people determined to forcefully confront and defeat terrorism and to defend our values.

I have supported internationally sanctioned coalition military action in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in Serbia, and in Afghanistan. Even so, in recent weeks, I and others—including major Republican policymakers, such as former Bush National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft; former Bush Secretary of State James Baker; my colleague on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CHUCK HAGEL; Bush Mid-East envoy General Anthony Zinni; and other leading U.S. military leaders—have raised serious questions about the approach the administration is taking on Iraq.

There have been questions raised about the nature and urgency of Iraq's

threat and our response to that threat: What is the best course of action that the United States could take to address this threat? What are the economic, political, and national security consequences of a possible U.S. or allied invasion of Iraq? There have been questions raised about the consequences of our actions abroad, including its effect on the continuing war on terrorism, our ongoing efforts to stabilize and rebuild Afghanistan, and efforts to calm the intensifying Middle East crisis, especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

There have been questions raised about the consequences of our actions here at home. Of gravest concern, obviously, are the questions raised about the possible loss of life that could result from our actions. The United States could post tens of thousands of troops in Iraq and, in so doing, risk countless lives of soldiers and innocent Iraqis.

There are other questions about the impact of an attack in relation to our economy. The United States could face soaring oil prices and could spend billions both on a war and a years-long effort to stabilize Iraq after an invasion.

The resolution that will be before the Senate explicitly authorizes a go-it-alone approach. I believe an international approach is essential. In my view, our policy should have four key elements.

First and foremost, the United States must work with our allies to deal with Iraq. We should not go it alone, or virtually alone, with a preemptive ground invasion. Most critically, acting alone could jeopardize our top national priority, the continuing war on terror. I believe it would be a mistake to vote for a resolution that authorizes a preemptive ground invasion. The intense cooperation of other nations in relation to matters that deal with intelligence sharing, security, political and economic cooperation, law enforcement, and financial surveillance, and other areas is crucial to this fight, and this is what is critical for our country to be able to wage its war effectively with our allies. Over the past year, this cooperation has been the most successful weapon against terrorist networks. That—not attacking Iraq—should be the main focus of our efforts in the war on terror.

As I think about what a go-it-alone strategy would mean in terms of the consequences in South Asia and the Near East and the need for our country to have access on the ground, and cooperation of the community, and get intelligence in the war against al-Qaida and in this war against terrorism, I believe a go-it-alone approach could undercut that effort. That is why I believe our effort should be international.

We have succeeded in destroying some al-Qaida forces, but many operatives have scattered. Their will to kill Americans is still strong. The United States has relied heavily on alliances with nearly 100 countries in a

coalition against terror for critical intelligence to protect Americans from possible future attacks. Acting with the support of allies, including, hopefully, Arab and Muslim allies, would limit possible damage to that coalition and our antiterrorism effort. But as General Wesley Clark, former Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, has recently noted, a premature, go-it-alone invasion of Iraq "would supercharge recruiting for al-Qaida."

Second, our efforts should have a goal of disarming Saddam Hussein of all his weapons of mass destruction. Iraq agreed to destroy its weapons of mass destruction at the end of the Persian Gulf War and to verification by the U.N. and the International Atomic Energy Agency that this had been done. According to the U.N. and the IAEA, and undisputed by the administration, inspections during the 1990s neutralized a substantial portion of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and getting inspectors back to finish the job is critical. We know he did not cooperate with all of the inspection regime.

We know what needs to be done. But the fact is we had that regime, and it is important now to call on the Security Council of the U.N. to insist that those inspectors be on the ground. The goal is disarmament, unfettered access. It is an international effort, and with that Saddam Hussein must comply. Otherwise, there will be consequences, including appropriate use of force. The prompt resumption of inspections and disarmament, under an expedited timetable and with unfettered access in Iraq, is imperative.

Third, weapons inspections should be enforceable. If efforts by the U.N. weapons inspectors are tried and fail, a range of potential U.N. sanctions means, including proportionate military force, should be considered. I have no doubt that this Congress would act swiftly to authorize force in such circumstances. This does not mean giving the United Nations a veto over U.S. actions. Nobody wants to do that. It simply means, as Chairman LEVIN has observed, that Saddam Hussein is a world problem and should be addressed in the world arena.

Finally, our approach toward Iraq must be consistent with international law and the framework of collective security developed over the last 50 years or more. It should be sanctioned by the Security Council under the U.N. charter, to which we are a party and by which we are legally bound. Only a broad coalition of nations, united to disarm Saddam Hussein, while preserving our war on terror, can succeed.

Our response will be far more effective if Saddam Hussein sees the whole world arrayed against him. We should act forcefully, resolutely, sensibly, with our allies—and not alone—to disarm Saddam Hussein. Authorizing the preemptive go-alone use of force right now, which is what the resolution before us calls for, in the midst of con-

tinuing efforts to enlist the world community to back a tough, new disarmament resolution on Iraq, could be a very costly mistake for our country.

Madam President, quite often at the end of debates on amendments, we thank our staffs for the work they have done and appreciate their hard work. At the end of my statement today on the floor of the Senate as to why I am opposed to the resolution before us that we will be debating today and in the days to come, which is too open-ended and would provide the President with authority for preemptive military action, including a ground invasion in Iraq, I would like to thank my staff. I would like to thank my staff for never trying one time to influence me to make any other decision than what I honestly and truthfully believe is right for the State I represent, Minnesota, for my country, and for the world in which my children and my grandchildren live. To all of my staff, I thank you for believing in me.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, thousands of working families in Oregon feel as if they have been hit by an economic wrecking ball. From Ontario to Portland, OR workers have been laid off their jobs, left to fend for themselves, while their medical and energy bills skyrocket, and they have been left out of what Larry Lindsey and the administration's economic team keep calling an economic recovery.

Oregonians are hungry for leadership on the economic issue. We are trying to do our part at home down the road at the election. All of Oregon's elected officials are going to be working with the private sector on a new economic game plan. I think starting in January, with the ISTEA legislation, we will have an opportunity to make some important investments. But Oregonians expect economic leadership from Washington, DC, now. That is what they want today.

I am anxious to work with the administration on these issues, but there has just not been the leadership forthcoming. For example, on the trade issue, I cast a vote—unpopular with many with whom I am close—to give the President the authority to negotiate trade agreements. Trade involves one out of seven jobs in Oregon. The trade jobs pay better than the nontrade jobs. So I want to meet the administration halfway.

Unfortunately, the administration and its economic team is not willing to move forward and, in fact, is moving backward on a host of issues. I want to outline several of those this morning, Madam President.

It is very obvious we need a transfusion—immediate transfusion—that can restore our economic health. There is nothing that could bring our econ-

omy back faster than getting increased transportation funds for the States. One State after another has shown that money for transportation projects, particularly repaving and other maintenance items, gets money into our economy and creates family wage employment for our workers faster than any other area.

A number of Senators, Democrats and Republicans, understand this. Unfortunately, the administration's economic team does not agree. They continue to propose significantly less money than is needed for our economic and transportation needs and push for it.

While the transportation officials of my State calculate that the administration's approach will mean tens of millions of dollars less funding for Oregon's struggling economy and hundreds of fewer family wage construction jobs that could put our citizens back to work, the administration persists in taking an approach that I think is a huge mistake for our country, particularly our economic needs.

On the health issue, something the Chair knows much about, we can find common ground, for example, on a measure that could significantly lower health costs, a bipartisan approach involving making wider use of generic drugs, the same drug as essentially the brand name in the majority of instances.

Senators of both political parties want to support this issue. There is support on the Democratic side and the Republican side. The administration will not support something that could have immediate benefit—immediate benefit—for the economic crunch that our citizens face and would have bipartisan support in the Senate.

Finally, it seems on issues such as unemployment compensation, we have Senators, again, who would like to move forward to provide what I call this transfusion of assistance to the people who are so hard hit. Thousands of laid-off workers are exhausting their temporary extension of benefits every week. The program expires on December 31 of this year. Anyone laid off before June 30 of this year is going to lose all their benefits come December 31, and anyone who lost a job after June 30 will not have any Federal extension in place when their State benefits expire.

For my home State with soaring unemployment, this means that nearly 30,000 laid-off workers currently getting a temporary extension of unemployment compensation would see the end of their benefits at the end of the year, according to the Department of Labor.

Again, it seems to me this is an issue where Democrats and Republicans could, as has happened so often, come together and provide some solace, some actual relief to these families who are hurting in our country. I will be talking more about this issue in the days ahead while working on a significant