

Cuban missile crisis. President Kennedy sent his Ambassador, Adlai Stevenson, to the chambers of the United Nations. He held up irrefutable proof of the missiles being put in Cuba by the then Soviet Union. With that proof, the world rallied around the United States.

We have to remember how missteps can create more problems. The situation in North Korea today illustrates how a dangerous situation can quickly escalate unnecessarily. By taking options off the table, we are worse off today than we were a few months ago. After backing the United States into a corner, the White House is now discussing donations of food and fuel, an approach they ridiculed just a short time ago. We have to be more consistent.

Today, there are no U.N. inspectors monitoring the North Korean nuclear facilities. Tensions have dramatically increased, and we have serious disagreements with our Japanese and South Korean allies. Let us not make the same mistake in Iraq that history, both decades ago and more recently, has tried to teach us.

Saddam Hussein must be disarmed to the point that he is no longer a threat to his neighbors. U.N. resolutions must be respected and enforced. But these are matters of concern to the world, not just to the United States. We are part of the world, but we are not the whole world.

The U.N. inspectors need time to complete their work. It is divisive and damaging for the United States, having secured a Security Council resolution, two months later to short-circuit the U.N. process in the name of enforcing that same U.N. resolution.

To those officials in the White House and the Pentagon who would use the U.N. inspections as a mere excuse to justify unilateral military action, I say the same things as when I opposed the resolution authorizing the use of force that passed the Senate back in September: This Vermonter never has and never will give a blank check to this President or to any President to wage war.

The next weeks and months will be decisive. Let's hope the Iraqi Government fulfills its obligations and the inspectors finish the job in a manner that gives credibility to their conclusions, whatever those conclusions may be. Let's work with the U.N. Security Council and our allies to find a way forward.

Unlike his father a decade ago, this President has not built a broad coalition for military action. If diplomacy fails, I am confident we can win a military victory. After all, we have the most powerful military in the world. But acting unilaterally would be extremely costly. It would lead to a prolonged U.S. military occupation of Iraq, the expenditure of tens, even hundreds, of billions of dollars. It would damage our relations with key allies, and it would further inflame the anti-American extremism that is growing

throughout the Muslim world, extremism that threatens us more than anything else today.

It threatens us because even today terrorists plan their attacks within the United States, not in the Persian Gulf. We need the world to be with us. A broad-based coalition is indispensable for achieving long-term peace in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, as well as our continuing efforts against international terrorism.

This war is not inevitable. We should not talk or act as if it is. But if war does come, let the United States be able to say we did everything we could to try to solve this another way; that we worked in concert with the United Nations; and that the U.N. was strengthened in the process. We must be convinced that war is justified; that the sacrifice of American lives can be justified; that America taking this step of a preemptive war can be justified not only today but, in history's eyes, decades from now.

I do not believe that threshold has yet been reached. So many of the American people do not. Our allies do not.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I understand we are in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, following the attacks of September 11, many Americans found themselves feeling, perhaps for the first time, a sense of vulnerability. Terrorists had successfully infiltrated our country, hijacked four of our jetliners, and committed mass suicide. Using simple tactics and superb coordination, they singlehandedly changed the American mindset in a matter of minutes.

President Bush recognized that our way of life changed drastically on September 11. During an address to a joint session of Congress and the American people 9 days after the attacks, President Bush said the following:

On September 11, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars—but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war—but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks—but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this brought upon us in a single day—and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.

For nearly 10 years prior to that, our country enjoyed unprecedented peace

and prosperity. The economy grew at an unbelievable rate. We were at peace with our neighbors. We focused on health-care, welfare, education, and other domestic priorities. The fall of the Soviet Union eliminated the threat to our Nation. Our defense budget shrank; our intelligence resources dwindled; and our homeland defenses remained virtually nonexistent. The biggest problem our military faced was not how best to invade Iraq, but how to keep enlisted families off food stamps.

Our mind simply was elsewhere. A number of blue-ribbon commissions tried to get our attention. The Bremer Commission pointed out the deficiencies of our intelligence collection efforts. The Gilmore Commission revealed how disconnected, disparate, and dysfunctional our homeland security efforts were. And, the Hart-Rudman Commission discussed how much our Federal Government needed to be restructured to better combat terrorism. Yet many of the recommendations from these commissions were pushed aside as being impractical, too expensive, or unnecessary. As it turns out, they were right, and on September 11, we paid the price.

Since that dreadful day, we have made considerable progress. We have rid Afghanistan of its terrorists-run government, disrupted terrorist operations around the world, and taken steps to improve our homeland defenses. I was pleased last November when the Congress, after 3 months of debate, approved legislation to create the Department of Homeland Security. This Department will pull together 22 agencies and nearly 200,000 Federal employees. It will not be an easy task. Tom Ridge, the new Secretary of the Department, will have his hands full for many years to come.

The Department of Defense has also taken a number of measures to improve our homeland defense. The establishment of Northern Command was a significant organizational step toward fighting terrorism at our borders. The new commander, Air Force Gen. Ed Eberhart, will be responsible for the defense of the United States, including land, aerospace and sea defenses. NORTHCOM will also provide military assistance to civil authorities, including crisis and subsequent consequence management operations should such assistance be necessary.

This past year the Congress went further when it created a new Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Security within Department of Defense. The assistant secretary will be responsible for providing guidance and planning assistance to the various combatant commands, including NORTHCOM. The Senate Armed Services Committee, of which I am a member, held a hearing today on the President's nominee, Paul McHale, for this position.

Despite our efforts to build stronger homeland defenses, our country finds itself confronted by numerous threats on several different fronts. As we

speaking, thousands of U.S. soldiers, sailors, and marines are being deployed around the globe in such remote places as Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf, and the Horn of Africa. Just last week, 4,000 soldiers from Fort Carson, CO, were given orders to deploy overseas.

The war against global terrorism continues to require substantial resources and considerable foreign cooperation. The administration has made enormous progress in this area, but more remains to be done. Many al-Qaida operatives are at large, and several nations continue to support terror groups. We must remain vigilant and proactive if we are to prevent future terror attacks.

With regard to Iraq, as the President said during his state of the union address, Saddam Hussein continues to hide his weapons programs, despite an aggressive weapons inspection regime. To many, the 12,000 page Iraqi declaration given to the United Nations last December was duplicative of previous declarations and revealed little of value. It only served to highlight Saddam Hussein's determination to retain his weapons of mass destruction.

The reports earlier this week by the U.N.'s chief weapons inspectors, Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei, further demonstrated that Iraq remains unwilling to give up its weapons programs. In his statement to the United Nation's Security Council, Hans Blix emphasized this point. He said,

Unlike South Africa, which decided on its own to eliminate its nuclear weapons and welcomed the inspection as a means of creating confidence in its disarmament, 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.

Iraq has hedged, delayed, and avoided complete disarmament for over a decade. There comes a time when diplomacy and sanctions become exercises in futility. There come a time when only military action will succeed where negotiations have repeatedly failed. There comes a time when the President of the United States, as leader of the free world, must say enough is enough.

Several press reports indicate that some U.S. allies, most notably France and Germany, may oppose military action against Iraq at this time. We should certainly take their thoughts into consideration. Our alliances should be both respected and preserved. At the same time, though, the President has an obligation to our country to do what is best for the United States—his primary responsibility is the safety and security of the American people. It is my hope that our friends and allies will recognize our determination to eliminate the threat posed by Iraq's weapons programs and support our efforts in the Persian Gulf.

Just as we prepare to confront Iraq's growing arsenal of destruction, we cannot ignore the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile

programs. The Bush administration has sought to form a global consensus to deal with North Korea's WMD ambitions. Press reports indicate that the President wants the United Nations Security Council to deal with this threat to East Asia. I think this is a good first step.

In many ways, the North Korean issue is different from the situation involving Iraq. There haven't been any U.N. resolutions calling for the disarmament of North Korea, nor have North Korea's allies, China and Russia, shown much interest in resolving this issue. A global consensus is now beginning to form. Our allies in the region, South Korea and Japan, are only starting to realize the danger North Korea's WMD efforts pose to the region.

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I think that is worth repeating.

Five years ago, North Korea test-launched a three-stage ballistic missile over Japan that could have reached parts of the United States.

This test ended a debate as to whether our country was vulnerable to ballistic missile attacks from countries of concern. It became a question of what we were going to do about it. Finally, after much debate, the Congress authorized in 1999 the development and deployment of a national missile defense system "as soon as it was technologically feasible."

Since President Bush's election in 2000, the Department of Defense has made considerable progress on a missile defense system. With additional funding and less restrictions, the Missile Defense Agency has launched a broad effort to evaluate all potential options for missile defense, including ground-based, sea-based, and even space-based defenses. The MDA now has a number of high-profile missile defense systems in development and is making progress in developing sophisticated sensors capable of detecting incoming missiles.

As the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Programs and Operations, including missile defense, I have assisted the President in developing these systems. Last year, the Congress provided nearly \$8 billion for missile defense.

I am pleased that a number of projects are now nearing completion. The PAC-3, an enhanced version of the Patriot missile used during the Gulf War capable of intercepting short and medium-range ballistic missiles, has entered into production. The Army's Theater High-Altitude Air Defense—THAAD—a system to counter medium-range ballistic missiles, is nearing production. And, perhaps most significantly, the ground-based mid-course interceptor system, which provides the United States with a limited defense against ICBMs, is scheduled to be deployed in 2004, as announced by President Bush on December 17 of this past year.

Missile defense is not the only program that has received increased attention since President Bush's election. The DOD budget as a whole has grown substantially over the past 2 years. Last year, the Congress authorized over \$390 billion in funding the department, an increase of nearly \$40 billion from the year before. While much of this increase went to support our military operations overseas, some of this money was used to shore up our counter-terrorism efforts, improve our intelligence capabilities, and develop new technologies to counter the growing threats to our Nation. The department is expected to request similar funding for the upcoming fiscal year.

The President and the Congress have worked hard over the past 2 years to reduce the threats to our Nation and prevent future attacks. It has not been easy. Partisan politics, divergent personalities, and conflicting perspectives frequently interrupt the process.

I believe the President deserves much of the credit for this progress. He has stepped up and led our country in a very difficult time. His message has clearly resonated with the American people. Increased vigilance and enhanced security are essential in a time of uncertainty and perceived vulnerability. I share this message and will continue to work in the Senate to see that measures that are enacted actually increase the security of the American people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. 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. THOMAS. Mr. President, how much time have we remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Eight and a half minutes.

Mr. THOMAS. I thank the Chair.

IRAQ

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I recognize there has been a good deal of discussion in the last day or two with respect to Iraq; much of it, of course, as a result of the President's State of the Union Message the other evening, and, of course, it is a legitimate discussion about where we are with respect to Iraq and terrorism.

I believe the President's message was very complete. I thought he spelled out exactly what his plans are and the reasons for them. I think he has pursued the proper course over a period of time.

Certainly, there is no one here who wants to have to go to war. No one here wants active military intervention if that can be avoided. On the other hand, this is a progressive situation that has to be resolved, which started back in 1991, and has not yet been resolved. So