

U.S. Senate
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC,
October 9, 1998.

The President
The White House
Washington, DC.

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our concern over recent developments in Iraq.

Last February, the Senate was working on a resolution supporting military action if diplomacy did not succeed in convincing Saddam Hussein to comply with the United Nations Security Council resolutions concerning the disclosure and destruction of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. This effort was discontinued when the Iraqi government reaffirmed its acceptance of all relevant Security Council resolutions and reiterated its willingness to cooperate with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in a Memorandum of Understanding signed by its Deputy Prime Minister and the United Nations Secretary General. Despite a brief interval of cooperation, however, Saddam Hussein has failed to live up to his commitments.

On August 5, Iraq suspended all cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA, except some limited monitoring activity. As UNSCOM Executive Chairman Richard Butler told us in a briefing for all Senators in March, the fundamental historic reality is that Iraq has consistently sought to limit, mitigate, reduce and, in some cases, defeat the Security Council's resolutions by a variety of devices.

We were gratified by the Security Council's action in unanimously passing Resolution 1194 on September 9. By condemning Iraq's decision to suspend cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA, by demanding that Iraq rescind that decision and cooperate fully with UNSCOM and the IAEA, by deciding not to conduct the sanctions' review scheduled for October 1998 and not to conduct any future such reviews until UNSCOM and the IAEA, report that they are satisfied that they have been able to exercise the full range of activities provided for in their mandates, and by acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council has sent an unambiguous message to Saddam Hussein.

We are skeptical, however, that Saddam Hussein will take heed of this message even though it is from a unanimous Security Council. Moreover, we are deeply concerned that without the intrusive inspections and monitoring by UNSCOM and the IAEA, Iraq will be able, over time, to reconstitute its weapons of mass destruction programs.

In light of these developments, we urge you, after consulting with Congress, and consistent with the U.S. Constitution and laws, to take necessary actions (including, if appropriate, air and missile strikes on suspect Iraq sites) to respond effectively to the threat posed by Iraq's refusal to end its weapons of mass destruction programs.

Sincerely,
Carl Levin
Joe Lieberman
Frank R. Lautenberg
Dick Lugar
Kit Bond
Jon Kyl
Chris Dodd
John McCain
Kay Bailey Hutchison
Alfonse D'Amato
Bob Kerrey
Pete V. Domenici
Dianne Feinstein
Barbara A. Mikulski
Thomas Daschle
John Breaux
Tim Johnson
Daniel K. Inouye
Arlen Specter
James Inhoff
Strom Thurmond
Mary L. Landrieu
Wendell Ford
John F. Kerry
Chuck Grassley
Jesse Helms
Rick Santorum