

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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