Fifth, is it sensible to tie our own hands for self-defense by such a Presidential Executive order when Saddam Hussein amasses weapons of mass destruction which threaten the United States and the whole world with horrible consequences?

Sixth, if we are justified in preemptive air and missile strikes, which will inevitably kill Iraqi civilians, why are we not justified in preemptive actions against Saddam Hussein who is a mass murderer and a certified international war criminal?

Mr. President, it is a rapidly changing world scene. It is time to consider those questions.

I have no doubt about two propositions. First, a trial of Saddam Hussein as an international war criminal would be preeminently just. Second, solving the international threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction mandates removing Saddam Hussein as Iraq's leader. Perhaps Saddam Hussein could be replaced by the people of Iraq with additional U.N. sanctions, a stronger Voice of America, and nonlethal covert action. If not, then we may have to change our answers to those six questions, just as Saddam Hussein has changed the world with his weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my letter to the President, dated February 16, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Washington, DC, February 16, 1998.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I strongly urge you not to take military action against Iraq until Congress has an opportunity to consider a resolution to authorize the use of force.

Bomber and missile strikes constitute acts of war. Only Congress has the Constitutional prerogative to authorize war. The Congress spoke loudly last week by not speaking at all. It is not too long to wait until next week for Congress to consider and vote on this issue.

Our national experience in Vietnam is a relatively recent reminder that public and Congressional support are indispensable to successful military involvement. I am glad to note you plan to address the nation tomorrow night. I held five town meetings last Monday and Friday, and can tell you that my constituents are very uneasy about air and missile strikes. There are concerns about inflicting casualties on innocent Iraqis, about potential terrorist reprisals, and the possibilities of expanding the conflict.

There is general agreement that Saddam Hussein is an intolerable menace and cannot be alloweded to threaten the world with weapons of mass destruction. But are there near-term alternatives such as a blockade to tighten the noose on his oil exports? Or can our allies be persuaded to tighten economic sanctions if they will not join us on the use of force?

I compliment Secretary Cohen and Secretary Albright, but their visits have not produced the coalition which was formed for the successful prosecution of the 1991 Gulf War. Have you considered personal meetings with the leaders of France, Russia, China, Germany, Egypt, etc?

There has been unanimity in our Congressional discussions to support the men and women of our military forces. But that unanimity does not extend to giving the President a blank check when the Constitution calls for independent Congressional action to decide whether to involve the United States in war.

There is yet time to pursue alternatives. Diplomacy and other sanctions short of war should be given every chance to work.

Sincerely,

ARLEN SPECTER.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that a hearing of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources will be held on Tuesday, February 24, 1998, 10:00 a.m., in SD–430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The subject of the hearing is Tobacco Settlement V. For further information, please call the committee, 202/224–5375.

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that a hearing of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources will be held on Wednesday, February 25, 1998, 9:30 a.m., in SD–430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The subject of the hearing is The Non-School Hours: Mobilizing School and Community Resources. For further information, please call the committee, 202/224–5375.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs would like to request unanimous consent to hold a hearing on the nomination of Togo D. West, Jr., to be Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs.

The hearing will take place on Tuesday, February 24, 1998, at 9:30 a.m., in room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that a hearing of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources will be held on Thursday, February 26, 1998, 9:30 a.m., in SD–430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The subject of the hearing is Health Care Information Confidentiality. For further information, please call the committee, 202/224–5375.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Labor and Human Resources be authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Monday, February 23, 1998. The committee will be having a hearing, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., on ''Caring for America's Children.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITIES

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Securities of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, February 23, 1998, to conduct a hearing on S. 1260, The Securities Litigation Uniform Standards Act of 1997.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

NATO EXPANSION

● Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to leave the door to NATO open. Others, whose wisdom I respect, have come before the Senate to urge that we legislatively adopt a policy that would close the door to NATO membership to candidate countries, regardless of their qualifications. While the reasons advanced in support of that view carry weight, I do not believe that they outweigh the reasons for leaving the door open.

Last year, as Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, I chaired a series of hearings at which ambassadors of candidate countries appeared and testified concerning their respective countries' reasons and qualifications for joining NATO. At the end of that series of hearings, we issued a report urging that Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Slovenia be included in the first round of NATO expansion. Since that time, ten months ago, I believe that subsequent developments have supported strongly the conclusion that we drew in favor of NATO expansion.

Now, the Senate is close to voting on the admission of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. I intend to vote for expansion. These countries have each proven that they share our democratic and free enterprise values, that they want to be members of NATO, and that they are willing to join us in bearing the burdens that Alliance membership imposes.

Mr. President, I want to take particular note that each of these countries, contrary to the positions taken by some of our allies of longer standing, have not hesitated to publicly state their support for our effort to persuade, and if necessary, compel Saddam Hussein to comply with the United Nations Security Council resolutions adopted after Iraq's unprovoked military aggression against Kuwait. One of the tests of alliance is the political will to take risks for the common

good of the group. Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary have met this test.

As I stated earlier, our recommendation ten months ago was that Slovenia and Romania be included in the first group of countries considered for NATO membership. That did not happen. But neither Slovenia nor Romania recoiled from their rejection by NATO. In fact, both have persisted in policies readying their countries and their militaries for NATO membership, and have been vocally enthusiastic about the prospect.

On July 8th, 1997, the ''Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation'' was issued by the Heads of State and Government of NATO. Paragraph 8 of the Madrid Declaration stated that, and I quote:

> We reaffirm that NATO remains open to new members under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty. The Alliance will continue to welcome new members in a position to further principles of the Treaty and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The Alliance expects to extend further invitations in coming years to nations willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and as NATO determines that the inclusion of these nations would serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance and that the inclusion would enhance overall European security and stability. To give substance to this commitment, NATO will maintain an active relationship with those nations that have expressed an interest in NATO membership as well as those who may wish to seek membership in the future. Those nations that have previously expressed an interest in becoming NATO members but that were not invited to begin accession talks today will remain under consideration for future membership. The considerations set forth in our 1995 Study on NATO Enlargement will continue to apply with regard to future aspirants, regardless of their geographic location. No European democratic country whose admission would fulfill the objectives of the Treaty will be excluded from consideration. Furthermore, in order to enhance overall security and stability in Europe, further steps in the ongoing enlargement process of the Alliance should balance the security concerns of all Allies.

Mr. President, those words sound like a promise to me. Perhaps more importantly, they recognized a central fact. That fact is that by setting an artificial limit to NATO enlargement, we are drawing a new dividing line across Europe. Whether that line is geographic or temporal does not matter. When such a line is drawn, in the present environment it creates a gray area. History teaches us that gray areas are not solutions, they are problems waiting to happen.

Other candidate NATO members do not want to be consigned to gray areas. They know that bad things happen to small countries left alone in gray areas. We know that we do not want to create situations that invite anti-democratic forces to grow and plan and act.

At the Commission, we pay very close attention to human rights concerns in Europe. Our experience with NATO enlargement has been that the requirements countries must meet for consideration for NATO membership have very strongly influenced their domestic politics. While all human rights problems are not resolved, most of them are. Also, disputes between ethnic majority and minority groups are given prominence and progress is made toward solutions. Some of these problems have existed for centuries and, in my view, would have continued unaddressed but for the necessity each country has seen to ''put its house in order'' before applying for NATO membership.

Moreover, international cross-border disputes that in the past have triggered at least hostility if not military conflict have been formally resolved, with the support of democratic majorities in the countries involved. This is not a trivial development in a part of the world where such disputes have given repeated rise to brutal conflicts that are incomprehensible to most Americans.

For these reasons, it is vitally important that the door to NATO membership not be closed, especially not by the United States. Proponents argue that a ''delay'' is necessary as a period of consolidation of the Alliance, and for the Russians to accommodate themselves to the changed European landscape.

I believe that ''delay'' in this case could become denial, with very grave consequences to those nations shut out by such a decision. Moreover, Russia is one of the nations I have in mind when I make this statement. Regardless of rhetoric by Russian Communists like Zhirinovsky, and others of the so-called ''red-brown'' extreme nationalist fringe, Russia itself has a very real interest in NATO expansion. And that interest is not in blocking, delaying, or limiting it.

In fact, to the extent that NATO expansion is delayed or limited, the radical forces in Russia's political equation will be strengthened. For the United States to provide them with a victory they could not have secured by any other means would be a terrible mistake. Radical forces in Russia cannot be appeased by throwing them a bone. All it does is embolden them and add to their power, allowing them to say to Russian voters, ''See what we can do, and we are not yet in charge of the government.'' Our policy should be to do what is best for us, and that means to give hope, support and security to small states trying to become democratic capitalist members of the Western community, and treat anti-democratic forces with implacable opposition.

Mr. President, the citizens of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were given hope when we refused for the duration of the Cold War to recognize their forcible and illegal incorporation into the Soviet Union. Ukraine is now a NATO ''Partner for Peace.'' The President of Bulgaria, Petar Stoyanov, was here recently, seeing President Clinton to make the case that Bulgaria is a credible candidate for NATO membership. The people of these countries do not deserve to have the door to NATO slammed shut on their fingers.

While some states with serious human rights and democratization problems do not look like possible NATO members at any time in the near future, as states around them make major efforts to put their domestic and international affairs in order to quality for membership, this has an influence and an impact. If we do as we have pledged, and allow candidate countries to join when they demonstrate that they meet the qualifications, those who choose not to make the effort will be more and more isolated. This process will undermine and weaken anti-democratic forces that have stirred back to life in some former Warsaw Pact states after the fall of Communism.

I want to make one other point. When the Commission issued its report, I reminded the Senate that NATO is a military alliance. A look at the map will refresh my colleagues' understanding of the need to include Romania and Slovenia in the next round of expansion. After Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are admitted, we will have an Alliance with a member, Hungary, which lacks a land corridor connecting it with other Alliance members. This is a weakness of major importance, one whose significance can only be magnified if we artificially ''delay'' accession of other qualified candidates. This point also focuses attention on Bulgaria's desire to become, when it is qualified, an Alliance member.

The Washington Post's Wednesday, February 11, 1998 edition contains an editorial and a separate article that support my perspective on this issue. The editorial entitled ''Opening NATO's Door,'' states that, and I quote:

> There is a moral heart to the case for enlargement, and it is to bind the democracies, refreshing the old, strengthening the new. The first three candidates have demonstrated they are committed to assuming alliance responsibilities. Their accession would, as Secretary of State Albright put it Monday, 'make us all safer by expanding the area of Europe where wars do not happen.' The resulting increments of stability would benefit not only NATO members but the Russians, who remain opposed to the development but are unable to stop it.
>
> The serious American objection to enlargement comes from strategists who fear the political and military dilution of an alliance once focused laser-like on territorial defense against a single dangerous foe. These strategists would have the European Union do the main work of easing the path of the new democracies, leaving NATO to deal with a still-problematic Russia and its huge residual nuclear resource. But the would leave the now-free pieces of the old Soviet empire marooned in strategic ambiguity. The new democracies need better and deserve it.

The article, entitled ''NATO Candidates Urge Senators to Back Expansion,'' by Edward Walsh, is also important. It quotes the foreign ministers of

Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary as supporting the continued expansion of NATO when other candidate states are ready to join. Here is the description of what they said, and I quote:

Geremek said other Central and Eastern European countries that hope to join NATO were disappointed to be left out of the first proposed expansion round but ''they are happy that the expansion will take place and feel it will increase their security.''

Enacting legislation requiring a three- to five-year wait before others could join NATO, as some have suggested, would send a discouraging message to these countries, the officials argued. ''The purpose of the enlargement is to diminish the dividing lines [in Europe], not to create new lines of division between the new members of NATO and those who stay outside,'' Kovacs said.

Mr. President, I ask that the full text of both the editorial and the article from which I have just quoted be included in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

I urge my colleagues to support NATO expansion. It is the right thing to do for America, the right thing to do for the Alliance, and the right thing to do for the people of Central and Eastern Europe who struggled so long in a seemingly hopeless quest for freedom and independence. We supported them then, and we must continue to support them now.

The material follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 11, 1998]

OPENING NATO'S DOOR

As the Senate moves to the question of ratifying NATO enlargement, the debate is in a curious place. It is generally accepted that adding Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to the 16-nation Atlantic Alliance will be approved by well over the necessary two-thirds when the vote comes probably next spring. Yet several years of intense discussion have not removed all serious doubts about the step. Even among supporters, misgivings about adding further members later are evident.

There is a moral heart to the case for enlargement, and it is to bind the democracies, refreshing the old, strengthening the new. The first three candidates have demonstrated they are committed to assuming alliance responsibilities. Their accession would, as Secretary of State Albright put it Monday, ''make us all safer by expanding the area of Europe where wars do not happen.'' The resulting increments of stability would benefit not only NATO members but the Russians, who remain opposed to the development but are unable to stop it.

The serious American objection to enlargement comes from strategists who fear the political and military dilution of an alliance once focused laser-like on territorial defense against a single dangerous foe. These strategists would have the European Union do the main work of easing the path of the new democracies, leaving NATO to deal with a still-problematic Russia and its huge residual nuclear resource. But that would leave the now-free pieces of the old Soviet empire marooned in strategic ambiguity. The new democracies need better and deserve it. The EU should move more quickly but cannot fairly be asked to satisfy the full range of their wish to be of the West. Their insecurity could rub events raw and unsettle the region.

The different currents of resistance to enlargement meet in common opposition to taking in any more than Central Europe's favored three. This is the impulse behind suggestions of a legislated ''pause.'' Such a maneuver, tying the hands of executive-branch foreign policymakers, is a truly bad idea. It could generate nervousness verging on desperation among the unfavored of Central Europe, and tempt others to throw their weight around.

The better way surely is, with Secretary Albright, to leave the NATO door open. Other democracies, as they meet the rigorous political as well as military standards for alliance membership, will then be able to assert their claim to be brought into the charmed circle. Time will let the allies show that enlargement, far from simply moving a military bloc menacingly closer to Russia's borders, calms the region as a whole.

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 11, 1998]

NATO CANDIDATES URGE SENATORS TO BACK EXPANSION

(By Edward Walsh)

Pressing for Senate ratification of an agreement to admit their countries to NATO, senior officials from three Central European countries said yesterday that enlarging the military alliance would enhance stability in that region.

Foreign Ministers Laszlo Kovacs of Hungary and Bronislaw Geremek of Poland and Deputy Foreign Minister Karel Kovanda of the Czech Republic visited key senators yesterday and Monday as part of the campaign to win the two-thirds Senate vote necessary for ratification. President Clinton is scheduled to send the expansion agreement, formally known as Protocols of Accession, to the Senate today. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has scheduled at least one more hearing on the agreement for Feb. 24 before a full Senate vote, probably this spring.

At a breakfast meeting with Washington Post reporters and editors, the officials said Senate concerns about the agreement center on the cost of the expansion and its impact on U.S.-Russian relations. Russia last year agreed to the expansion, which NATO officials have estimated will cost $1.5 billion over 10 years, with the United States paying about 25 percent of that amount. Other estimates have set the figure significantly higher.

Pointing to numerous potential ''trouble spots'' in the region, Kovacs said NATO and the United States ''have two options—to stay idle and wait for the next crisis, then to intervene and try to enforce peace, which is more expensive and certainly more risky, or to enlarge NATO, projecting stability. The new members will further project stability.''

Kovacs and Geremek said public opinion in their countries supported joining NATO. Polls in the Czech Republic, Kovanda said, show 55 percent to 60 percent support, but also 15 percent to 20 percent who are ''diehard opponents.''

Geremek said other Central and Eastern European countries that hope to join NATO were disappointed to be left out of the first proposed expansion round but ''they are happy that the expansion will take place and feel it will increase their security.''

Enacting legislation requiring a three- to five-year wait before others could join NATO, as some have suggested, would send a discouraging message to these countries, the officials argued. ''The purpose of the enlargement is to diminish the dividing lines [in Europe], not to create new lines of division between the new members of NATO and those who stay outside,'' Kovacs said.

Sen. John W. Warner (R-Va.), a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, said in a statement to the Senate yesterday he intends to propose a three-year moratorium on further NATO expansion as a condition to the resolution of ratification for the admission of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.●

TRIBUTE TO STEVE DAHL

● Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to pay special tribute to a legendary radio personality, Steve Dahl, who today is celebrating his twentieth anniversary of broadcasting in Chicago, Illinois.

At age sixteen, Steve launched his career into radio broadcasting. At the time, he was considered somewhat of a rebel on the airwaves, but over the years, Chicagoans have come to love his unique style and personality.

With his afternoon talk-show, ''The Steve Dahl Show,'' on WCKG FM Chicago, Steve continues to entertain and inform more than a half million listeners everyday. As his loyal audience tunes in daily to hear his commentary on life in the Windy City, Steve's popularity continues to grow.

Steve Dahl has made a lasting contribution to the Chicago radio industry. Today, I join his colleagues, listeners, friends and family to commend Steve for his impressive tenure on the Chicago airwaves.●

A BUDGET THAT SLAMS THE MIDDLE CLASS

● Mr. KYL. Mr. President, in his State of the Union Address last month, President Clinton urged Congress to approve his request to pump billions of dollars into the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help stabilize Asian economies. He justified his request by saying that ''preparing for a far off storm that may reach our shores is far wiser than ignoring the thunder 'til the clouds are just overhead.''

There is something to be said for trying to deal with problems before they grow too large—before they engulf us. We will have a debate about the propriety of the IMF request in the weeks ahead. But I would suggest that it is not just the IMF that is attempting to deal with an approaching storm.

Mr. President, millions of Americans are also looking ahead to be sure they can cope with unforeseen threats to their own family's future financial security. Some people are trying to create a nest egg for their retirement years. Some take out a life-insurance policy or buy an annuity to ensure that a spouse or child is taken care of when they are gone. Others are looking for a way to pay death taxes without creating too much hardship for their families. Whatever the coming storm might be, they are trying to find a way to prepare. And most of us would consider that to be good planning—something the federal government would want to encourage.

Unfortunately, while the Clinton administration eagerly argues the benefits of pouring billions of dollars into the IMF to help other countries, it cannot seem to see a benefit in helping our