

and the concern, the angst of these Members, whether they agreed with me or not, came through loud and clear.

And so, I guess I shared the emotion. I want peace. I want to see a peaceful resolution. And I could identify with those—whether they were on the side that was supporting of the administration or the other—with those who were really making fervent appeals for peace. But I think it was historic. I think it was conducted showing the best of the United States Congress at work. And I keep feeling that it was historic because what it did and how it endorsed the President's action to fulfill this resolution—when you go back and look at war and peace I think historians will say this is a very significant step. I am pleased that the Congress responded. I'm pleased that they have acted and therefore are a part of all of this.

But I didn't sense—you know, when you win a vote on something you work hard for, sometimes there's a sense of exhilaration and joy, pleasure. I didn't sense that at all here. I was grateful to the Members that took the lead in supporting the positions that I'm identified with. I could empathize with those who didn't vote for us. So, I guess my emotion was somber itself. I didn't watch the whole thing—I didn't watch the whole debate. But what I saw I appreciated because there was very little personal rancor, assigning motives to the other person, or something of that nature. So, it was quite different than some of the debates that properly characterize the give-and-take of competitive politics.

Soviet Military Intervention in Lithuania

Q. Sir, the crackdown was still going on today in Lithuania. What is your answer to those who say you are putting the Lithuanians and the Baltics under Iraq because of the Persian Gulf?

The President. I don't think that's true. I've had an opportunity to express myself directly to President Gorbachev on that. We had a statement on it. I have talked to him not just in this last phone call but in others, and the Soviets know our position clearly. So, I don't think that's a fair charge at all.

A couple more. I think I've been a little lengthy here, and we didn't get as many

as we want.

Q. How about the back of the room?

The President. Not this time, Sarah [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News], not this time, okay?

Persian Gulf Crisis

Q. Mr. President, it must now be absolutely clear to Saddam Hussein, perhaps for the first time, that you've got the domestic and the international support you need to use force to drive him out of Kuwait. Wouldn't this be a prudent time to give him an avenue out of this mess, perhaps through something Perez de Cuellar could offer him today or tomorrow?

The President. Well, let's wait and see what Perez de Cuellar—how those talks go. I talked to him beforehand, and he is properly, I would say, confined to operating within the U.N. resolutions. He must do that. We're talking about the United Nations Security Council and, indeed, of the General Assembly—the will of the entire world against Saddam Hussein. But I've always felt, Gerry [Gerald Seib, Wall Street Journal], that the best way, the best way is to make Saddam Hussein understand that we have the will to do what the Congress I think has now suggested I should do, or can do. And secondly, that if force is used, Saddam Hussein simply cannot prevail. And my hope is that the mission of the Secretary-General, added to what the Congress has done here today, added to the many other initiatives taken by Arab League people or by EC people or—will convince him.

So, if your question is, should we now compromise, give him something in order to do that which he should have done long ago, the answer is, absolutely not.

I'm going to take two more here, and then I really do have to run.

Q. Mr. President, let me follow Gerry's question because the reports persist that the U.N. Secretary-General, when he meets with Saddam Hussein, will lay out steps beyond compliance with the resolutions to include a U.N. peacekeeping force, to include an eventual Mideast peace conference. Given the demand for absolute com-