

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3602

June 26, 2003

Mr. James Collins  
2735 N. W. 35th Street  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73112

Dear James:

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). I appreciate you taking the time to share your views.

I understand your concern. I am pleased with the military and the Administration's handling of the situation. Historical evidence leads me to believe Iraq was in possession of WMD.

At the end of the first Gulf War, Saddam Hussein agreed to dismantle all WMDs. For the next 12 years, he systematically violated that agreement through deception and denial. Throughout this period, the U.N. Special Commission highlighted the weapons and weapon material remaining unaccounted for by Saddam Hussein. This list includes: 30,000 chemical warheads, 550 artillery shells fitted with mustard gas, 400 biological weapons-capable aerial bombs, 26,000 liters of anthrax, botulinum, VX and Sarin gasses. In January of this year, 16 chemical warheads and new documents about nuclear and missile programs were discovered by inspectors. Where are the other unaccounted for weapons?

Logic leads me to also ask the following questions: If Saddam Hussein did not have a WMD program, why did he kick out U.N. weapons inspectors when they requested access to the presidential places and other suspect sites in Iraq in 1998- in direct violation of the cease-fire conditions that Iraq had accepted under United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 of 1991? If Hussein did not have a WMD program, why, on November 8, 2002, did the U. N. Security Council - including Syria, Russia, France and Germany - unanimously approve Resolution 1441, which gave Iraq a "final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations?" If Hussein did not have a WMD program, why didn't he just comply with U.N. Resolution 1441 and allow weapons inspectors to have complete access to all sites in Iraq? This would have provided him the opportunity to unequivocally prove to

the world that he did not possess WMD. Finally, if the Iraqi regime did not possess WMD, why did coalition forces find large amounts of biological and chemical protective gear and antidotes (such as atropine syringes) in Iraqi army bunkers?

None of these questions can be answered in any fashion that proves Iraq did not possess WMD. Major military action in Iraq has only been over for a relatively short period, and certain areas north and west of Baghdad are still hostile territory. The country is almost the size of California with numerous sites that could have housed WMD or their components. Our military is currently looking for any WMD. Finding these weapons will not be a quick or easy task - especially after the very careful and deliberate deception and denial plan followed by Saddam's regime for over a decade.

On June 11, Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS) announced that his Committee is continuing to review intelligence documents related to Iraq's weapons and weapon production capabilities. It is critical that there be a thorough review of all such documentation to see what steps are appropriate. I have complete confidence that the committee will conduct itself with the utmost integrity and analytical rigor.

Again, thank you for contacting me on this issue. If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Nickles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "N".

DON NICKLES  
U.S. Senator