

FEBRUARY 5, 2003

SCHAKOWSKY REACTS TO SECRETARY POWELL'S UN SPEECH ON IRAQ

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), a Chief Deputy Whip, issued the following statement in reaction to Secretary Colin Powell's presentation to the United Nations:

"The world agrees that Iraq must disarm and that Saddam Hussein must rid his nation of weapons of mass destruction. Secretary Powell presented a strong case that Iraq is not fully cooperating with the United Nations to achieve that goal, however, he did not make the case for war with Iraq at this time."

"Before we commit hundreds of thousands of U.S. military men and women to battle and put them in harms way, we must exhaust all diplomatic efforts, strengthen the inspection regime, continue to share critical information with our allies, expand air patrols, gain access to Iraqi scientists and ensure a non porous embargo of arms.

"I am concerned that the Bush Administration, in its rush to deploy resources to the Gulf for a possible war with Iraq, is going to leave us vulnerable here at home. Just last week, the Coast Guard announced that it is sending nine cutters and two port security teams overseas for a possible war in the Middle East. Today's announcement that Al Qaeda poses the most "viable" terrorism threat to the Untied States is a sobering reminder that homeland security must remain our top priority."