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IRAQ: WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

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IRAQ: WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS

TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2004

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING
THREATS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 p.m., in room 2247, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher Shays (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Shays, Turner, Platts, Kucinich, and Maloney.

Staff present: Lawrence Halloran, staff director and counsel; R. Nicholas Palarino, senior policy advisor; Robert Briggs, clerk; Richard Lundberg, detailee; Andrew Su, minority professional staff member; and Christopher Davis, minority investigator.

Mr. SHAYS. A quorum being present, the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations hearing entitled, "Iraq: Winning Hearts and Minds" is called to order.

Almost 1 year after the capture of Saddam Hussein, the hard lessons of liberation are coming into sharper relief. For many Iraqis, euphoria over the fall of the tyrant has decayed into disappointment over the pace of reconstruction. Eagerness to embrace long suffering suppressed freedoms has become impatience over half-measures and interim organizations that look and act more Western than Iraqi. Welcomed liberators are now viewed in some quarters as resented occupiers. Why?

In the course of five visits to post-Saddam Iraq, my staff and I asked the same questions. Four of those visits were sponsored by nongovernment organizations [NGO's], allowing us to travel outside the military umbrella that can sometimes shield Members of Congress from useful information not included in the official briefing slides. Across Iraq, we saw families and communities celebrating weddings, building schools, and trying to weave the fabric of civil society from disparate, often conflicting, ethnic, religious, and political threats. We also saw a rigid, centralized Coalition Provisional Authority [CPA] at times succumbing to hubris and condescension in dealing with the sovereign people it was created to serve. Many Iraqis noticed.

In that hostile terrain, our accomplishments whither quickly while our errors are grotesquely magnified. Conveying American good intentions through the cacophony of competing tribal, religious, and factional voices requires patience and a cultural sen-

sitivity that were apparently not part of the original war plan. So today we ask: What have we learned about how a newly sovereign Iraq will perceive U.S. words and actions? How do we reach the Iraqi people?

Our previous oversight of post-war humanitarian assistance and public diplomacy in Iraq pointed to the need for clarity, persistence, and humility in that unforgiving, volatile part of the world. The perceived dissonance between American rhetoric and actions breeds mistrust at home and in Iraq about why we are there and how long we will stay. The same lack of strategic clarity causes others to doubt our will to see the mission through. And when we forget why we are there, when we forget it is their revolution not ours, we allow ourselves to be portrayed as arrogant agents of empire rather than as trustees of noble ideals.

Today we welcome three panels of most distinguished witnesses who bring first-hand experience and invaluable expertise to our continuing oversight of U.S. efforts to reach the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. We asked for their insights and analyses of U.S. efforts to secure, stabilize, rebuild, and foster civil discourse and democracy in post-Saddam Iraq.

We very much appreciate the participation of Ms. Rend Al-Rahim, the Iraqi Representative to the United States. Thank you for being here. She brings a unique perspective to these important issues. We look forward to her testimony and that of all of our witnesses.

I will just say before recognizing the ranking member, it is our custom to swear in all witnesses. But we do make rare exceptions. In one instance I chickened out, for example, and could not bring myself to ask Senator Byrd to take the oath. But in other instances and in deference to protocol, we also do not administer the oath to international diplomats and international civil servants who agree to provide information to this subcommittee. So we will not be swearing in our first witness. But I cannot tell you how grateful we are that you are here.

At this time, the Chair would recognize Mr. Kucinich, the ranking member of this subcommittee. Thank you, Mr. Kucinich.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Christopher Shays follows:]

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Statement of Rep. Christopher Shays
June 15, 2004

Almost one year after the capture of Saddam Hussein, the hard lessons of liberation are coming into sharper relief. For many Iraqis, euphoria over the fall of the tyrant has decayed into disappointment over the pace of reconstruction. Eagerness to embrace long suppressed freedoms has become impatience over half-measures and interim organizations that look and act more Western than Iraqi. Welcomed liberators are now viewed in some quarters as resented occupiers. Why?

In the course of five visits to post-Saddam Iraq, we asked the same questions. Four portions those visits were sponsored by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), allowing us to travel outside the military umbrella that can shield Members of Congress from useful information not included in the official briefing slides. Across Iraq, we saw families and communities celebrating weddings, building schools and trying to weave the fabric of a civil society from disparate, often conflicting, ethnic, religious and political threads. We also saw a rigid, centralized Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) at times succumbing to hubris and condescension in dealing with the sovereign people it was created to serve. Many Iraqis noticed.

In that hostile terrain, our accomplishments wither quickly while our errors are grotesquely magnified. Conveying American good intentions through the cacophony of competing tribal, religious and factional voices requires patience and a cultural sensitivity that were apparently not part of the original war plan. So today we ask: What have we learned about how a newly sovereign Iraq will perceive U.S. words and actions? How do we reach the Iraqi people?

Our previous oversight of post-war humanitarian assistance and public diplomacy in Iraq pointed to the need for clarity, persistence and humility in that unforgiving, volatile part of the world. The perceived dissonance between American rhetoric and actions breeds mistrust at home and in Iraq about why we are there and how long we will stay. The same lack of strategic clarity causes others to doubt our will to see the mission through. And when we forget why we're there, when we forget it's their revolution not ours, we allow ourselves to be portrayed as arrogant agents of empire rather than as trustees of noble ideals.

Today we welcome three panels of distinguished witnesses who bring first-hand experience and invaluable expertise to our continuing oversight of U.S. efforts to reach the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. We asked for their insights and analyses of U.S. efforts to secure, stabilize, rebuild and foster civil discourse and democracy in post-Saddam Iraq.

We very much appreciate the participation of Ms. Rend al-Rahim Francke, the Iraqi Representative to the United States. She brings a unique perspective to these important issues. We look forward to her testimony and that of all our witnesses.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you very much, Chairman Shays, for holding this hearing.

We are familiar with the fact that the Vice President predicted back in March 2003 that U.S. forces would be greeted by Iraqi citizens as their liberators. Instead, recent polls of the Iraqi people show that 80 percent have negative views of the United States, and that a majority of Iraqi people want U.S. military forces to leave immediately. That this data was gathered prior to the prison abuse scandal and the escalation of violence against Coalition forces in recent weeks is instructive.

I believe our military presence in Iraq was, is, and will continue to be counterproductive, and it endangers the security of Americans both here and abroad by uniting those and strengthening those who oppose us. Since the end of major combat operations was declared on May 1, 2003, the lives of nearly 700 additional U.S. soldiers have been lost in Iraq, many of them victims of homemade bombs, which are strategically placed by the Iraqi roadside to inflict harm on our troops. And at this moment, I believe we have over 830 who have lost their lives in this conflict, thousands have been injured, and over 10,000 innocent Iraqis have lost their lives.

It is clear that the United States has underestimated the level of resistance of the Iraqis. The U.S. Government has erred in the fixed idea that only Baathists, Al Qaeda, and criminal groups oppose the U.S. occupation.

Mr. Chairman, without objection, I would like to insert in the record an article from the June 6, 2004 edition of the Washington Post. It is entitled, "The Military: Losing Hearts and Minds?"

Mr. SHAYS. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. KUCINICH. It is actually written by an Army Reserve Captain Oscar Estrada, who is serving as a civil affairs team leader in Iraq. Captain Estrada writes that the good efforts of American troops are having the opposite effects. He finds that paying townspeople a dollar to collect a bag of trash is demeaning to Iraqis, that providing medical care leads to disappointment and resentment when there is no medicine to heal the sick, and that buildings and cars are needlessly damaged as soldiers in Humvees speed through Iraqi cities shooting in all directions.

I want to say that while I take strong exception to our presence in Iraq, the men and women who serve this country and who love this country need to be appreciated. But at the same time, it is essential that we point out any of the shortcomings that I believe is the direct result of failed policies.

The bombing of the wedding in Western Iraq near the Syrian border killed over 40 people, including women and children. The U.S.' subsequent denial of the incident only inflamed tensions. The indiscriminate use of force that the United States used in Fallujah to target the insurgents killed over 800 innocent civilians, creating a further uproar from people.

This is the real face of the U.S. occupation seen everyday by the Iraqi people. When combined with the egregious abuses our military leaders apparently condoned at the prison, it is no wonder that Iraqi frustration and resistance is mounting. The question for us now is what, if anything, we can do to earn the trust of Iraqis and regain moral standing in the world.

Take, for instance, the question of how the United States should handle the prison torture scandal. What level of accountability of high ranking officials is required to demonstrate U.S. contrition? And I am not only talking about military officials here, Mr. Chairman. Is it enough, as one of our colleagues has said, that a few low ranking "bad apples" are dishonorably discharged? Or will that be seen in Iraq as scapegoating the responsibility of higher up officials who authored the policy that resulted in the prison scandal? Does that responsibility go to the White House, where the White House counsel penned a memo providing a legal rationale for freeing the President from the international obligation of honoring the rights of prisoners?

I think that this hearing is important because it gives this Congress an opportunity to discuss some of the things that the chairman raised in his opening statement. We need to see where this whole effort is going, and we need to determine at some point, Mr. Chairman, whether it is the purview of this committee or not, at what time we are going to get out of Iraq and create international cooperation which will enable the U.S. troops to be brought home.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Dennis J. Kucinich follows:]

Statement of Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich
Ranking Minority Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations

Hearing on "Iraq: Winning Hearts and Minds"
June 15, 2004

Good afternoon and thank you, Chairman Shays, for holding this important hearing.

Frankly, however, this hearing should have been held far earlier, and I fear that it may now come too late. The U.S. and its allies have occupied Iraq for 13 months now, and in just two weeks, the Coalition Provisional Authority will hand over control of Iraq to a new government. We should have been thinking about how to win Iraqi hearts and minds long before now, for it is clear that we have failed in this mission.

Vice President Cheney famously predicted back in March 2003 that U.S. forces would be greeted by Iraqi citizens as their liberators. Instead, recent polls of the Iraqi people show that 80% have negative views of the United States, and that the majority of the Iraqi people want U.S. military forces to leave immediately.

What is more worrisome to me is that this data was gathered prior to the prison abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib and the escalation of violence against coalition forces in recent weeks.

Mr. Chairman, I've stated many times before that I believe our military presence in Iraq has become counterproductive, and endangers the security of Americans both here and abroad by uniting and strengthening those who oppose us. Since the end of major combat operations was declared on May 1, 2003, the lives of nearly 700 additional U.S. soldiers have been lost in Iraq, many of them victims of the homemade bombs, which are strategically placed by the Iraqi roadside to inflict harm on our troops.

Clearly, we have severely underestimated the level of resistance of the Iraqis. We have also erred in the fixed idea that only Baathists, Al Qaeda and criminal groups oppose the U.S. occupation.

I would like to insert an article from the June 6, 2004 edition of the Washington Post into the record. It is titled, "The Military: Losing Hearts and Minds?" and is written by Army Reserve

Captain Oscar Estrada, who is serving as a civil affairs team leader in Iraq.

Captain Estrada writes that the good efforts of American troops are having quite the opposite of their intended effects. He finds that paying townspeople $1 to collect a bag of trash is demeaning to Iraqis, that providing medical care leads to disappointment and resentment when there is no medicine to heal the sick. Homes and buildings are needlessly damaged as soldiers fire into the darkness in response to the sounds of bullets, and cars are sideswiped by speeding Humvees trying to avoid the improvised explosive devices planted on the roads.

Moreover, the bombing of the wedding in Western Iraq near the Syrian Border killed over 40 people, including women and children, and the U.S.'s subsequent denial of the incident, only inflamed tensions. The indiscriminant use of force that the U.S. used in Fallujah to target the insurgents, killed over 800 innocent civilians, created further uproar from the people. And in the words

of the U.S.' great hope in Iraq, Lakhdar Brahimi: an "American Dictator" has been running Iraq.

This is the real face of the U.S. occupation seen everyday by the Iraqi people. When combined with the egregious abuses our military leaders apparently condoned at Abu Ghraib prison – it is no wonder that Iraqi frustration and resistance is mounting. The question for us now is what, if anything, we can do to earn the trust of Iraqis and regain moral standing in the world.

Take for instance, the question of how the U.S. should handle the prison torture scandal at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere. What level of accountability of high-ranking officials is required to demonstrate U.S. contrition?

Is it enough, as the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee has said, that a few low-ranking bad-apples" are dishonorably discharged? Or will that be seen in Iraq as scapegoating the responsibility of higher-up officials, who authored the policy of "Gitmoizing" Abu Ghraib? Or does responsibility go to the White House, where the White House

Counsel penned a memo providing a legal rationale for freeing the President from the international obligation of honoring the rights of prisoners?

I look forward to listening to the testimony of the distinguished witnesses appearing today, and urge that this Subcommittee hold additional oversight hearings on the reconstruction of Iraq.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

washingtonpost.com

The Military: Losing Hearts and Minds?

By Oscar R. Estrada

Sunday, June 6, 2004; Page B01

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BAQUBAH, Iraq

The General and the Colonel have told us that we are the main effort, at the forefront of helping to rebuild Iraq. But how do you rebuild when all around you destruction and violence continue? Do the facts and figures showing levels of electricity restored, the amount of drinking water available, the number of schools reconstructed or the numbers of police officers hired and trained really convince the Iraqi people that we are here to help? Are we winning their hearts and minds?

Winning hearts and minds is my job, in a nutshell. I'm an Army Reserve civil affairs (CA) officer stationed in Baqubah, 30 miles northeast of Baghdad. In Vietnam, winning hearts and minds was mostly a Special Forces task, but after that they were smart enough to get out of it, and the responsibility has since fallen into the laps of reservists like me who are trained to deal with every conceivable problem that arises when Big Army meets Little Civilian. And that's why CA soldiers are among those most often deployed overseas in the Reserve.

That's how they get you, actually, with promises of foreign travel, foreign language training, Airborne School, Air Assault School . . . and the chance to help others. We're trained in the Army's regimented style to deal with civilians in foreign countries, required to learn a satisfactory number of acronyms, probed, pricked and tested, and then sent overseas to do good.

And here we are, in Iraq, trying to help the Iraqi people as death threats frighten our Iraqi interpreters into quitting to protect their families, and as attacks from mortars, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) become daily and nightly occurrences.

We're told by senior officers that most Iraqis are being influenced by "bad guys" and their anti-coalition messages. The latest acronym for these bad guys is AIF, which stands for Anti-Iraqi Forces. The fact that most AIF members are Iraqi is neatly ignored as we try to win the goodwill of the "good" Iraqis.

One day last week we rolled into the town of Zaghniyah to win some of the local hearts and minds. In a country where most people are unemployed, we offer the townspeople $1 for every bag of trash they can collect. Our "docs" -- medics, assistants and physicians -- set up shop in the local health clinic and we try to "engage local leadership." But most of the local leaders, we are told, are not there. Those people who do speak with us do so only to catalogue their concerns -- chiefly unemployment and lack of electricity and water. It's the day after the swearing-in of Iraq's new interim government, and so I explain that their concerns have to be presented to their Governing Council, and that we can fund projects only through that council. An old man waves me off and tells me that they know the Americans control everything and will do so as long as they are here. The rest of the men nod in agreement.

As the day wears on, every ray of sun seems to add weight to my Kevlar helmet and body armor. I am at a loss as to

why our efforts aren't recognized or appreciated. But then, as I look at the children collecting trash and the main road clogged with military vehicles, as I watch one of our docs try to help a woman carrying a gaunt and sickly baby in arms, and as I listen to an old sheik struggle with our demands that he hold American-style town meetings, I realize that Iraqis may see our help as something else. I see how paying them to collect trash may be demeaning and remote from their hopes for prosperity in a new Iraq. I see our good faith efforts to provide medical care lead to disappointment and resentment when we have neither the medicine nor the equipment to cure or heal many ailments. And I see how our efforts to introduce representative democracy can lead to frustration.

Some experiences here have reminded me that our sacrifice for the rebuilding of Iraq is minor compared with that of the average Iraqi. A few weeks ago I was on a patrol in the town of Buhriz, near Baqubah. Our mission: to assess the city's potable water needs. Buhriz is a place where our soldiers are often shot at, so we rolled in with two Bradleys and several Humvees packed with heavily armed troops.

On the way to the water treatment plant, we stop for a psychological operations (psyop) mission. A psyop team walks up and down the market handing out "product," in this case pro-coalition messages in a glossy Arabic-language magazine. Young people take the magazines and seem to enjoy the novelty of the event; some people bombard the team and its interpreter with questions about things the town needs and the whereabouts of detained relatives.

But others return the fancy magazine and pull their kids away from "the occupiers." One man pulls a young boy by the arm and slaps him on the back of the head as he chastises him. I stare at the man and he at me; his hatred is palpable. We're less than five feet apart, but the true separation is far greater. I'm unable to communicate with him without the help of the one interpreter assigned to this patrol of 30 or so soldiers, and the "terp" is with the psyop team. I wish I could ask the man why he hates us, but I doubt anything useful would come of such a conversation. As we drive out of town, a little boy who looks about 3 years old spits at our vehicles as we pass his house.

I flash back to an incident a month earlier when we were returning to our compound by way of "RPG Alley," a route of frequent attacks. A unit ahead of us had reported taking fire and we rushed to the scene. Other patrols and M1 tanks soon arrived and we sat and waited, pointing our weapons into a date palm grove to the north. A small column of Humvees moved down a dirt road toward the grove, and all hell broke loose. I never heard a shot fired from the grove, but someone did, and then everyone was firing.

"Hey, what the hell are we shooting at?" I screamed at my buddy as I continued to squeeze off rounds from my M-16.

"I'm not sure! By that shack. You?"

"I'm just shooting where everybody else is shooting."

But everybody else was shooting all over the place. Small puffs of white erupted in front of us as our own soldiers lobbed grenades at the grove but came up short; tracers from .50-caliber machine guns flew past us, and the smell of cordite filled the air. Then, as suddenly as it had started, the tumult ended. We sat in silence and listened to the crackling radios as a patrol dismounted from a couple of armored Humvees and began to search among the trees.

"Dagger, this is Bravo 6. Do you have anything, over?"

"Roger. We're going to need a terp. We have a guy here who's pretty upset. I think we killed his cow, over."

"Upset how, over?"

"He can't talk; I think he's in shock. He looks scared, over."

"He should be scared. He's the enemy."

"Uhm, ahh, Roger, 6 . . . he's not armed and looks like a farmer or something."

"He was in the grove that we took fire from; he's a [expletive] bad guy!"

"Roger."

From my perch in the Humvee, I listened as the patrol found a suspicious bag hanging from a tree and called in an explosive ordnance disposal unit to examine it. On the other side of the road, in the distance, a horse-drawn cart crept on its way from some unknown village to the piece of road we now controlled. I watched it grow larger until the old man on the cart came face to face with the armed soldier waving him off. He slowly turned the cart around and headed back to where he had come from. I wondered where he was going, whether it was important and how much effort he'd put into the trip. I wondered if we had any chance of winning either his heart or his mind.

As we headed back to our compound, I couldn't stop thinking about the man in the grove, frozen in shock at the sight of his dead livestock. Did his family depend on that cow for its survival? Had he seen his world fall apart? Had we lost both his heart and his mind?

Stop thinking about this, I tell myself as our imposing convoy comes to a stop in front of the water treatment plant that serves Buhriz -- it's time, once again, to go about my job of winning those hearts and minds. I spend the next half-hour asking people questions and taking notes that I'll later summarize in a neat and orderly report sprinkled with just the right number of Army acronyms, grid coordinates and date-time groups. I'll detail the gallons-per-day requirements and the inoperable pump and the need for high-capacity filters and all the other bits of information that will help someone somewhere request the thousands of dollars it will take to repair the plant. My work is done, and I feel confident I've done it well. I feel as if I've actually accomplished something worthwhile today.

And then I remember: Security, you forgot to ask about security! So I do, and the treatment plant manager tells me that his biggest threat is coalition soldiers, who shoot up the compound whenever the nearby MP station and government building are attacked. He shows me the bullet holes and asks, "Why?" I give the standard response: We have to defend ourselves, and these problems are caused by the insurgents. And I think the people listening are buying it when the plant's caretaker tugs at my elbow, urging me to come see his house on the corner of the plant grounds. We're running late, but I follow the man before the patrol leader can say no.

An old man, the caretaker's father, comes out of the house and gestures for me to come inside. It's a one-level, three-room concrete building, clean but humble. The old man's grandchildren, his daughter-in-law and his wife stare up at me as he leads me by the arm and points out the bullet holes on the side of the house, the shattered windows and the bullet-riddled living room. He's speaking to me in Arabic. I can't understand a word he's saying, and yet I understand it all. I see the anguish in his face as his eyes start to tear up, I see the sadness as he points to old photographs of safer days under Saddam Hussein. I see the shame as he mimics how our soldiers hit him when he was detained, and I see the disappointment as he asks me "Why?" and I stare at him at a loss for words.

"Why?" I don't even remember what I told him, but I think I apologized. The patrol leader was telling me it was time to go. Everyone, even the old man's family, seemed in a hurry to end the encounter. So we quickly walked out, hoping to somehow outpace the wave of shame that threatened to knock us over.

Only I can't outrun it. I stay up that night thinking of the old man and the young soldiers who fired into the darkness in response to bullets and mortars and RPGs hurled at them from somewhere "out there." I think of the man with the dead cow and of the rush of adrenaline I felt firing from the back of that Humvee at the perceived threat. I think of the old man on the cart, the children who burst into tears when we point our weapons into their cars (just in case), and the

countless numbers of people whose vehicles we sideswipe as we try to use speed to survive the IEDs that await us each morning. I think of my fellow soldiers and the reality of being attacked and feeling threatened, and it all makes sense -- the need to smash their cars and shoot their cows and point our weapons at them and detain them without concern for notifying their families. But how would I feel in their shoes? Would I be able to offer my own heart and mind?

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Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman. At this time I recognize the vice chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. Turner. Welcome.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course, we are all so appreciative of our chairman's leadership in the issue of this committee and national security and the issue of the global war on terror. Specifically in the area of Iraq, though, our chairman has travelled to Iraq many times and in ways not like most Members of Congress have gone; in ways where he has direct contact with the Iraqi people and places himself in a great deal of risk compared to many of the just fact-finding missions that even I attended. We know that from our chairman's efforts to make certain that he is in Iraq and on the ground and having contact with the Iraqi people in ways that most of us do not have the opportunity or have not been willing to take the risk, he brings with him a great deal of information and insight that we very much appreciate to this topic and to the committee.

It is interesting, in listening to the issues of mistakes the United States has made or may have made, it is easy to criticize a policy by listing a number of mistakes. It is easy to criticize a policy by listing mistakes without taking the responsibility for what it would mean if there is inaction. Whenever I hear the United States criticized for what we have done and the mistakes that have been made, I always think back to when Tony Blair came before Congress to receive the Congressional Medal and he talked about the issue of the war on terror. He said that "History would condemn us if we failed to take action on the war on terror. Along the way we may make mistakes, but they will forgive us for these mistakes as we rise to the occasion to make certain that this threat that we have for the civilized world is addressed."

One of the things that I think no one questions is that the U.S.' role and goal in Iraq is for a transition to democracy. It is important for us to have hearings like this and that the chairman's leadership in knowing how we should address this issue, in that we need to know: How is the issue of democracy being perceived in Iraq? How are we being perceived? How is the overall goal viewed? What support do we have of the Iraqi people? And how do we communicate. What are the ways that we are seeing our actions communicating a message that we do not want to have conveyed that might undermine our efforts?

Our efforts in this hearing should not be to just list a litany of mistakes, but to embrace the goal and look at how we can, through greater information, make certain that we achieve it, both for us and the Iraqi people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman very much. I would just want to say, since I have some real concerns about how we have done the rebuilding of Iraq, and the extent that we have been culturally sensitive, and so on, I strongly support our reasons for being there and am very grateful that we have brave men and women who have taken on this task. We just want to make sure that it ends in success.

Representative Al-Rahim, thank you so much for being here. You, by your testimony, may have tremendous impact on the success of this mission and the ultimate transformation of power that happens in a few days. This is not an American revolution, it is an

Iraqi revolution, and on June 30th that will be very clear. I am certain that Iraq will do certain things that we may not like. But guess what? It is your country.

So with that, welcome. You have a statement that I would like you to feel you can give in its entirety. I would like you not to feel rushed, so that we have the benefit of what you would like to say. So I am going to encourage you to give your statement and not say that it will all be in the record and just summarize. My only concern is that as you look at me, I think we should move that water in front of you, get that microphone in front of you. Let's help out there, somebody. Thank you, Bob. Welcome.

STATEMENT OF REND AL-RAHIM, IRAQI REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for inviting me to testify on this important subject. Having testified before, I have learned to make a summary of my statement. In any case, my full statement is rather long; it is eight pages of single space, and it would be really rather long to read it all. I have summarized it, but I would welcome any questions to clarify so that I can get into some issues in greater detail. So lets work on the summary.

Thank you for inviting me to testify on this important issue, Mr. Chairman, Congressman. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the United States and the Coalition forces for bringing to Iraqis freedom from dictatorship and tyranny. Ending the murderous regime of Saddam Hussein was, indeed, a moral victory against evil and we should celebrate that victory. We should never have any doubts about the rightness of the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime, even by force.

I also wish to express our deep appreciation for the sacrifices made by Americans, Coalition members, and hundreds of Iraqis over the past 14 months. We should honor their sacrifices and the memory of those who have fallen.

Mr. Chairman, it is important to recognize that the picture is not all gloomy and dark in Iraq. And I want to make that statement first and foremost. Iraqis did, indeed, welcome the Coalition forces as liberators. There have been many successes, although many challenges also remain. To measure the magnitude of the achievements and the challenges, it is essential to bear in mind that the old regime destroyed Iraqi institutions, society, and the Iraqi economy for 35 long years. We have to rebuild the country from the ashes left to us by Saddam Hussein's regime.

Let me list some of the achievements.

First, the economy has made significant progress and there is thriving trade and entrepreneurship. Somebody called Baghdad a Boom Town a while ago. And from my own personal experience, I would concur with that.

Salaries and the standard of living of Iraqis have risen dramatically.

A free press is flourishing. Civil society institutions are being formed, and professional associations are, for the first time, free from the control of government.

Political parties are taking their first steps and political debate in Iraq is open and lively.

Ministries have resumed their services and are active in the reconstruction process of their own ministries.

The Iraqi Governing Council in March adopted a Transitional Administrative Law, a sort of proto-interim constitution, with a Bill of Rights that is the most progressive in the Middle East. And I would want to add here that it is not just the outcome of this law that is significant, but the process that it entailed, which was a process of debate, of deliberation, of negotiation of true political horse trading, and of compromises. I was witness to some of those meetings resulted in the TAL, as we call it, and it was truly impressive the way that Iraqi politicians were able to debate.

Since early June, there have been two noteworthy successes. First of all, a new, well-qualified Iraqi government has been formed, with the help of the United Nations, which will assume full sovereignty and authority on June 30th. And second, a Iraqi delegation went to New York for the very first time and took part actively in shaping a U.N. resolution on Iraq, and this resolution has been passed unanimously by the U.N. Security Council.

These are all significant achievements in the space of 14 months.

At the same time we have faced, and continue to face, problems. Some of these problems arise from miscalculations in U.S. policy and failures in implementation. And I strongly feel that as representative of a country that looks forward to a long and lasting friendship with the United States, it is important for all of us to take stock and measure the successes as well as the failures. We ought to be able to talk to each other about these things in order to move forward.

I would like to draw attention here to some reports written by Iraqis prior to March 2003; that is, prior to military action in Iraq. The first one is a report that was written by a group of Iraqis in November 2002, under the auspices of the State Department's project called Future of Iraq Project. The report is entitled, "Transition to Democracy," in which Iraqis wrote about how they conceived that transition and their recommendations for policies during the transition period. I would also like to refer to my own testimony in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on August 2002. And finally, I would like to refer to a report I wrote when I was still executive director of the Iraq Foundation. I wrote it in September 2003, after 5 months in Baghdad, and the report is entitled, "Iraq Democracy Report No. 1," with the hope that I would do a No. 2 and 3. But this job intervened.

One of the important issues that we noticed in Iraq is that there appeared to be multiple conflicting policies within the CPA, causing confusion and frequent reversals. This confusion within the CPA became infectious and affected the confidence of the Iraqi population. It was visible through the U-turns, the reversals, and Iraqis felt destabilized.

The first and, so to speak, the "Mother" of all policy errors is the declared policy of occupation. Many Iraqis had urged that the Coalition should be a liberator and a partner of Iraqis, not an occupying power. It is humiliating to Iraqis. It goes against their sense of dignity and patriotism. There are no nice words by which to talk about occupation. Moreover, occupation has proven to be practically unworkable.

With the collapse of the old regime, the political and security infrastructure of the country were dismantled and the logic of occupation allowed the ensuing political and security vacuum to persist. This was a mistake that still haunts us.

With occupation came the suppression of Iraqi sovereignty. Another policy decision that Iraqis warned against before military action. Sovereignty, like occupation, is an emotional issue that touches on people's dignity and nationhood. But there is also a very practical issue to the suppression of sovereignty. The Coalition did not have the resources, the understanding, or the ability to run the Iraqi state. Iraqis, as we urged, should have run the Iraqi state and its institutions. An Iraqi government, with authorities seen by the people as embodying the power of the state, should have been a pillar of post-liberation transition. I should add here that it was indeed with difficulty that the CPA was persuaded to create a Governing Council of Iraqis rather than the Advisory Council of Iraqis that they wished to create. Many Iraqis protested strongly, saying it is the Iraqis who should form the government and the United States should provide the advice, not the other way around.

The security situation immediately exposed some of the contradictions of the occupation. Law and order broke down and there was little effort by Coalition forces to put a stop to it; indeed, probably Coalition Forces were unable, did not have the resources to put a stop in the degeneration of law and order. Looting, kidnapping, blackmail, and assassinations were ignored by the Coalition. People had no one to turn to. The military forces did not have the personnel, the language skills, the intelligence capacities, or the social understanding to be an effective police and security force. Yet, really little attempt was made to mobilize local Iraqi resources in security and law enforcement. To my knowledge, not one individual has been captured, indicted, and tried for a crime of looting, kidnapping, or assassination in Iraq, or indeed any crime committed against an Iraqi, in the past 14 months.

The message that went to troublemakers in Iraq is that the coast is clear. The message to ordinary law-abiding citizens was that the Coalition did not care about their safety, only about force protection. Now this may not have been the reality, but I am talking about perceptions and perceptions are important in attitudes.

Iraqis had high expectations after liberation. Repressed and deprived of basic necessities for decades, Iraqis were expecting some dividends from liberation in the form of more electricity, water, sanitation, personal safety, redress of grievance, participation in a democratic process. Perhaps these expectations were unrealistic. Certainly, delivery was short. Moreover, some sectors of society were disenfranchised as a result of policy decisions. The incidents in Abu Ghraib unfortunately compounded the sense of alienation felt by Iraqis.

Within all this context, public diplomacy and communication between the Coalition and the people was virtually non-existent. The local Iraqi television station, as we all know, was a dismal failure. The Coalition did not exploit the opportunity or the resources of the press or any other vehicles to communicate with the people, to tell them what to expect and what they could not expect, to tell them why electricity was not available, why water was not avail-

able, to tell them that this was because of terrorist activities and so on. Iraqis lived in the dark and fed on rumors and urban myths.

In short, the dividends of liberation did not trickle down to the majority of Iraqi society. Unfortunately, Iraqis did not have the opportunity to be an active part of their own liberation, to be part of liberation and part of the transition process. A feeling of alienation has set in because of a feeling of a disempowerment and disenfranchisement.

Today there are disturbing voices in the United States calling for the United States to lower our sights in Iraq. The voices claim that the U.S. objective should not be democratization and reform, but only stability. It is a call that comes out of a sense of panic. But stability can hardly be a vindication for the sacrifices made by the United States, by its Coalition partners, and by Iraqis. Stability, of course, is important. But we have a right through our sacrifices to aim for a higher goal. We must stay firmly committed to a vision of democracy in Iraq. This is important for Iraqis and important for the credibility of the United States in the region.

As we move forward, the paradigm of occupation has to be abandoned in favor of a paradigm of a true partnership. As we build our country, Iraqis need the support of the United States and we need the multinational forces in Iraq to help us until we can handle security issues on our own. Mr. Chairman, we cannot do without multinational forces now, and we need international support in reconstruction and economic recovery. Failure in Iraq is absolutely not an option. It will plunge Iraq and the region into anarchy and give victory to terrorists, extremists, and fanatics. We must succeed, and we must do it in partnership with the United States and the international community. Iraqis look forward to a lasting and firm friendship with the United States based on mutual respect, shared interests, institutional cooperation, and friendship amongst our two nations.

Thank you very much. I would be happy to answer questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Al-Rahim follows:]

House Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations
Statement
Rend Al-Rahim
Iraqi Representative to the United States
June 15, 2004

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for the invitation to speak before your committee. On behalf of the Iraqi people and the government of Iraq, I would like to take this opportunity to express gratitude for the leadership of the United States in liberating Iraqis from the murderous dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, and for the sacrifices of the American people and other members of the Coalition. For over three decades, Saddam Hussein killed millions of Iraqis, brought the country to economic and financial ruin, invaded and waged war on his neighbors, and developed and used weapons of mass destruction. His removal was a moral imperative that should be extolled and never undermined. We should also honor the memory of the hundreds of Iraqi civil servants, policemen, aid workers and others who have died because they wanted to serve the new Iraq. Among these have been two members of the Iraqi Governing Council. Three days ago, a career diplomatic who was a deputy foreign minister was gunned down by terrorists. The sacrifices of all parties have been tragic.

Achievements

Mr. Chairman. Iraqis look to a lasting friendship between Iraq and the United States, based on mutual respect and understanding, and on shared interests. This is why it is important to draw up a balance sheet of the relationship as it stands now, and examine its progress over the past year.

When the old regime collapsed in April 2003, Iraqis were jubilant. They indeed welcomed the U.S.-led Coalition as liberators. In Baghdad tangible signs of welcome were extended to the Coalition forces. People offered Coalition troops cold drinks in the summer heat, children played with young soldiers. On the national level and among individuals, there was great hope for the first time in decades: hope for a future and a new beginning. The small number of die-hard Ba'thists whose fortunes were intimately linked with the regime were silenced.

It is important to remember that for 35 years the old regime held the state and society in an iron grip. Its collapse was an earthquake that profoundly shook Iraq. Yet over the past fourteen months, a great deal has been achieved, both by Iraqis and by the Coalition:

- Freedom is visible everywhere. Over 100 newspapers and periodicals are published in Iraq today, across the whole political spectrum. They are free to express their opinion and criticize. Dozens of political parties have been formed, of all stripes and persuasions. Professional association are for the first time free from government control. There are hundreds of new non-governmental organizations, with a multitude of interests and missions. Women's group have flourished.
- The huge injection of funds into the economy has had an impact. Commerce and private enterprise are thriving. Jobs are being created, and salaries and earning have risen exponentially. Unemployment is still at 30%, but this figure is expected to decrease. Imports are pouring into Iraq and goods are bough as fast as they arrive. An increasing number of Iraqi companies can now obtain contracts under the reconstruction program.
- Schools, hospitals, universities and other public sector services are gradually recovering. Within 6 months of liberation, schools and universities were open again to students. The institutions of the state, which collapsed with the collapse of the regime, are being rebuilt, step by step. Ministries are up and running, and many are undergoing a thorough restructuring.
- A noteworthy achievement has been the establishment of city, district and governorate councils throughout the country, with the help of US and British civil affairs personnel and civilian members of the Coalition. Even though few local elections have been held, these councils have given Iraqis a taste of self-government and local decision-making for the first time.
- Politically, the Transitional Administrative Law signed by the Iraqi Governing Council is a landmark achievement, both for its content and for the political process of deliberation, negotiation, and compromise that it entailed.
- Finally, only 14 months after liberation, Iraqis have formed a competent and responsible government ready to assume sovereignty and full authority in Iraq on June 30.

The UN Security Council Resolution passed unanimously on June 8th consolidates these gains and marks a new beginning for Iraqi sovereignty and full authority over Iraq's affairs.

Shift in Iraqi Attitudes

All of these are significant achievements over a relatively short period of time. Nevertheless, the good will generated by liberation has been strained. The shift in Iraqi attitudes can be attributed to a number of inter-related, policy and operational miscalculations by the Coalition provisional Authority.

Generally, there is a perception in Iraq that the U.S. came in with conflicting sets of policies and strategies, and that it has oscillated from one set to the other. Thus we have witnessed internal disagreements with the CPA, reversals and U-turns, and much improvisation. This "wobbliness" has contributed to a feeling of uncertainty and anxiety among Iraqis.

More specifically, I will concentrate on the issues of occupation, loss of sovereignty, dis-empowerment of Iraqis, and failed expectations.

Occupation. One of the reasons for deteriorating relations is the strategic decision by the Coalition to declare a military occupation of Iraq. Iraqis wanted and welcomed the US and the Coalition as liberators and partners, not as occupiers. We wanted liberation to have an Iraqi face and to take ownership of it. In the event, we felt we had been sidelined.

Prior to military action in 2003, Iraqis who spoke to policy makers in Washington urged the US not to adopt the posture of occupation. We felt that this would be counterproductive and send the wrong signal to Iraqis. Despite our recommendation, the Coalition declared that it was an occupying power, and took on full military, political and operational authority, to the dismay of many Iraqis. There really is no "nice" way to describe military occupation once you experience it first hand. Occupation is offensive, both in principle and in practice, and it is especially sensitive in a part of the world that has suffered long periods of foreign rule. Declaring an occupation dealt a blow to Iraqi dignity and national pride.

Iraqis also urged the US military to assume a more discrete, low profile presence in the cities and towns, to minimize possible friction between Iraqi civilians and heavily armed troops. Yet the opposite happened. Going about their daily lives, Iraqis encountered heavily armed Coalition troops and tanks at innumerable checkpoints, outside office buildings, and in residential neighborhoods. These encounters were often humiliating to Iraqis. Inevitably, given the tense environment, tempers flared, clashes erupted, and Iraqis and Americans were wounded or killed. This created a downward spiral in trust and cooperation on both sides.

Political Vacuum and the Suspension of Sovereignty. The collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime led to an anticipated disintegration of the state and an ensuing vacuum of political authority. Prior to the war, Iraqis had cautioned against this political vacuum, and called for the rapid rebuilding of the state through the formation of an Iraqi government that is seen by the people of Iraq as sovereign and authoritative. Sovereignty was needed as a matter of national pride and dignity, as well as for the practical purposes of restoring order and running the institutions of state. (In this and other contexts, I would like to draw attention to my prepared testimony of August 1, 2002, for a hearing before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. I would also like to draw attention to a November 2002 report written by Iraqis under the title "Transition to Democracy", under the auspices of the Department of State Future of Iraq Project).

However, rather than permitting an Iraqi government with real authority to take shape, the Coalition suspended sovereignty for 14 months and severely restricted the powers of the Governing Council that was formed in July 2003. The Coalition itself had neither the resources nor the credibility to act as an Iraqi government. As a result, no one was running the country, and the very concept of an Iraqi state was annulled for 14 months. A profound sense of confusion and drift prevailed among ordinary Iraqis in the summer and fall of 2003. It left Iraqis feeling dis-empowered and disenfranchised, and contributed a great deal to the growing frustration.

Law and order. The breakdown in law and order that followed the fall of the regime, including the looting that was allowed to take place while Coalition troops looked on, was a disastrous signal to Iraqis that Coalition troops were concerned exclusively with their own safety, and not the safety of Iraqi lives and treasures. There was in fact a contradiction in the logic of the occupation. If the Coalition is an occupying power, then it is indeed responsible for law and order and law enforcement in Iraq. The occupying power cannot have its cake and eat it: it cannot have the privileges and authority of occupation without the responsibilities. Yet this is how it looks to Iraqis, as looting, kidnapping, car-jacking, and other crimes are committed and put the lives of citizens at risk. The failure of the Coalition to address, or even take seriously, the break down in law and order altered the favorable disposition of middle-class, law-abiding Iraqis, who welcomed the Coalition as liberators.

Security Vacuum. The security infrastructure of Iraq, supported by the army, the police force, and the intelligence services, also disintegrated with the collapse of the regime. It is often argued that CPA Order # 2 that dissolved the Iraqi army was merely an acknowledgment of a de facto situation. That may be so. Nevertheless, it was a hatchet job where selective laser surgery was called for. It discarded much useful capability that could have been harnessed. Moreover, the order also deprived hundreds of thousands of military men and their families of their livelihood, giving rise to discontent.

Iraq urgently needed to re-establish an Iraqi security force, one led by people who have a vested interest in the new Iraqi order. The Coalition was slow in responding to this need. Last summer, some members of the Iraqi Governing Council proposed creating security forces from existing militias, to ensure political commitment and reliability, but that was rejected by the CPA. In our view, Iraqis had to be given a major role in maintaining security both for the purposes of effectiveness and to spare Coalition troops the pitfalls of confrontations with local populations.

Security operations by foreign troops are neither politically desirable nor practically effective. A force that does not speak the native language, has no understanding of the complex social structure, does not know local mores and customs, has no native intelligence capability—such a force cannot hope to maintain security on the streets. Worse, the dynamics of occupation lead to friction in tense encounters with Iraqis, and to mistakes that inflame emotions.

Our concerns were well-placed. From an initial mission to maintain security for all Iraqis, the operations of the Coalition military forces increasingly turned to "force protection", leaving ordinary Iraqi citizens with no protection or recourse against crimes. As a result, Iraqis became the primary targets of criminal activities, from assassinations to kidnappings to looting and intimidation. Iraqis perceived this as deliberate neglect and dereliction of duty by the occupying power.

Expectations and Delivery. After 35 years of deprivation and repression, Iraqis had high expectations of liberation. They expected services, such as electricity, health, water, sanitation, and telephones, to improve immediately. They expected reconstruction of infrastructure, schools, hospitals and universities, to move quickly. Unfortunately, because of security problems and other setbacks, delivery did not meet expectations. Iraqis could not understand why and no one in the Coalition bothered to give explanations. Indeed when services broke down or shortages occurred, there was no one to ask. Iraqis were baffled and incredulous. "The man in the moon" example has been quoted by journalists: If the US could put a man on the moon thirty years ago, how is it they can't fix the electricity system in Iraq?

Failure of Public Diplomacy and Communication. The problem of thwarted expectations was compounded by lack of communication and public diplomacy. There were no mechanisms for Iraqis to obtain information on anything that affected their lives or to address any of their problems. On many occasions I was personally asked questions or presented with problems that should have received a simple answer from a government office. Yet it was impossible to obtain information. In all spheres of life, Iraqis lived on rumors and urban myths. It is by now no secret that the television station established by the Coalition was a failure. Whereas it should have been extensively used by the Coalition and Iraqi officials to communicate with people, provide information, address concerns, and build confidence, the station was instead virtually content-free. Consequently, Iraqis turned to Al-Jazira, Arabiya, and the Iranian Al-Alam for their information and for discussions of issues that affected their lives. Unfortunately, this problem was still there when I was in Baghdad last March.

Deterioration of the Security Environment

It is clear today that old regime loyalists who withdrew from the battlefield have regrouped to fight a guerilla warfare. Although they are few relative to the population of Iraq, they have been able to stall progress on all fronts and sow confusion and fear in Iraq. They have been aided and inspired by fanatic external elements that form part of the international network of terrorism. For both of these actors, the objective is to thwart the success of a new Iraq. The biggest threat to their interests is a democratic, prosperous and stable Iraq. Thus there is a confluence of short-term interests between domestic and external forces that has spurred cooperation and common action to wreak as much havoc as they can.

It is significant that the terrorists have specifically targeted Iraqis who are bravely contributing to building a new order in Iraq, be they police forces, government employees, or political leaders. They mean to intimidate everyone away from contributing to success. When reconstruction efforts appeared to be picking up early this year, terrorists escalated their activities against contractors, diplomats, and even aid workers, in order to drive them out of Iraq. Ordinary Iraqis, who understand the price they are being made to pay by the terrorists, condemn their actions but are impotent and too afraid to counter them

Unfortunately, the terrorists have been able to capitalize on Iraqi sensitivity to the occupation and the mistakes made by Coalition forces, most recently the episodes in Abu Ghraib prison. They address themselves to the politically disenfranchised and the economically disadvantaged. They have tried to exploit, though unsuccessfully, sectarian differences. They practice propaganda and wage psychological warfare as energetically as they wage terrorism. Those working for a successful Iraq still do not have countervailing public diplomacy tools that can influence the perceptions of the population.

The worsening security environment can only be improved by building Iraqi security forces that are committed to the new order, are well trained, and placed under Iraqi command. Building this capacity will be a gradual process. The Coalition undertook a renewed effort in this direction after the events of April this year, and the new Interim Iraqi Government is fully committed to building indigenous security capacity.

Economic and Physical Reconstruction

Iraq has all the elements needed to become the economic growth engine for the region. After two and a half decades of nearly continuous war, the country has to be rebuilt from the ground up. The progress of economic and political rebuilding provides a mixed picture of successes and drawbacks.

As noted earlier, a great deal of physical reconstruction has been accomplished. Iraq's economy is healthier than it has been in twenty years, commerce is thriving, and incomes have risen dramatically for civil servants and private sector employees. Early this year, Baghdad was described, without too much exaggeration, as a boom town. As a measure of economic confidence, Iraqis transferred to Iraq $5 million dollars a day from accounts abroad. Last summer and fall, foreign entrepreneurs and corporations filled the hotels of Baghdad, seeking to obtain contracts, establish businesses or conduct trade. Initially Iraqi contractors had little access to the large US firms with USAID contracts and it was difficult to obtain secondary or even tertiary contracts. But the situation improved in 2004, especially when Iraqi ministries put out their own tenders and began to do their own contracting.

Iraq's needs are enormous while resources are limited, and prioritizing is necessarily a triage operation. For example, supplemental funds provided by the US Congress have largely gone to capital intensive, heavy engineering projects in such fields as electricity

and oil industry infrastructure, both of which are essential. But these employ fewer people, require higher qualifications, and are therefore awarded to non-Iraqi firms. Because of the need to create hundreds of thousands of jobs, we also need to put resources into labor intensive, low tech projects in Iraq that can be awarded to Iraqi companies and absorb Iraqi manpower.

The single impediment to reconstruction and economic recovery is the security situation. Sabotage of infrastructure started in the first months after liberation, most notably in the electricity and oil sectors. Later terrorism expanded its reach, with the murder and hostage taking of foreign contractors. Iraqis involved with foreign contractors have been equally targeted.

This is a vicious cycle that needs to be turned around into a virtuous cycle. We need to generate jobs, improve services, raise standards of living to all sectors of the population in order to give Iraqis a vested interest in the new order. This will help confidence to soar and will indeed win hearts and minds.

Political Reform and Democracy Building

In the area of building democracy, the Coalition has laid stress on reforming government institutions. The Iraqi Governing Council and the ministers appointed by the Coalition were a group of men and women broadly reflective the diversity of Iraqi society and possessed, in the aggregate, a pool of talents and professional qualifications. They acquitted themselves well in a difficult and dangerous environment. The new Iraqi Interim Government is similarly diverse and professionally capable, and promises to be competent in the discharge of its responsibilities once it takes over on June 30 with full sovereign authorities.

Local councils, established throughout the country with the help of the CPA, have brought governance nearer to the people. As yet these councils have limited authority and many of them are appointed rather than elected. Nevertheless, they are a good example of the potential for democratic transformation.

The Coalition promulgated laws to liberalize the economy, enhance accountability, and strengthen civil society organizations. It notably encouraged the participation of women in public and civic life. We are hopeful that these reforms will take root.

Most noteworthy is the writing of the Transitional Administrative Law, a process of political debate, negotiation, and compromise that led to the most enlightened basic law anywhere in the Middle East. Although it has drawn some criticism, it ought to be hailed as a signal achievement of democratic process and democratic outcome.

However, this effort at political reform has focused on the superstructure of the state, that is, reform from the top down. As a long time democracy advocate and activist, I believe that top-down democracy is not enough. We must also create a culture of democracy at

the grass roots level. The Iraqi people have to buy into the idea of democracy, have a personal stake in it, and ultimately be willing to protect it. This process involves formal education in schools and universities as well as informal public education, strengthening civil society institutions, promoting democratic practices such as public debate and conflict resolution skills. More investment and training is needed in this area.

The Way Forward

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to make two points about where we go from here.

First, Iraq has to succeed. Failure is unthinkable. A failure in Iraq will plunge the country and the entire region into anarchy and will hand victory to fanatics and terrorists, with disastrous consequences for the world.

But there is a danger that success will be defined solely as stability, and there are growing voices in Washington advocating "lowering our sights". Stability of course is essential, and nothing can be achieved without it. But the sacrifices of Americans, Coalition members and Iraqis cannot be vindicated by mere stability. The vision of Iraqis and of the U.S. in undertaking this difficult voyage is to implant and nurture democracy. Iraqis themselves use the word democracy more than any other in their political discussions. The mechanics of democracy may be tailored to Iraq's specific environment, but the universal values and practices of democracy, acknowledged by all nations, should not be abandoned.

Only a definition of success as the promotion of democracy in Iraq will make the sacrifices worth while. It will affirm the moral purpose in changing the regime of Saddam Hussein, and strengthen the credibility of the United States as an advocate of reform in the region.

Second, on June 30th, a new Iraqi government will assume sovereignty and authority. We will need, and have requested, the continued presence of the multinational forces authorized by the UN Security Council resolution, as we proceed with building our security capabilities and progressively take charge of our own security needs. We need the assistance of the international community in this endeavor, and hope that the United States and other countries will stay the course.

We look to an enduring friendship with the United States, and for that we must move away from the paradigm of occupying force and occupied people, to one of partnership between nations, which we have always advocated. The new Iraqi government must be in fact and in the perception of Iraqis, sovereign and free to exercise authority. The partnership we want eventually with the United States is not military: it must be a partnership on the level of institutions, social organizations, and ordinary citizens. We should begin to build this partnership today.

Thank you Mr. Chairman

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you very much. I am going to turn to Mr. Turner in a second to start off. But first I want to say, you have studied in Great Britain, you have studied in France, and you are well aware of American frankness. I would love to have a nice dialog that is very candid. So we are going to ask you questions that may appear to be aggressive, but from that we learn, as I think you know. I just want to say whenever I hear someone say we have lost over 800 Americans, as of June 13, we have lost 833 Americans. Each one of those lives is precious. We have 4,704 wounded, and each one of those lives is precious and many of them have come back without arms, limbs, their faces have been blown apart. Obviously, each one of those incidences tears our heart apart. I think your testimony can help us be more successful, and ultimately, have less deaths, less wounded, and can move this transition along. So I cannot wait to have the opportunity to talk with you. But it is Mr. Turner, then we are going to go to Mrs. Maloney, and then Mr. Platts, and then I will have my opportunity. I believe in the 10-minute rule, so that is what we are going to do. We have better dialog that.

You are on, Mr. Turner.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Al-Rahim, for your honest discussion and for the issues that you brought before us. Your passion and commitment to the end result of a democracy for Iraq really shows your interest in a partnership. And your experience and intellect that you bring in giving a critical analysis of where we have gone wrong in areas of communication and approach and ways that we can improve it is very helpful.

There is no question that whenever you are an invading military force, that transition from an invading force to one of partnership is difficult to balance. And in this instance, there is no question that there was an invasion that occurred.

Second, the issue that we all know of the instability in Iraq is, in part, contributed by individuals that have entered Iraq that are not even representative of the Iraqi people that cause difficulty for both of us as we try to manage both the safety of our troops and, of course, the safety of the Iraqis.

But the issues that you raise are ones where decisions could be made for outcomes to be different. I am assuming by your passionate commitment to success and your description of these that you do not believe that learning these lessons is too late and that we still have an opportunity for a partnership that could result in not only just success for a transition of democracy, but a positive relationship between the Iraqi people and the United States.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Congressman, thank you very much. First of all, I want to affirm that all Iraqis want a partnership with the United States and they want a friendship with the Untied States. It is a question of how to remodel the relationship so that it is not a relationship of occupier and occupied, but of two equal partners who can work in synergy and in cooperation to forge a friendship. We need the United States and we do not feel that we can go it alone by any means. But we also want this friendship to be a long-term friendship, not just a friendship while we rebuild the country. We do not see this as a temporary thing. We want it to be long-lasting

and we want it to be stable. This is why I think it is important to look at areas of error in order to rectify them.

Mr. TURNER. On the issue of democracy, when we talk about that as being a mutually shared goal and a goal of the Iraqi people, when we talk about a democracy here, obviously, we are talking about not just our form of government but really historically, what goes to the fabric of American society and the birth of our Nation. When we talk about democracy in Iraq and that being a goal, in looking at both the period of oppression for Iraq and also the educational system and the anti-West communication that had to occur throughout the system, what do you think the view is of democracy? And is it a shared concept? Is part of our issue one of communicating what democracy is, how it works, and really what it brings?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Democracy happens to be the word most used by Iraqis in their political discussions. Now this does not mean that all Iraqis mean one thing by democracy, nor does it mean that they mean the same thing as the United States would mean by democracy. But I think that there are constant human values attached to democracy that all nations share that are beyond a certain country or a certain group of people, and that Iraqis are as capable of sharing those democratic values as any nation on Earth and is capable of practicing democracy as any nation.

However, you did point to some serious issues. We had a period of repression that lasted 35 years. We have an education system that was corrupted by a dictatorship. And we have a number of other problems in Iraq that lead me to believe that democracy is going to have to be built block by block. In any case, I do not believe democracy is a kit that you take off of a shelf and assemble in this country or that. It has to be a process that moves forward and has to grow organically within a country. It is a series of policies, of principles, of operational mechanisms and practices that are implemented, the sum of all of which eventually amount to something recognizable as democracy.

What frightens me is that if the United States and the rest of the world forget about democracy in Iraq and say, well, Iraq is not going to be democratic, it is inherently an undemocratic society, that Iraqis will also give up on the notion of democracy. And yes, stability is important, and stability is important for a democracy to flourish. But we really have made a good start in this democratic process. We have a free press. We have a civil society that is very vibrant. We have NGO's that have started, independent professional associations, entrepreneurs; all kinds of seeds of democracy. We do not want those to die. And it is very important for the United States and for the international community to reinforce and nurture those seeds rather than say, well, it is hopeless anyway.

Mr. TURNER. I think that you certainly have the U.S. commitment to democracy, and certainly there will always be a chorus of naysayers. But the basic bedrock of democracy is a belief in freedom of individual liberty, and that certainly includes everyone.

I do have one concern about the issue of how a democratic Iraq is structured. One of the things that struck me while I was there is that as we went to schools, and we were there as the school was letting out and the parents came and were picking up their kids,

we were able to have a free flow discussion about the issues of the school, their community, and the city of Baghdad. What we do not have here that is an issue that will have to be addressed in Iraq is that you do have, even though there will be freedoms in the economy of entrepreneurialship, you do have a concentrated commodity economy with oil. You have almost a singular commodity economy, but I am going to say concentrated in the hopefulness that the entrepreneurialship that will occur will rise and play a big role in the economy. That concentrated commodity economy is going to require some entity to have both control and disposition of those funds. That is a role that currently you do not see in like our country or other structured democracies, is that you see predominantly the government having authority over tax collection and the disposition of those funds but not over the issue of a jointly owned commodity. How do you see that as being an issue of concern and what thoughts do you have as to how that is addressed?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. In fact, Congressman, you do touch on a very important issue. All the countries, apart from the countries in Europe, that rely so heavily on oil income have been called the "renter states." In other words, states that do not need to do anything except collect the revenue from oil. Therefore, instead of no taxation without representation, it is no representation without taxation. So, you do not tax them, they do not have to be represented, and therefore the government is not accountable. And that is really the problem I think that you are addressing.

There are some studies that have said that countries that rely over-heavily on oil, where oil is the monopoly of the state, have great difficulty in democratizing. Certainly, there is that risk. I do not think, however, that at this stage we can anything other than keep oil revenues in the hands of the government. I think anything else would truly destabilize the country, partly because of the massive reconstruction effort that needs to be orchestrated and managed by the government.

However, I would like to point to some historical facts about Iraq. First of all, Iraq is rich in other respects, not just oil. We have very good agricultural potential, we have plenty of water, we have other mineral resources, and we have an extremely entrepreneurial and highly educated population that is eager to do things. In the 1950's there was a movement toward private sector industrialization in Iraq which was very successful. It was somewhat dropped in the 1960's, revived in the early 1970's again very successfully. We must place a lot of emphasis on this private sector because this is how we form civil society and a middle class that can actually ask for accountability from its government. This is something that we need to concentrate on because right now we cannot say privatize oil.

Mr. TURNER. I thank you very much. I will just note than in the many trips by helicopter for hours to different communities, I was struck by the endless amount of wheat fields and the irrigation. And I hope you do not take this the wrong way, but I said, "My God, this is a real country. It has more than oil. It has tremendous potential in other ways."

At this time the Chair would recognize Mrs. Maloney.

Mrs. MALONEY. I thank you for your testimony and really for your many years of working to promote democracy and respect for human rights. I am very pleased that you are now in a position and with the authority to help work toward these changes in Iraq.

You mentioned in your testimony that critical to the future success of Iraq is the support of the international community. I would say, on both sides of the aisle, we could not agree more. We have had efforts to involve the United Nations more, the G–7 needs to be involved more, NATO, I would say the Arab League, and definitely the countries surrounding Iraq that have a great stake in the stability and future strength of Iraq, and I would say muslim leaders of other countries, given the fact that 97 percent of the country is muslim. So my question to you, are there any other international organizations we should be reaching out to to help support Iraq? And do you have any direction on how we could be more successful for the Iraqi people in securing international support? Now the burden is 97 percent on the United States of America. We would welcome more resources in any form to help the Iraqi people.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Thank you very much. I believe you have mentioned all the organizations I can possibly think of-the United Nations, G–8, NATO, muslim countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and so on and so forth. The U.N. resolution which was recently passed I believe on June 8th really opens the door for many more nations to support Iraqi reconstruction and the political, physical, and economic rebuilding of Iraq. Additionally, I believe that the transfer of all sovereignty and authority to an Iraqi government on June 8th will further make it easier for other countries to help out.

However, I may be mistaken, but I believe you were thinking in terms of military support.

Mrs. MALONEY. No. All support. Certainly humanitarian, military, NGO's, financial—support in any form.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Yes. I think with the U.N. resolution and with the transfer of sovereignty we will be able to solicit assistance from a much wider range of countries than we have been up until this moment, and particularly support in reconstruction, financial support through extinction of debts to Iraq, of advancing more grants and loans to Iraq. We should not forget the enormous support that we need in training. This is a very big and important field and training support should come for our own military forces, for our security forces, but also training in technologies, in professions, and so on. There is a whole array that I think will be forthcoming.

Mrs. MALONEY. I hope that you are correct because it would be very helpful. One of the biggest challenges confronting Iraq now is security. The American military has worked incredibly hard to empower and work with the Iraqi police, the border patrol, the new civilian defense force. But it seems any country needs security in their borders in order to move forward with education and all the other things that a country needs to do to help their people. But security appears to be the biggest obstacle. Security for the Iraqi people, for anyone in Iraq, it is very challenging. And your comments on that, I was deeply disturbed to read reports of Iraqi police stations being overwhelmed and really taken by rogue militant

groups. This cannot happen in a country. There is no order. And your comments on what we could do to improve the security, but it is extremely problematic for your new government if your streets are not secure. That appears to be the biggest challenge you have.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. It is, in fact, the biggest challenge. The Iraqi Governing Council has long advocated creating a core security force of Iraqis who are committed to the new order. I think one of the problems we have had in creating the current police force is that we have sacrificed quantity for quality, both in terms of selecting the people for the police force and in terms of training. We need to improve the selection process and the training, and we need to put the police force under Iraqi leadership so that they feel that they are part of the process of transition and not outside it. This is going to contribute to improved security, which we need if we are going to have elections in January.

Mrs. MALONEY. It was my understanding that the Iraqi police force is under Iraqi leadership. That there is a police chief, whose life has been threatened several times. That it is under Iraqi leadership. It appears to be that the problem is they are not holding the line. It is under Iraqi leadership. But if someone overwhelmed you, taking over your police station and taking over the streets, they are not being successful. So from what I read in the papers, it appears that the structure is under Iraqi leadership. Sometimes the American military has had to come in and restore order because the police force has not been capable of restoring the order. Now, is that because there is a lack of will in the heart of the people? Why can they not restore order?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. In terms of Iraqi leadership, the Iraqi Ministry of Interior did not have full authority. The ministries that continue to function still function under CPA authority and not under Iraqi authority. The Minister of Interior has no power to make decisions unilaterally. And I think this is a structural problem. Hopefully, it will be fixed by June 30th.

Mrs. MALONEY. On June 30th, when the Ministry of the Interior takes over, has complete authority and then they control completely the police, the border patrol, the civilian patrol, what happens if rogue militant groups are then able to overwhelm the police force of Iraq? Then you would have chaos I would think.

So it is a tremendous challenge. And, in my opinion, it is more than a structural problem of who is in charge. All I know is in New York we have the best and the finest, that is what we call the police force, and when they go out on the streets they are not calling the Department of the Interior or the police chief, they are out there on their own restoring order, making sure people are protected, and getting the job done, very much like the American military does. If you are on the front line, you get the job done; you cannot call central headquarters. And what is happening, from what I am reading in the papers, is they are not getting the job done. They are being overwhelmed, they are scattering, they are not getting the job done. And when you take over complete power, if they are not able to get the job done, as an Iraqi citizen I would be extremely concerned because the safety of my children and my neighbors would be very much at stake. Maybe that is something we have to look at.

But one thing that you mentioned in your statement, you said that many of the Iraqi people, if I quote you correctly, lived in the dark, that they were fed rumors, they did not understand the good intentions of how we were trying to restore the infrastructure, the schools, the electricity. So my question to you is, how can we, the United States, countries that come in to help, and the new Iraqi government, use the tools of public diplomacy in a better way in Iraq and prevent the people from relying on information that may be from a very biased source that does not in their goal support the independence and success of the new Iraqi government? How can we do a better job in getting that out?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. First of all, there has to be a much better media in Iraq, television particularly, that features Iraqis. The Iraqi television station or stations have to be content-rich. They have to focus on the issues and they have to be utilized to inform people about what is happening, to address people's concerns, and to be a forum for people to send their grievances. We have not used any of that, neither through newspapers, nor television, nor radio. This is going to be a major responsibility for the new Iraqi government but I think the United States can help with this. Unfortunately, it is no longer up to the United States to run—and I do not say unfortunately—but it really will not be up to the United States from now on to run Iraqi television and the Iraqi media. It has to be the new government. But these resources must be utilized because so far they have done a poor job.

I would like to go back, by the way, to the issue of security. I mentioned the quantity versus quality. There is an important issue, and that is it is not just a question of confronting these militants or terrorists, it is also of disbanding their cells. That is an intelligence operation and that has not been done very well by the Coalition. Iraqis will have to take over that job, and to the extent they succeed in intelligence, they will succeed in deterring terrorism and security threats.

Mrs. MALONEY. I want to thank you for your testimony. My time is up. But very briefly, a number of men and women are serving in Iraq from the district that I represent and they would like very much to come home. And they would like very much not to have to go into streets and restore order. They do not want to do that. They feel they have to do it to restore the order in the streets to give the new government a chance. So anything you can do through your government to strengthen the forces and give them the support is absolutely critical. Without security, without order, you do not have a country. And our military, as one Captain told me, he said, "Carolyn, we do not want to go into any towns. We want to just be here in support of the Iraqi people. But if chaos breaks out and militant hoodlums are taking over the streets, they do not have any other choice." So I just want to plead with you to make that a high priority of your new government. We all wish you all the best.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. I will certainly relay that. Thank you.

Mr. SHAYS. Your statement is rich with information and most of it is very easy for me to accept. Some of it, when I think about it, I weep internally because I think: If only. When I was there in April a year ago, I met a gentleman named Mohammed Abdul Has-

san. He had been in an Iranian prison for nearly 15 years, he did not make the swap, and he came back at age 55 to marry and start a family. I marveled at his tough life, and he gave me the feeling that his life was not too much different than a lot of Iraqis. And I got the sense that Iraqis are very tough people who have known a tremendous amount of suffering. But he was very eager to get on with his life and he had no resentments, which was to me very interesting.

I asked him things that we did that troubled him. He told me, and they were simple things, but they meant a lot to him. Just even throwing candy on the ground and seeing children pick it up as if, as he said, they were dogs or chickens. Just even that was an image that he did not like to see. An individual soldier extending his hand and a woman going like this, saying thank you but—what she was saying was we do not shake hands with strangers, but thank you for honoring me. Things like that. I learned from some that if an American soldier humiliates a man in front of his wife, he might as well have put a dagger in his belly and twisted it.

And I learned, most of all, that you want this to be an Iraqi revolution, not an American revolution. Now I understand that, and I understand it because we did not want it to be a French revolution when we depended on the French to block the Brits from coming in and prevent them from leaving the ports during our revolutionary war.

But I will start with the thing that I find most puzzling about your statement. You say that declaring an occupation dealt a blow to Iraqi dignity and national pride. You know, I do not know if we declared that as much as the rest of the world declared it and we had to acknowledge it. What I would like you to do is tell me what was the alternative of an occupation in the first few days and weeks and months. Maybe you could start by giving me a sense of what you mean.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that indeed the United States did want the legal label of occupation. If I am mistaken about that, then——

Mr. SHAYS. Well let us assume it is true. But what I do not understand quite is it the label that troubled you, or it was the reality that troubled you? Because I do not know even without the label if we could have prevented the reality. I mean, we overthrew a government. We could have just gotten up and left but that would have been horrendous. Were we to automatically establish a government right like that? Tell me.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Mr. Chairman, yes. It is my belief, and many Iraqis share this, that by July when the Iraqi Governing Council was formed——

Mr. SHAYS. Last year.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Last July, July 2003, by then it was high time an Iraqi government, not just an Iraqi Governing Council, but that an Iraqi government be formed, given authority to run the country, to run the ministries, and for the Coalition to remain in Iraq but to take a backseat certainly on political decisionmaking, on policies, and so on. We certainly needed the military forces to remain, and we still need them to remain, but it is the image of a disempowered

Iraqi Governing Council that could not take a single decision and where the head of the CPA could say I am the ultimate authority in Iraq, I can veto anything, nobody else has any right to take any decision, we are the only ones in power.

Mr. SHAYS. Bottom line, you would have liked to have seen last July, and you believe it could have been pulled off then, you would have liked to have seen the transfer of power in a sense that we are ultimately doing this June 30th.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Yes, indeed, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. OK.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. May I finish?

Mr. SHAYS. Sure.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. I also believe that more people should have been brought into the political process through an Iraqi conference or through engaging more political parties and more political or social sectors from Iraqi society in some kind of political process, through a national assembly, or through consultative councils. One of the problems is that many Iraqi groups, even the limited political bodies that were created, were not fully representative of the whole richness of Iraqi society.

Mr. SHAYS. Behind me is Dr. Nick Palarino, and he helped organize my five trips in the last year. What we learned very quickly were things like Iraqis saying to us, "My father, my uncle, my cousin is in the army, he is not a bad man. There are bad people, get them out, but why punish my father?" Or "I have a family member in the government. Why do they have no future? Why would you do this?" I had many Iraqis say, "We understand why you have to do certain things, but why cannot we guard the hospitals?" This was early on. And I remember when the hotel was first bombed there were 30 Iraqis injured and 6 killed. They did not run away. They tried to prevent the terrorist and succeeded in preventing the terrorists from basically imploding the hotel. Were those the things that we should have been listening to?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Yes. Absolutely, sir. This must have been in the early period because, in fact, the determination of Iraqis to deter terrorists in those early periods were really powerful. All Iraqis wanted to contribute. I referred in my written statement to the issue of disbanding the Iraqi army and I called it a hatchet job where laser surgery was required. What we should have done, indeed I am certainly not in favor of the Baath Party and I think many people in the Iraqi army had blood on their hands, however, to simply dismiss both of them, give them no compensation, no pension, no salary, and no prospect of getting any job whatsoever, both lost us a lot of talent and capability and angered a very large number of Iraqis.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me just interrupt you there. I was listening to Ehud Barach, the former Foreign Minister of Israel, in his analysis of the failures, he said, "The Baathist Party was not the Nazi Party. There were bad people. But," he said, "how did you get your child an education? How did you support your family? That was one way to succeed in Iraq." And so I am just extending the point that even a Jewish leader was saying to us what an unfortunate mistake.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. I think the thing about the de-Baathification is it is much more important to take out the culture of the Baath than just ordinary individual Baathists. And that is what we should have concentrated on.

Mr. SHAYS. I want to know if these observations are observations you agree with. First off, the statistic I have is that two-thirds of the Iraqi people want us to leave, and two-thirds of them want us to stay, and they are sticking to it. [Laughter.]

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Yes. Iraqis are schizophrenic about this particular issue.

Mr. SHAYS. I understand. So, as my staff says, in that respect they are ready for democracy. [Laughter.]

Many Iraqis told me—they did not even say it, I felt it, they were suspicious of us as the government because they never had a government they could trust. It is almost by definition that if you are part of government, you cannot be trusted, and certainly not a foreign power. Does that seem consistent with what you would feel is out there?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. The problem was that there was no government. Of course, Iraqis distrust government. All nations distrust government, but perhaps Iraqis distrust government more than others. The problem, Mr. Chairman, was that there was no government. The Coalition simply could not substitute an Iraqi government.

Mr. SHAYS. Fair enough. I think you have made your point, and I think it is an excellent point. Another observation that I had was that they blamed us for the sanctions, not Saddam. And I had so many Iraqis tell me of loved ones or neighbors that had been killed in their effort to rebel against Saddam and blamed us because we had told them to rebel and yet left the Republican Guard in place. Are those things that seem consistent with your view, one, that they blame us for the sanctions, and two, that they blame us for saying rebel against Saddam?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Yes. I would qualify that, I do not think this is universal. The important thing is that the Iraqis were willing to give the United States the benefit of the doubt after liberation, and that is really important.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. And then we squandered it.

Let me proceed a little bit longer and then I can go back to you if you have some questions. Do you have some questions? OK. Let us go to Mr. Platts.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Al-Rahim, thank you for your testimony and your clear devotion and dedication to your fellow Iraqis and the liberation of your nation. I want to followup on the chairman's question, his initial question was actually what I was contemplating, is the issue of how quickly sovereignty should have been turned over to the Iraqis. By your statement, you believe it should have been and could have been by July of last year. I think part of the chairman's efforts here today is to learn from what has happened and how things maybe could have been done in a different way and perhaps better way. How would we have gone about, in those 2½, maybe 3 months between the initial liberation and the establishment of a government, how would you suggest we would have identified who the government would be,

who would be in charge of the ministries? How would the Coalition authority select those individuals?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Congressman, it was possible to identify a Governing Council by early July. I am not arguing about the people. I am saying they were not given any authority.

Mr. PLATTS. Would you acknowledge that identifying a group that will be given a position of advisory input, to have some working relationship, is different than saying you have full sovereignty and full decisionmaking power over all of Iraq and all of the citizens?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. In the end, the Governing Council was in limbo. It was neither an advisory body nor was it a rulemaking authoritative body. In any case, any government that could have been appointed in July would have had to be an Interim Government awaiting elections. I do not really see where the problem is. The CPA identified a Governing Council, it identified ministers. It is just that they had no authority to do anything.

Mr. PLATTS. The process was a little different in the sense of identifying that Iraqi Governing Council versus the Interim Government that is now going to assume sovereignty and the ability to bring in the U.N. and have a broader input to who the ones given the actual sovereignty will be. It just seems that ability would have been a little challenged to do it in 2½ months.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Congressman, the U.N. was already involved. Sergio DeMello, the representative of Khoffi Anan, was in Baghdad and was involved in the formation of the Governing Council. It may be doubtful whether it would have been formed without his assistance, actually.

Mr. PLATTS. And I certainly appreciate your position, as appropriately it should be, that the sooner the Iraqis have their own sovereignty, the better. It just seems that given the challenges that we saw especially regarding security in those initial months and continue to see, the ability to so quickly say you have complete authority and responsibility and we are selecting you versus we are going to try to have input. When I visited Iraq in October and met with a number of the ministers, they certainly in my personal conversations with them did not convey that they had no input. In fact, they seemed to have a very positive working relationship with their Coalition Provisional Authority counterparts and conveyed to me and to I think other members of our delegation that they were appreciative of the input they had in their respective ministries. And your impression is that they really did not?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. They did not have very much influence. They did not control their budgets. They did not set policies for their ministries. Now, over time, they did sort of arrest authority from the CPA. So that by early this year many of the ministers did have a certain level of autonomy, but certainly not in October.

I also want to go back to the July timeframe and say that I lived in Iraq from very early May until November, and in July the security situation was far, far better than it was in the fall and later on. Yes, we were having some sabotage activities and so on, but it was a manageable situation at that time. So it becomes a question of a chicken and egg story.

Mr. PLATTS. The final area I wanted to touch on was in your assessment of what could have been done better in the area of, as you talked about in your testimony, expectations and delivery and the disbelief after the liberation occurred, whether it be electricity, water, other infrastructure related services that were so behind the times, of how quickly they were being provided. My understanding from my visit and other testimony that we have had over the past year is that was due in part to the lack of investment in the infrastructure by Saddam and the diversion of his resources to military capabilities and things.

What would be your assessment of the individuals who were selected as part of the Iraqi Governing Council in their public efforts to try to convey realistic expectations of how long it would take to rebuild? I visited a power plant, what appears to be technology probably 40 years old, and it is not something that overnight you can replace. And although perhaps it was the impression the United States, Great Britain, the other nations are here and they are just going to fix everything, it would not be a realistic expectation. So what would be your assessment of the Iraqi leaders, Governing Council members and others such as yourself, in trying to get the message out to the average Iraqi that they are committing their time and American taxpayers money to rebuild our infrastructure. It will not happen overnight, to try to lessen those expectations so they are more realistic and not unrealistic?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. First of all, I agree with you that expectations were unrealistic given the situation. But there was always "The man in the moon" analogy, what journalists have called it: If the United States can get a man on the moon, can't it fix the electricity. I also want to acknowledge that neither Iraqis in the Governing Council nor the Coalition made enough of an effort through the media and through public outreach to explain to Iraqis why these expectations were unrealistic, when such expectations could be met, over what period of time, and when things went wrong nobody explained to the average Iraqi why they had gone wrong. We had a power outage for 24 hours in Baghdad and nobody came on television afterwards to explain why. This, by the way, was simultaneous with the brown out in New York and Northeast United States. Of course, the Iraqis immediately said, "See, the whole of New York and Northeast United States browns out, they fix it right away. We have 24 hours of a blackout, nobody even tells us."

Mr. PLATTS. Sort of like being on Amtrak and the train stops and you do not know what is happening and no one tells you times 100.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Times 100. And the failure was both CPA and Iraqi, and I do acknowledge that.

Mr. PLATTS. And we heard I think an admission by the CPA when I was there in October that they were not adequately getting the message out and communicating to the average Iraqi citizen. One of the kind of heart-wrenching stories I came back with from our visit was that of the [Arabic name] hospital in Baghdad and visiting the maternity ward, the ICU, the NIC unit I call it, and the gratitude of the Iraqi doctor who was administering the hospital for the technology that the Coalition had brought in and of our efforts to immunize—I think now we are up to about 85 percent of Iraqi children are immunized—and how dramatically dif-

ferent that is than under the Saddam Hussein regime where, from what he told us, the formula was purposely poisoned for the Iraqi babies to purposely escalate the infant mortality rate, I think it was 107 per 1,000. He knew what was done before and how the Iraqi government was, in essence, killing its own children, how the Coalition Authority came in and was helping to save the Iraqi children, and he personally knew that. But, clearly, that message was not being well conveyed and understood and embraced by the average Iraqi, by your comments, and that lack of communication in a broad sense was hurting the effort.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Lack of communication played a big role I think in Iraqi perceptions and attitudes. And it is very sad.

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to ask questions. And again, Ms. Al-Rahim, I thank you for your leadership and I certainly wish you and your nation and its citizens great success as you move forward and assume full sovereignty and embrace the liberties that you now enjoy.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Thank you.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you very much. I am going to close up here. I know we need to get to the second panel. My only reference to Amtrak and being on a train is I think most Americans who have been in that experience know how irritating even that little simple inconvenience can be. You want to get somewhere, the train is an hour and a half late, you want to know why it is late, no one tells you why, no one tells you when you are going to get there. I just can imagine what it must be for Iraqis.

But let me just tell you expectations on the side. And it is our own fault because our intelligence was so bad. We thought all we had to do was protect the infrastructure so that we could get it operating again, little did we know that it was 30 years old and it was kept together by gum and rubber bands. It was a shock certainly to Members of Congress to realize that in order to get things running again we had to provide everything new. And some of it was a challenge because it was French-and German-made and we were not getting much interaction from those two countries. So, lots of expectations I think on both sides. So, welcome to the world of humanity.

I want to read one statement you said because I think it is the most frustrating for me because this is where Americans shine. But it also is important because it seems so obvious. You write, "In all spheres of life, Iraqis lived on rumors and urban myths. It is by now no secret that the television station established by the Coalition was a failure. Whereas it should have been extensively used by the Coalition and Iraqi officials to communicate with people, provide information, address concerns, and build confidence, the station was instead virtually content-free." I can just tell you, to the extent Members could get there, and quite often we were discouraged from going, that is something we kept asking because we had Iraqis asking us, particularly even the Queen of Jordan, she said, "America, the country that communicates better than anyone else, with all your expertise and you could not do anything to counter Al-Jazira and you could not communicate with the Iraqi people." So it is one of the grand mysteries of our failure. And we

have witnesses later that can testify. I do think, though, we have a local station that has gained some credibility. Is it Al-Iraqiya?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Al-Iraqiya is the failed one. There is a new one called Al-Hurra which appears to be gathering momentum.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me just tell you, Al-Iraqiya, I am told, is listened to by more Iraqis than even Al-Jazira is.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Because most Iraqis do not have satellite. You do not need satellite for Al-Iraqiya, you need satellite for Al-Jazira. Anyone who has satellite does not watch Al-Iraqiya. But most people do not have satellite. In the rural areas and in the provinces they do not.

Mr. SHAYS. My biggest criticism, and I would like you to react to it, and if you are not comfortable, then that is fine, but the administration had a chance to allow the military to get Saddam's old regime members to fight the terrorists and deal with security and make sure our prisons were obviously run well and properly, and he had the chance to have the State Department, which is far more culturally sensitive, run the rebuilding. The administration decided that the chain of command, and I mean no disrespect to the military, but the chain of the command would go through the military. I know for a fact, because I remember having dialog with State Department last year, they were saying we need Arabic speakers, we need Iraqi-Americans, and they told us the reactions that would happen if we did certain things, which we ended up doing. They predicted so much of this.

What I feel good about is that on June 30th the military will be in charge of what they do best—and by the way, they build schools well, they do all those other things well, but we were asking them to build schools in the daytime and fight the bad folks at night. We were asking them to work 18 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year. And what I am happy about now is that we will have an ambassador who will answer to the State Department. And he has said, and he has made it very clear to me, he is an ambassador, he is not Mr. Bremer, he is a representative of our government to interact with the sovereign government of Iraq.

I will say one other thing that makes me feel good because I feel the administration gets it. In a conversation with Condaleeza Rice a week and a half ago with nine Members, for about an hour and a half she was very fluent, as she is, but very willing to go wherever the dialog went. In other words, there was a lot of good interaction. And she said something at the end that sent shivers up my back. She said, and I thought I knew where she was going, she said, "We had years before the Declaration of Independence to understand democracy and the idea of minority rights." The Declaration of Independence, 1776, Articles of Confederation, the Constitution. Now I thought she was saying finally, after 13 years, we got it right with the Constitution. She waited a second, looked every one of us in the eye, and said, "And in that Constitution I was only three-fifths a person." Which has to make Americans be a little more compassionate, a little more understanding that there may have to be compromises in this new government that we will not like and that maybe you will not like.

And so let me end with this. What happens if this new government decides that they do not want a woman representative? What

happens if they decide they do not want women in the ministry? What happens if this government decides that girls in school are not going to get the same education as boys in school? I want to ask you what happens there, and I know it is a hypothetical, but I am not sure it is going to be just the way I hope it will be and maybe not the way you hope it will be. So tell me what you think about that and how we should react if, in the end, we see a government that simply has lost many opportunities. Will you say, well, we screwed it up a year, so you are allowed to do the same thing? Or what will you say?

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I do not think that this will happen. Iraqis are very sensitive to women's rights now. And by the way, women have had a big role in the Iraqi society, professionally not politically, for many decades. It is unlikely.

What I would want, if they decide they do not want women ministers, I would want the right to advocate for women's rights. Even if a government says, no, we do not want women in this position, I want the right to lobby and speak freely. And I hope that the United States will support me in maintaining my right to speak, not in imposing anything on the government.

I want to commend the civil affairs people in the U.S. military, and I mentioned them, by the way, in my written statement, who did a stellar job with local citizens groups and local councils. I also want to say that, indeed, everybody in the Coalition worked 18 hours a day, at least, and Ambassador Bremer worked 36 hours a day.

Mr. SHAYS. I know that.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. It was phenomenal and we were full of admiration and awe for their energy and for their good will. It is just that good will was not conveyed in the best way possible. This is the problem we had. So I really do have a great admiration and appreciation for the work they did. I also admire the fact that you went over to Iraq five times, four of them with an NGO. That is quite a statement.

Mr. SHAYS. That is the Peace Corps in me.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Well, as the head of an NGO for a long time, I really appreciate that.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. I will just say to you, you have been a wonderful witness. I have tremendous love and respect for the Iraqi people. I pray that your new government will succeed. I also want to say to you that I consider you extraordinarily brave and courageous people because I know you put your lives at risk, you put your families at risk, and we just have nothing but admiration for you and a great deal of love and affection. Thank you very much.

Ms. AL-RAHIM. Thank you, and same here.

Mr. SHAYS. With that, we will move to the second panel.

I now call on our second panel. Ambassador Ronald Schlicher, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs/Iraq, Department of State; Mr. Peter Rodman, Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, Office of Secretary of Defense; Lieutenant General Walter L. Sharp, Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Mr. Gordon West, Senior Deputy

Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia and the Near East, U.S. Agency for International Development.

Gentlemen, if you would stand, I will swear you in. Let me ask you if there is anyone else you think you may need to draw upon, you may ask them to respond to a question, even if we do not end up doing it, if you would suggest that they stand up and raise their right hand, that will save us from having to swear someone in later. You may not be called on but I think it helps. So if you would raise your right hands, I will swear you in.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SHAYS. Note for the record that all of our witnesses have responded in the affirmative. If we ask anyone else to come up, we will make sure that the transcriber has their full name and title.

I want to thank each and every one of you. You honor this subcommittee with your presence. You have honored America for years with your service. And we are very grateful to each and every one of you.

We will go in the order I called you. I believe you are, in fact, sitting in the order I called you. So, Ambassador, you have the floor. I would like you to stick to the 5-minutes as much as you can. I will roll over the clock, but I would like you to be as close to the 5-minutes as you can. And I would like you to feel free to speak about anything that happened in the first panel either now or in response to questions.

STATEMENTS OF AMBASSADOR RONALD L. SCHLICHER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS/IRAQ, DEPARTMENT OF STATE; PETER RODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE; LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTER L. SHARP, DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGIC PLANS AND POLICY, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF; GORDON WEST, SENIOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ambassador SCHLICHER. Very well. Thank you, sir. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is my honor today to report to you on where we stand in the State Department in terms of being prepared for the upcoming transition to Iraqi sovereignty on June 30, and in preparing to stand up our new Mission in Baghdad in a way that helps both us and the Iraqis meet the challenges that lie ahead. We hope in this discussion that we will lay out for you kind of the institutional manner in which we will approach business in the coming period and give you an idea of where we think the Iraqi Interim Government starts from as a base in political terms during this crucial period. Let me thank you in advance for the interest and support you and the Congress as a whole have afforded to our personnel, both military and civilian, on the ground in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, you mentioned Ambassador Negroponte, which leads me to my first topic of how we are organizing ourselves in State to better be able to meet the challenge of transitioning to lead agency on June 30th in managing and representing our country's interest to a sovereign Iraqi government. Our first Ambas-

sador to the new Iraq, John Negroponte, is, of course, eminently well prepared for the challenges at had. He is one of our most capable and distinguished diplomats. He is assisted on the ground in Baghdad by his Deputy Chief of Mission, that is Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, who was serving as our Ambassador in Albania before he answered the call to serve in Iraq. Ambassador Jeffrey, by the way, is already on the ground in Baghdad, leading an advance team to smooth the transition. Ambassador Negroponte and Ambassador Jeffrey have put together a superb, very senior new team that collectively features a very impressive mix of regional experience, which of course includes language skills as well, management skills, and technical expertise, because all of those things are very much going to be needed as we pursue our interests and help the Iraqis in the period ahead. This management team will supervise a very large Mission that will initially total approximately 900 American staff, and 500 locally employed staff. Our security upgrades for our temporary chancery are proceeding on schedule and will be ready by July 1. We have also chosen a site for a permanent chancery and would like to come to agreement with the Iraqi government on the way forward on this project as soon as possible.

In preparing for the transition, there has been a remarkable effort undertaken by DOD and State, by Ambassador Frank Ricciardone and General Mick Kicklighter, who led a combined team to work out how State and DOD will work together to make the transition and work together in the new post-June 30 context. Thanks to their work, the two agencies have finalized agreements between each other on respective roles, missions, resources, responsibilities and authorities so that we complement and support each other as we move ahead.

Inside State, we are also in the process of reorganizing ourselves to better handle the challenges posed. Inside the near East Bureau, we are creating an operation called NEA-I, I, of course, for Iraq, which will entail my office as coordinator, a deputy political office, an economic office, a public diplomacy office, a political-military office, and an office of a coordinator for assistance in Iraqi reconstruction, which is headed by Ambassador Robin Raphel. This team in Washington will be responsible for close coordination on a constant basis with Ambassador Negroponte's team in Baghdad and with the interagency here.

This new U.S. team will work in partnership with the new sovereign Iraqi Interim Government to achieve our shared goals on security and stability, and improving the delivery of services, and improving economic opportunity, and, of course, in ushering in Iraq's first democratic elections no later than January 2005. The U.N. will also remain an important partner in the effort to organize those elections.

As the Iraqis begin to exercise their sovereignty, we will find ourselves in a more standard situation as far as the manner of conducting bilateral business goes. Instead of governing and ruling a country as we have been, we will doing business with a sovereign Iraqi government which will be looking to make its own decisions. On the diplomatic side of the house we will be doing business as a country team. I mention that not as a point of bureaucratic minutia, but actually because we believe the country team approach is

an approach which achieves a comprehensive view of a given issue because it has all of the players in our operation around the table who can offer their perspectives on whether it is an economic perspective, a cultural sensitivity perspective, a security perspective, and in that way we come up with a common approach by which we are able to get the maximum in terms of pursuing our interest on any given issue.

During the coming period, as you have pointed out, we will work with the Interim Government and the U.N. to assure free and fair elections. It is going to be very, very important during that period that we keep a clear focus on what average Iraqis and the political class are doing, saying, and thinking about the momentous events through which they and their country are passing. In this regard, the new country team will be able to build on the contacts and outreach established by CPA and Ambassador Bremer's team over the last 14 months. As someone who was personally involved in that effort, I can assure you that it was very difficult after over a decade's absence from the country, but CPA has made great strides in this regard in its time in Baghdad and the country team has a solid basis to build on.

I would note also as well that our efforts to keep in touch with average Iraqis will be greatly aided by the presence outside of regional centers in Mosul, Kirkuk, Basra, and Hillah, and we are also going to embed State Department officers with military commanders in the field at the division level. We believe that this range of assets will help Ambassador Negroponte and our military commanders keep well abreast of the local context in which they are operating.

Thus, with the establishment of a strong new Mission, with clear ideas about how we will coordinate the achievement of our policy and security goals, and with the establishment of the security partnership with the IIG, which my military colleagues will no doubt talk about, we are well placed in institutional terms to meet the challenges before us.

Now let me switch to the Iraqi side and talk about the political basis on which the new Interim Government begins its great effort as well. We are hopeful that the preparations that the Coalition has made over the course of a year will help assure that the Iraqis are ready to resume sovereignty and move forward toward democratic elections. Our efforts have been from the ground up and from the top down.

First, we provided training, advice, equipment, and facilities to help establish and strengthen local councils, regional councils, and national governing institutions. As of our last count, we had 16 Governorate councils, 90 district councils, 194 city councils, and 445 neighborhood councils. At the national level, we have already turned over I believe it is 16, I think that is the number today, ministries to direct Iraqi control and the rest of course will be transferred over the course of the next 2 weeks. We will continue to offer to the Iraqis liaison officers to provide technical expertise that the Iraqis judge is necessary to run their ministries according to the required standards. Of course, in March we also supported the Iraqis as they drafted and adopted clearly defined principles and targets in the TAL, the Transitional Administrative Law,

which will be in effect as of July 1 and will stay in effect until a constitutionally based government takes office. On June 1, the former Iraqi Governing Council adopted with Ambassador Bremer's full support the Annex to the TAL that reflected the results of extensive conversations by U.N. Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi with Iraqis from all over the country.

That brings us to the new Iraqi government and the base on which it starts its efforts over the next several months. And I am happy to report to you that government is in place. It is led by President Ghazi al-Yawer and a strong Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Allawi. We believe that this government is particularly notable for its competence, its experience, its diversity in all terms, politically, professionally, geographically, and gender terms. Nearly two-thirds of the ministers have doctorates, and a preponderance of the ministers are new faces who have not served previously.

It is our impression that, in spite of the terrorist attacks on Iraqi civil servants, the overall reception of the Iraqi public to the new government has been very positive. We hear it in Baghdad, we hear it back here, also regional support has been very good, all of the neighbors seem to be responding well, international organizations as well. So with these things institutionally and on the ground, we feel that we are well poised to move into the coming period. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Schlicher follows:]

Statement of Ronald L. Schlicher
State Department Coordinator for Iraq
Hearing Before the House Committee on Government Reform
16 June 2004

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, it is my honor today to report to you today on where we stand in the State Department in terms of being prepared for the upcoming transition to Iraqi sovereignty on June 30, and in preparing to stand up our new Mission in Baghdad in a way that helps both us and the Iraqis meet the challenges that lie ahead. Let me thank you in advance for the interest and support you and the Congress as a whole have afforded to our personnel, both military and civilian, on the ground in Iraq.

The State Department is also organizing itself to be better able to meet the challenge of transitioning to lead agency in managing and representing US interests to a sovereign Iraqi government. Our first Ambassador to the new Iraq, John D. Negroponte, is eminently well prepared for the challenges at hand as one of the most capable and seasoned diplomats our nation has to offer. He is assisted by his Deputy Chief of Mission, Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, who was serving as our Ambassador in Albania before he answered the call to serve in Iraq. Ambassador Jeffrey is already on the ground in Baghdad leading an advance team to smooth the transition. Ambassador Negroponte and Ambassador Jeffrey have put together a superb, very senior new country team that collectively features an impressive mixture of regional experience, management skills, and technical expertise. This management team will supervise a large Mission totaling up to 1000 permanent American staff, as well as around 500 locally-employed staff. Our security upgrades for our temporary chancery are proceeding on schedule and it will be ready by July 1. We have also chosen a site for a permanent Chancery and would like to come to agreement with the Iraqi government on the way forward on this project as soon as possible.

In preparing for the transition, there has been a remarkable effort undertaken by Ambassador Frank Ricciardone and General Mick Kicklighter, who led a combined team to work out how State and DoD will work together in the new post-June 30 context. Thanks to their work, the two agencies have finalized agreements between each other on respective roles, missions, resources, responsibilities and authorities so that they will complement and support each other.

Inside the State Department, we are also in the process of organizing ourselves to better handle the challenges posed. Inside the near East Bureau, we are creating an operation known as "NEA/I," – "I" for Iraq – which will entail my office as Coordinator, a Deputy, a political office, an economic office, a public diplomacy office, a political-military office and an office of a Coordinator for Iraq Reconstruction headed by Ambassador Robin Raphel. This team in Washington will be responsible for close coordination on a constant basis with Ambassador Negroponte's team in Baghdad and with the interagency process here.

The new U.S. team in Baghdad will work in partnership with the new sovereign Iraqi Interim Government to achieve our shared goals on achieving security and stability, improving the delivery of services and economic opportunity, and in ushering in Iraq's first democratic elections no later than January 2005. The UN will also remain an important partner in the effort to organize the elections.

As the Iraqis start exercising their sovereign rights, we will find ourselves in a more standard situation as far as the manner of conducting bilateral business goes. On the diplomatic side of the house we will be doing business as a country team, which is organized in a manner that achieves a comprehensive approach to a given issue by airing issues and shaping responses by considering each interested agency's or party's prism on the issue. This integrated approach to the pursuit of our goals is especially vital in Iraq, of course, given the enormity of the tasks at hand on both the security and reconstruction and democracy sides.

During the coming period, as we work with the Interim government and the UN to assure free and fair elections, it will be very important that we keep a clear focus on what average Iraqis and the political class are doing, saying, and thinking about the momentous events through which they are passing. In this regard, the new country team will be able to build on the contacts and outreach established by CPA and Ambassador Bremer's team over the last 14 months -- this task was a very difficult one after a decade and half's absence from the country, but CPA has made great strides in this regard in its time in Baghdad. Our Mission will also be aided greatly by the presence outside Baghdad of regional centers in Mosul, Kirkuk, Basra, and Hillah, and by the embedding of FSO's with division-level military commands in the field. This range of assets should help Ambassador Negroponte and our military commanders keep well abreast of the local context in which they are operating.

Thus, with the establishment of a strong new Mission, with clear ideas about how we will coordinate the achievement of our policy and security goals, and with the establishment of the security partnership with the IIG described by General Sharp, we are well-placed in institutional terms to meet the challenges before us.

We are also hopeful that the preparations that the United States and Coalition countries have made over the course of more than a year will help assure that the Iraqis are ready to resume sovereignty. Our efforts have been from the ground up and from the top down. First, we have provided the training, advice, equipment, and facilities to help establish and strengthen local, regional, and national governing institutions. As of our last count, there are 16 governorate councils, 90 district councils, 194 city councils, and 445 neighborhood councils. At the national level, we have already turned over 16 (check number) ministries to direct Iraqi control and the rest will be transferred over in the two weeks leading up to June 30. We will continue to offer to the Iraqis liaison officers to help provide the technical expertise which they judge they need to run their ministries in the most effective manner possible. We also supported the Iraqis as they drafted and adopted clearly defined principles and targets in the Transitional Administrative Law, which will be in effect as of July 1 and will stay in effect until a constitutionally-based

elected government takes office. On June 1, the former Iraqi Governing Council adopted with our full support the Annex to the TAL that reflected the results of extensive conversations by UN Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi with Iraqis from across Iraq's diverse society.

The Iraqi Interim Government that will assume full sovereign authority on June 30 is in place. It is led by President Ghazi al-Yawer and a strong Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. We believe that the Iraqi Interim Government is particularly notable for its competence, experience, and diversity -- politically, professionally, and geographically. Nearly two-thirds of the cabinet ministers have doctorates, and a preponderance of ministers have noted served previously as ministers or members of the former Governing Council.

It is our impression that, in spite of the ongoing terrorist attacks on Iraqi civil servants and Coalition targets, the overall initial reception by the Iraqi public to the new government has been very positive. Similarly, reception to the new Interim Government in the region and the international community has been very positive. The new, unanimously adopted UNSCR 1456 also provides strong international endorsement of Iraq's re-acquisition of sovereignty, of a robust and comprehensive security partnership between the MNF and IIG, and of Iraq's reconstruction and economic development. We will work with the Iraqi Interim Government to actively seek out particular ways in which the international community can support each of these goals. We are encouraged that the interim government, despite the enormous challenges it still faces, starts its tenure with a significant degree of support.

As Iraqis find renewed pride in their sovereignty and move toward free and fair democratic elections scheduled for no later than next January, there will also be other means by which they can be confident that they are re-asserting control over their sovereign affairs. The TAL Annex provides for a National Council to be selected at an Iraq-organized national conference to be held in Baghdad next month. PM Allawi and his government will be able to draw on the wisdom and advice of this Council. In addition to its advisory function, it will be a forum to promote national dialogue and consensus, and will have the authority to oversee the implementation of laws, and to veto executive orders by a two-thirds majority.

Mr. Chairman, as you can see, the State Department is working hard with all our interagency colleagues, with our Coalition partners, with CPA, the UN and the Iraqi people to carry out a smooth transition which will enable the new Mission to carry out the direction provided by President Bush. On May 24, he laid out five steps that we must accomplish to consolidate freedom and stability in Iraq: Those steps are

First, handing over authority to a sovereign Iraqi government.

Second, helping establish security.

Third, continuing to rebuild Iraqi infrastructure.

Fourth, encouraging international support.

And fifth, moving toward free national elections.

Through the measures we have put in place and others as needed, we will pursue these goals laid out by the President with vigor and will overcome the challenges posed by an uncertain security environment, by ongoing reconstruction efforts, and by a political process that is still new to a people traumatized by an evil system which ruled for decades. In this period, we will also look to you for the support that Congress has offered in helping our nation, the Coalition, and the Iraqi people in achieving our profoundly important goals in Iraq.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Committee today on these important topics.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. It would seem that we are well poised and I just hope that we make sure we do not lose this opportunity. You did go 10 minutes but it was important we hear from you. Thank you, Ambassador. I understand you have a meeting at the White House at 4:45.

Ambassador SCHLICHER. Yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. We will make sure you are not going to be late.

Mr. Peter Rodman, thank you so much for being here.

Mr. RODMAN. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend you for the contribution and the leadership that you have shown on this issue for a long period of time, and I want to congratulate you and the committee for this timely hearing.

We would be remiss not to acknowledge the serious problems that remain in Iraq, particularly in the security field. But I welcome this opportunity to discuss what our strategy is and how we see it unfolding.

There is no doubt in our minds, as the Ambassador in fact confirmed before, that the overwhelming majority of people of Iraq still welcome the removal of that regime and consider it a liberation. They have concerns now about how life is now, and we share those concerns. But those concerns focus on the future, not the past. As the Ambassador mentioned, the collapse of the old regime left a vacuum, and the essence of our strategy has in fact been to prepare Iraqis and to help Iraqis fill that vacuum themselves, to build their own institutions—political, economic, and security institutions. And the next milestone, of course, in that process is the turnover of authority on June 30.

In your invitation to me, Mr. Chairman, you listed six questions. In my prepared statement I have addressed those specifically, but I want to address one in the brief time I have right now. The thrust of the question is, what accounts for the change of attitude among the Iraqis that seems to be producing this insurgency against the Coalition. With all due respect, I would say that is maybe not the whole story. It is not only that a change of attitude may be fueling the violence against the Coalition; it may equally be that these extremists are targeting the morale of the population. They are attacking the economy, they are attacking the political process, they are attacking Iraqi police. They are doing everything they can to derail the progress that is being made—to demoralize the population, to discredit the Coalition.

As political leaders, you understand the phenomenon of "What have you done for me lately?" Fourteen months ago, they considered themselves liberated. So we have two syndromes. We have the "man in the moon" syndrome; we also have the "what have you done for me lately?" syndrome. It is obvious that 14 months after liberation hardships still exist, uncertainties still exist, and it is only natural to be resentful of the people in authority, especially if those in authority are foreign powers exercising the authority of an occupier. So it is no surprise to me, therefore, when I read opinion polls showing a lot of people saying "we want this occupation to end." The fact is, we share that desire and that is why we are launched on this timetable to hand over sovereign authority right away.

Now just to elaborate a little bit. I do not accept the premise that the extremists represent the majority of the people or represent the aspirations of the people. I think they are applying a kind of Leninist doctrine of "the worse the better." The more damage they can do, the more they can undercut us, no matter what hardship they are imposing on the people of Iraq—that is what I think is going on.

Most of all, this war is a war against the democratic political process. It is not just a war against the Coalition; it is an attempt to derail this democratic political evolution. We have some evidence of that in the famous letter of Zarqawi, the terrorist leader who is affiliated with Al-Qaeda, a message of his that we intercepted a few months ago. He is very candid. He says, "I am racing against time," because on June 30 when the Americans have "stepped back" and the Iraqis, when their own cousins and brothers are in charge, "what excuse" do I have anymore? And "how do you motivate Iraqis to kill their own brothers and cousins?" So he knows what our strategy is and I think his most important goal is to derail it.

So one can ask, what is the measure of success? One measure of our problem, of course, is the casualties, the terrible violence that continues. But another metric of success is, is he succeeding in derailing this political process? And I submit that the answer is no. And that is what gives me encouragement, that we have a strategy that is on track. Legitimacy—and we will have that certainly when an elective government takes office we hope and expect at the beginning of next year—legitimacy will be our strongest weapon against the extremists.

So our strategy is not just military. It is partly a political strategy. In fact, the essence of it I would say is political. There is a lot of legitimate criticism that I have heard, including from the Ambassador, about, is our message getting through? The bottom line, I would say, in measuring the effectiveness of our message is that we believe the Iraqi people still have the same objective we have, and I think the polls indicate that. This democratic evolution is their objective and it is our objective. The fact that they want to see the occupation end soon is absolutely natural and absolutely correct on their part. And we know, as again we have heard the Ambassador say, that all of the moderate leaders of Iraq are unanimous in telling us they want the Coalition to stay. The U.N. resolution shows international support for our present course, which is the course of the Iraqi people as they advance toward a sovereign government and a democratic government.

In other words, we think that June 30th is going to be the setback for Zarqawi that he is afraid of; even more so, an elected government at the end of the year. The Iraqi people know this, I am confident of that, and that again is what gives me confidence that we are on the right track.

We, in turn, should never forget that we have accomplished something of historic importance in liberating Iraq. The success of a democratic Iraq will have wider ramifications throughout the Middle East, as the President has so often declared. And so we are embarked on an enterprise of great moral as well as strategic significance. It is a vital national commitment that we as a nation

need to fulfill. Congress and the President, I am confident, are united in this task and I am confident that we will succeed. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rodman follows:]

"Iraq: Winning the Hearts and Minds"

Prepared Statement of
Peter W. Rodman
Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
before the
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations
of the
House Government Reform Committee
Tuesday, June 15, 2004

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am please to be able to testify before this Committee about our policy and prospects in Iraq.

I would be remiss not to acknowledge the serious problems that remain in Iraq, particularly in the field of security. But I welcome this opportunity to discuss what our strategy is, and how we see it unfolding.

Over the past thirty-five years, the Iraqi people have been through a terrible ordeal. They suffered through a dark and painful era under the tyrannical rule of Saddam Hussein and his Ba'athist regime. The fall of Saddam's regime and the liberation of the Iraqi people ushered in a new period in Iraqi history. Images of falling statues and streets filled with celebrating Iraqis greeted Coalition forces. There is no doubt in our minds that the overwhelming majority of Iraqi people still welcome the removal of that regime. They have concerns now -- and so do we. But those concerns focus on the future.

The rapid collapse of the old regime left a vacuum, and the essence of our strategy has been to help decent, moderate Iraqis fill that vacuum -- to help the Iraqis build their own new institutions: political, economic, and security institutions. Today, just 14 months after liberation, Iraq is undergoing an historic transformation:

- Just over two weeks from now, the Coalition will transfer sovereign authority to a new Interim Government in Iraq. This government will lay the foundation for free and democratic elections in Iraq at the end of 2004, or at the latest by January 2005.

- This unfolding political process is guided by the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), negotiated by Iraqis in March, which with its provisions for civil liberties, human rights (including women's rights), and other checks and balances presents a remarkable example of liberal governance in the Arab world.

- On June 8, United Nations Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 1546 endorsing the formation of the new sovereign Interim Government of Iraq.

- Ninety percent of all cities and towns in Iraq are governed by elected municipal councils.

- Iraq now has a new and stable currency.

- Iraq's inflation peaked at an annualized rate of 47.7 percent in October 2003. In April 2004, it was down to 19.6 percent. Over the last six months, the Consumer Price Index has averaged an annual rate of 7.0 percent.

- Estimated crude oil export revenue is over $6.9 billion so far in 2004.

- Over 220,000 Iraqis currently serve in uniform protecting facilities, borders, and patrolling streets to provide security.

- Two hundred forty Iraqi hospitals and over 1,200 preventive health clinics are operating.

- Nearly 2500 schools have been rehabilitated to date and an additional 1,200 are expected to be complete by the end of this year.

These are just some examples of the progress that is being made in the political, economic, and security spheres.

This hearing focuses on the important topic of Iraqi public attitudes. We know there are problems on the ground, as I said, particularly in the security sphere. And this Committee is correct to note that political, economic, and public diplomacy issues all play a part in determining the security conditions in Iraq today.

Your letter of invitation to me asked me to focus on six questions. Let me respond to them in order.

Question # 1: What events precipitated the change in Iraqi attitudes from jubilation over the fall of [Saddam] Hussein to a high profile insurgency against Coalition personnel?

With all due respect, I would like to challenge the premise of the question. I do not believe that a "change in Iraqi attitudes" underlies the present violence.

First of all, it seems clear, as I suggested earlier, that the Iraqi people overwhelmingly continue to welcome at the removal of a hated tyrant. A new Gallup poll conducted in March/April 2004 puts this figure still at 80 percent.

As political leaders, you understand the phenomenon of "What have you done for me lately?" Today, 14 months later, despite the progress I described, there is still some hardship and uncertainty. To some extent we may be the victims of our own success. After the quick triumph of our military campaign, Iraqis' expectations may have been excessively high. Lieutenant General David Petraeus calls it the "man on the moon" syndrome: "If America can put a man on the moon, it certainly can get me 24/7 electricity."

When difficulties persist, it is natural for people to express resentment at those in authority -- especially when the latter are foreign powers exercising authority as an occupier. It is no surprise that there is a desire in Iraq to see an early end to occupation. We share that desire.

That is why President Bush decided to accelerate the process of transferring sovereign authority back to Iraqis -- not waiting (as earlier plans would have done) for the formation of an elected government under a new constitution. As I noted, the handover of sovereign authority is due to occur very soon -- on June 30 -- to a broadly representative Interim Government formed through consultations among Iraqi leaders, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advisor, and the Coalition Provisional Authority.

One can ask whether the perpetrators of violence have a broad base in Iraq and whether they truly represent the aspirations of the Iraqi people. They include contradictory forces -- die-hard former regime elements, Islamist and nationalist radicals, foreign jihadists -- who differ on long-term goals but share the apparent goal of defeating the Coalition.

These extremists, applying Lenin's doctrine of "the worse, the better," are attempting to wage war against the progress that is being made. Your question refers to a "high profile insurgency against Coalition forces." In fact, what is taking place is even more a war against Iraq's democratic progress. It attacks soft targets such as Iraq's economic infrastructure -- including energy facilities that are a key to Iraq's future prosperity -- as well as moderate political leaders and the growing number of Iraqis bearing arms as police, who are bravely seeking to maintain law and order so the country can get back on its feet.

Thus, the problem is not that the "change in Iraqi attitudes" underlies the insurgency. It is that the minority of extremists are seeking to demoralize the population by their campaign of violence. It is a way, among other things, of disrupting and discrediting the Coalition's determined efforts to improve the lives of the Iraqi people.

The war against the Coalition is also a war to derail the democratic political process on which Iraq has embarked. We know this from the letter of al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi which we captured earlier this year. Zarqawi makes patently clear that he considers himself in a "race against time" to block or disrupt the June 30 handover. "We fight them," Zarqawi says, "and this is difficult because of the gap that will emerge between us and the people of the land. How can we fight their cousins and their sons and under what pretext after the Americans...pull back? ... Democracy is coming, and there will be no excuse [for us] thereafter." Zarqawi talks of his attempt to drive the Americans out, and to foment sectarian war -- all in order to disrupt what is taking place.

The good news is that he has failed to disrupt what is taking place. That is his main strategic goal, and he is failing to achieve it. Our basic strategy is political as well as military: It is to empower moderate Iraqis and marginalize the extremists politically while we hunt them down militarily. That strategy is on track.

Question #2: What factors caused the security environment to deteriorate?

Security problems clearly remain. But here, too, one can ask whether this is the result of a "hearts and minds" problem or other factors. The insurgents do seem to have gradually improved their ability to organize and coordinate their actions -- yet their impact is still greatest against soft targets. Most of the incidents, though tragically they can inflict casualties, do not have a strategic significance. The more serious challenges that we faced in April -- the violence in Fallujah, mainly by former regime die-hards, and the challenge represented by Mustaqa al-Sadr's attempt to dominate the Shia community – are being dealt with; they have not been entirely overcome but we believe we are regaining the upper hand.

Administration officials have pointed out on a number of occasions that an intensification of violence should be anticipated in the coming period, as the extremists redouble their efforts to disrupt the June 30 handover and undermine the new Iraqi government's authority.

Our strategy here too is to empower the moderate Iraqis -- to help them build their strong new institutions in the security sphere. While over 220, 000 Iraqis are under arms, we know from the April crisis that many of them need more training and better equipment. They will benefit, however, from being under an Iraqi chain of command after June 30. With strong leadership and clear guidance from Iraqi authorities, these Iraqi security forces are likely to be better motivated than when under the Coalition. They will be defending their own country and its democratic progress against enemies seeking to ruin both.

Question #3: To what extent did the Coalition succeed in fostering political reforms in Iraq?

The political evolution of Iraq continues apace, as described above -- the formation of the Governing Council last July; then the political timetable agreed on last November; then the negotiation of the Transitional Administrative Law in March; and now the imminent assumption of sovereign authority by the Iraqi Interim Government.

- In July, a National Conference will convene to select an advisory Interim National Council.

- Democratic elections for a Transitional National Assembly will be held by the end of this year, or no later than January 31, 2005. A Transitional Government will then take power.

- During 2005, the Transitional National Assembly will take charge of the drafting of a permanent constitution. By October 15, 2005, a referendum will be held to approve the constitution.

- Elections for the new government under this new constitution are to be held by December 15, 2005, and the government is to take office by December 31, 2005.

In addition, CPA devoted a considerable effort to supporting the building of civil society in Iraq. This included obtaining grants for women's and political coalition conferences; developing a civic education campaign and distributing materials on the TAL and the political process; other forms of assistance to women's groups; planning resource centers for training and building NGO capacity; and providing training for local government bodies and for the Governing Council's executive secretariat staff.

This democratic political process embodies the hope of Iraq's future. It is supported by all the moderate political forces in Iraq, who constitute the overwhelmingly majority. The legitimacy of this process is the strongest weapon against the extremists: In the name of what do they seek to destroy Iraq's democratic progress?

Secretary of State Powell expressed it eloquently on June 8, before a meeting with Iraq's new Interim President, Sheikh Ghazi al-Yawer:

> They [the extremists] are now challenging their own [country's] leaders. They are now fighting against the dreams of their own people. The Coalition is there to help their government, and they are now attacking their own covenant, and they are attacking their own interests and the interests of their people, and they must be defeated. They cannot be allowed to deny the Iraqi people this hopeful future, and they cannot be allowed to drag them into the past, the terrible past that we got rid of last year when we got rid of Saddam Hussein.

Opinion polls in Iraq have shown that large majorities support democratic principles:

- Over 90 percent support the right to free and fair elections.

- Nearly 80 percent believe in free media.

- Over 70 percent believe in equal rights for women.

- Over 85 percent believe in the right to criticize government.

(CPA Poll August 2003)

- Seventy-six percent of Iraqis acknowledge that they feel freer to express any political view in public now than during the tyranny of Saddam.

(Gallup, March/April 2004)

Question #4: What is your judgment of the Coalition's efforts to distribute aid and development funds, rebuild infrastructure, and create a stable economy generating needed jobs for Iraqis?

At the beginning I cited some of the indicators of progress in the economic field. In addition, it should be noted:

- There have been no health or food crises.

- Projects to improve the supply of water, the disposal of sewage, and other municipal services are underway across the country.

- A 2004 program to clear 20,000 kilometers of Iraq's waterways will employ around 100,000 Iraqis.

- We should see even more jobs starting to be created this summer as contracts begin to be let and the impact of international donations begins to be felt.

- In a CPA-sponsored poll in February 2004, a significant majority in key cities (55 percent) considered the economic situation an improvement over before the war.

Since April, the pace of reconstruction has been slowed by real and perceived security threats. Nonetheless, reconstruction work proceeds throughout Iraq due to the diligent efforts of Coalition forces, contractors, and the Iraqi people.

Question #5: Why did Coalition and U.S. Government public diplomacy efforts fail to reach the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people?

I commend Chairman Shays for his long-standing interest in the important topic of public diplomacy, and for his wise advice.

Again, however, the premise underlying this particular question should not be overstated. There were delays in establishing U.S. media that could reach the Iraqi population. But today Al-Iraqiya television and radio and the broader regional coverage of Radio Sawa and Al-Hurra television put us on a better footing.

A recent CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll found that 74 percent of Iraqis polled watch Al-Iraqiya, considerably more than watch Al-Jazeera (27 percent). The two Arabic-language regional broadcasting stations created by the independent U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors are also showing promise -- Radio Sawa, which has a listenership in the 20-40 percent range in many Arab communities; and Al-Hurra TV, which broadcasts by satellite 24/7 to over 20 Middle East countries, including Iraq. A special Iraqi programming stream has been developed that is now being broadcast into Iraq via terrestrial means as well.

As President Bush said on May 24, "Iraqis will write their own history and find their own way." The measure of success will not be how much they like us, but what kind of new Iraq takes its place in the community of nations.

The bottom line in judging the effectiveness of our "message," therefore, is that we believe the Iraqi people have the same objective we have -- a democratic future. Their preference to see occupation end and self-rule begin is natural -- and we share it. There are those who reject this democratic future, but they are enemies of the Iraqi people, not just enemies of the Coalition.

We also know that all of Iraq's moderate leaders, in the Interim Government as well as in the Governing Council before it, want the Coalition to remain to complete the task of helping the new Iraq get on its feet. This wish is clearly stated in both the Transitional Administrative Law and in the letter of Prime Minister Dr. Ayad Allawi to the UN Security Council on June 5, blessed by the international community in UN Security Council Resolution 1546 a few days later.

Question #6: To what extent has the United States government succeeded in building Iraqi confidence in, and cooperation with Coalition efforts to create social cohesion, democratic governance, respect for human rights, and economic well being in Iraq?

The answer to this question is already embodied in several of the answers provided above. It is also expressed clearly in the categorical statement of Iraq's new leaders -- President al-Yawer, Prime Minister Allawi, and others -- that the Coalition's continued support is needed and wanted.

The June 30 transfer of sovereign authority will be, we are confident, the setback for the extremists that Zarqawi fears. Even more so, the emergence of an elected Iraqi government at the beginning of next year. Legitimacy, as I stated, is our strongest weapon against the extremists.

The Iraqi people know this.

The Transitional Administrative Law, as noted earlier, represents an historic consensus among Iraqis on democratic principles and human rights. The TAL remains the guiding document for the next phase. It is the Iraqis' great achievement.

The United States, in its turn, has accomplished something of historic importance in the liberation of Iraq. We should never forget this. The success of democratic Iraq will have wider ramifications in the Middle East, as President Bush has declared. Thus, this is an enterprise of great moral as well as strategic significance.

It is a vital national commitment that we as a nation need to fulfill. Congress and the President, I am confident, are united in this task. And we will prevail.

Thank you.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you very much. I appreciate it, Mr. Secretary. General Sharp, welcome.

General SHARP. Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to address you on this important subject today.

Today, Iraqi security personnel, the United States, and 31 Coalition partners are working together to secure, protect, and establish peace and justice for all Iraqi citizens so that they may enjoy a future of their own choosing. Establishment of a safe and secure environment is the single most important element for improved Iraqi quality of life because it enables relief efforts, a free political process, economic prosperity, and social opportunity.

And Iraqi people are stepping forward. More than 220,000 Iraqi citizens have taken positions in the various components of the Iraqi security forces. Multinational personnel have made significant progress in recruiting, training, and equipping Iraqi security forces. This includes about 90,000 in the Iraqi police service, 18,000 in the department of border enforcement, 35,000 in the Iraqi civil defense corps, 6,000 in the Iraqi armed forces, and 74,000 in the facilities protection. Based upon the current training and equipping schedules, we anticipate that the department of border enforcement, the Iraqi civil defense corps, and the facilities protection service will be fully trained and equipped by September of this year, the Iraqi armed forces by December 2004, and the Iraqi police by June 2005. By the end of this month, over $3 billion will have been committed to the Iraqi security forces equipping, infrastructure, and training.

By June 30, the United States and its Coalition partners will transition control to a fully sovereign Iraqi Interim Government. Our responsibilities will not end with the June 30 transition. Multinational forces will remain in Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi people and with the authorization of the United Nations after the Iraqi Interim Government assumes full responsibilities. These forces, and increasingly Iraqi forces, will continue to conduct offensive operations to defeat any remaining anti-Iraqi forces and neutralize destabilizing influences in Iraq in order to create a secure environment in which the Iraqi people can build their own future. They will also continue to organize, train, equip, mentor, and certify credible and capable Iraqi security forces in order to continue the transition of responsibility for security from multinational forces to Iraqi forces. Concurrently, Iraqi and multinational forces will continue to conduct stability operations to support the evolving Iraqi government, the restoration of essential services, and economic development. All multinational forces will work in close coordination and consultation with the Iraqi government at all levels.

Sir, if I may divert from my written statement for 1 second. The discussion that we had earlier about the willingness to become full partners in this effort after June 30, I would like just to read very briefly from the letter that Secretary Powell sent to the U.N. Security Council which lays out exactly how we will be partners in doing that. He stated in that letter, and we fully support this, "Development of an effective and cooperative security partnership between the multinational force and the sovereign government of Iraq is critical to the stability of Iraq. The commander of the multinational force will work in partnership with the sovereign govern-

ment of Iraq to help improve security while recognizing and respecting its sovereignty." And then it goes on to talk to the mechanisms by which we will do that coordination and cooperation.

I am confident that through this partnership we—the Iraqis, the Coalition, and the United States Armed Forces—will succeed in establishing a safe and secure environment in Iraq. Sir, I am happy to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Sharp follows:]

"Iraq: Winning the Hearts and Minds"

Opening Statement of
LTG Walter L. Sharp
Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, The Joint Staff
before the
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations
of the
House Government Reform Committee
Tuesday, June 15, 2004

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Kucinich, Members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to address Iraqi confidence and cooperation.

Today, Iraqi security personnel, the United States, and thirty-one Coalition partners are working together to secure, protect, and establish peace and justice for all Iraqi citizens so they may enjoy a future of their own choosing. Establishment of a safe and secure environment is the single most important element for improved Iraqi quality of life because it enables relief efforts, a free political process, economic prosperity, and social opportunity.

Multinational military personnel have made significant progress in recruiting, training and equipping Iraqi security forces. More than 220,000 Iraqi citizens have taken positions in the various components of the Iraqi security forces. This includes 90,000 in the Iraqi Police Service, 18,000 in the Department of Border Enforcement, 35,000 in the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, 6,000 in the Iraqi Armed Forces, and 74,000 in the Facilities Protection

Service. Based on current training and equipping schedules, we anticipate that the Department of Border Enforcement, the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps and the Facilities Protection Service will be fully trained and equipped by September 2004, the Iraqi Armed Forces by December 2004, and the Iraqi Police by June 2005.

By 30 June, the United States and its Coalition partners will transition control of Iraq to a fully sovereign Iraqi Interim Government. Our responsibilities will not end with the 30 June transition. Multinational forces will remain in Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi people and with the authorization of the United Nations after the Iraqi Interim Government assumes its leadership responsibilities. These forces will continue to conduct offensive operations to defeat remaining anti-coalition forces and neutralize destabilizing influences in Iraq in order to create a secure environment in which the Iraqi people can build their own future. They will also continue current efforts to organize, train, equip, mentor, and certify credible and capable Iraqi security forces in order to continue the transition of responsibility for security from multinational forces to Iraqi forces. Concurrently, multinational forces will continue to conduct stability operations to support the evolving Iraqi government, the restoration of essential services, and economic development. United States military forces will remain under the operational control of the combatant commander throughout their tenure in Iraq. All multinational forces will work in close consultation and coordination with the Iraqi government at all levels.

I am confident that through this partnership, we--the Iraqis, the Coalition, and the U.S. Armed Forces, will succeed in establishing a safe and secure environment in Iraq. I will be happy to take your questions.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. I am going to do this, if you do not mind, Mr. West, because I do not want to rush your statement, and Ambassador Schlicher, I hope we are not letting you go to the White House so you can go to the White House picnic. I hope there is more substance.

Ambassador SCHLICHER. It is real work.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. I will be there later so I will check you out.

Ambassador, let me ask you three questions, because we are going to go vote and you will not be here when we get back. I want to know what was the worst decision we made. I want to know the best decision. And I want to know what is the most important thing we must do in the year to come. So I want to know the worst decision, the best decision, and what is the most important thing you think we have to remember in terms of succeeding, and, obviously, succeeding is also winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. Can you give me an answer to those questions?

Ambassador SCHLICHER. Yes, sir. Let me just take a stab at it, please. Let me put it in brief context of the big difficulty that we faced as a Coalition on liberating Iraq and inheriting the government——

Mr. SHAYS. Do me a favor—we have a vote and I only have about 3 minutes—just give me the answer, and then if you want to qualify it. In other words, I do not want to be unfair to you, but what is the decision that you think we should regret the most, the best, and then if we have time I will let you qualify them, OK?

Ambassador SCHLICHER. Yes, sir. Based on my 6 months experience in Iraq where my job was actually to talk to Iraqis and measure their reactions to things, I think that we could have done a much better job at the beginning in making clear that our attitude toward de-Baathification needed to be focused on criminal behavior and not on mere membership.

Mr. SHAYS. The bad guys.

Ambassador SCHLICHER. Yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. What is the best decision we made?

Ambassador SCHLICHER. I think the best decision that we have made is a quick transfer to Iraqi sovereignty, the quickest possible one, which is what we are approaching on June 30. And I think that is the point on which Ambassador Rahim and I converge.

I think the most important thing as we move forward is making sure that we use these mechanisms that are being set up that General Sharp described, make sure that our coordination with the Iraqi government is as close as it possibly can be and that the mechanisms on the security side that the General laid out are also complemented on the economic side with donor mechanisms. That is what we really have to get right.

And my apologies to Mr. Rodman, General Sharp, and Mr. West.

Mr. SHAYS. The subcommittee will stand in recess while we go vote.

[Recess.]

Mr. SHAYS. This hearing is called to order.

You have the floor, Mr. West.

Mr. WEST. Chairman Shays, we thank you very much for this opportunity to discuss reconstruction programs, lessons learned, and how we can look forward. I have submitted my written testimony

that describes areas of infrastructure, governance, economic growth, and health and education wherein we have been active in cooperation with the CPA. I will not go into any detail on that. I would like to look forward.

Looking at the eyes of the Interim Government come July 1st, I would propose that what they look out and see, what they see as their challenges, are our challenges. They will know that Saddam basically controlled the country by severely limiting the numbers and the types of institutions, political and social, that existed in that country in exerting total control through the Baathist Party, the military, and the police. That is not a model that is going to be available or attractive to them on how they exert authority. But the means by which they can exert authority to both secure the country and to implement the many great ideas they will have is really the challenge that we face—how does a new government exert its authority over the country?

I would say, in many senses, the concept of winning individual hearts and minds really will not be the challenge that the Governor, nor we, face. We have seen many cases. It is not a black and white situation. I will give you an example. We were working with the First Calvary in Sadr City and Al-Rasheed. You will see youths who are out in the day helping clean up garbage and improve their neighborhoods and at night it will be the same people who are out shooting at our troops. If you ask them are they grateful for the assistance, they will say yes. It is confusing. You will see parents who are thrilled that they have power and electricity and they will be furious because their daughter comes homes and says I cannot go to school today, it is unsafe to go through the area. So it is a mixed picture and I do not think it is going to clear. And I do not know that it is even the issue. I think the issue will be to what extent you can, as I say, really govern a country.

I would just like to go over some of the areas. In the area of governance, a tremendous amount of initiative has been done, a lot of it I believe under-appreciated, by the work of the CPA and the military and others at the local and provincial levels—development of village councils, local councils, district councils, provincial councils. Democracy is a bottoms up affair. A lot of that initiative has really formed what I believe is the future of Iraq, not so much the central government but the structure of a new society from the bottom up. That initiative has to be preserved and developed further. You see the councils are the first people who are being targeted in many of these towns and villages because they are the threats to those who are opposed to democracy. We cannot let that fail. That is a very important part of the new institution of Iraq.

Other areas. Political party development. It is going to be very key to how you develop the ability to exert your authority or to have dialog with those who control the population.

Civil society. The ability to foster groups who are able to bring together common and differing opinions throughout the country. We have seen cases of handicapped societies, of women's groups, of college students, the Iraqis are thrilled to have the freedom to get together and talk to each other openly without fear. And that is a very important new emphasis that we should build on in Iraq.

The ability to build again the police and the military. Not just the issue of actually the force itself, but the fact that they are strong and potential institutions that will have a major impact on stabilizing Iraq.

Tribal leaders and religious leaders. Their role in the political development. This has been a lot of the focus of people on the ground already. Those are key areas or institutions, if you will, to be built on.

In areas like infrastructure, the infrastructure itself is important, but increasingly the ability for the ministries, the contractors, local communities to maintain the institutions surrounding the development of services, both economic services and others.

Education. Schools and universities we consider very important. Not only are they institutions that help influence and shape attitudes, they are also just physically places to get youths off the street and occupied for a day and believing they have a future.

Similarly in the economic growth area, jobs themselves are important, but also there are many institutions that go along in this area, whether they are banks, larger businesses, different chambers of commerce, ways to represent private sector interests.

So we are really looking ourselves at ways that we can build into our programs more of a focus on how the Iraqis implement their good ideas, how they do their own security. We believe these are going to be done largely through organizations and institutions that are going to need to be a focus in the future. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. West follows:]

Testimony of Gordon West
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Asia and the Near East
United States Agency for International Development
Before the
Subcommittee on National Security,
Emerging Threats, and International Relations
House Committee on Government Reform
June 15, 2004

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this hearing to discuss the overall economy, efficiency and management of government operations and activities in Iraq.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has been carrying out activities, in support of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), aimed at building a local commitment to democracy and providing economic opportunity for Iraqis.

USAID's role within the CPA umbrella has concentrated on four areas:

Infrastructure repair: USAID is working primarily in the power, water and transportation sectors. These activities have ranged from working with the Army Corps of Engineers and our contractors on large water and electricity projects to working with civil affairs troops and through our own community based program to carry out smaller community improvement projects. All these activities not only provide critical services expected by the communities, they also generate employment -- the lack of which is a key factor in this unrest.

Some of our key accomplishments in this area are:

- Carried out $200 million worth of water and sanitation projects that benefit some 14.5m Iraqis;
- Provided emergency repair and on-going rehabilitation at eight electrical power generation plants throughout the country;
- Providing and installing four new power generating units for an increase of over 1,200 megawatts of electricity;
- Rehabilitated three key bridges critical to the flow of passengers and good throughout Iraq;
- Reopened the seaport of Umm Qasr and dredged the port to an average depth of 12.5 meters;
- Rehabilitated the Basrah and Baghdad airports;
- Restored international calling service and activated more than 140,000 subscriber lines in Baghdad.

Governance: USAID has worked with the Department of State and CPA to reform Iraqi governance at all levels: national, governorate, and local. We have supported the introduction of viable, legitimate governorate and city governments that represent their constituents. We have also helped establish and strengthen civil society organizations that give voice to a broad spectrum of Iraqi citizens, both male and female. Our technical assistance is also providing important inputs into the political transition at the national level. If the average Iraqi is to accept governance, he or she must be convinced that the government, on all levels, is concerned with and responsive to their needs. Our inputs focus on providing mechanisms for peaceful dialogue and transparent, efficient governance.

Some of our accomplishments in the governance area are:

- Helped to establish and strengthen 16 governorate councils, 91 district councils, 194 city or sub-district councils and 445 neighborhood councils;
- Provided $2.4 million for the implementation of CPA's nation-wide Civic Education Program;
- Conducted over 10,000 democracy Dialogue Activities throughout Iraq;
- Rehabilitated nine government ministries, Baghdad's mayoral buildings, the headquarters of nine Baghdad municipalities and urban water and electric authorities;
- Provided 40 directorates and agencies with enough furniture, equipment and office supplies to enable them to return to service;
- Assisted local governments in budget formulation;
- Established more than 650 community associations in 17 governorates as part of a campaign developing grassroots democracy and empowerment.

Economic Growth: The development of an efficient, responsive economy is a highly complex undertaking. Consequently, USAID is providing a wide variety of assistance to address macroeconomic issues, government finance, banking, private sector development, trade, rural economics and food security. Some of these activities were carried out in conjunction with the Departments of State and Treasury. A strong, growing economy is the *sine qua non* to help insure employment so critical to stability, as well as to develop economic linkages with other countries.

Some of our accomplishments are:

- Implementing activities with the CPA to reform Iraq's currency, state owned enterprises, small businesses, banking system, taxations system, budgeting and utility administration.
- Facilitated the Central Bank program to exchange new dinars for old; there are currently 4.62 trillion dinars in circulation.
- Assisted with a $21 m micro-credit program to generate employment and small businesses.
- Supported a National Employment Program which created more that 77,000 public works jobs.
- Developed a bank-to-bank payment system that allowed 80 banks to resume business by October 2003.

- Supported the Iraqi initiative to revitalize agriculture production and to stimulate income and employment generation.

Education and Health: Concomitant to economic growth is the need for a healthy and well educated populace. USAID's program in these areas provides for better trained primary and secondary school teachers, as well as better equipped schools. We are also supporting university partnerships so that the once vaunted Iraqi institutions of higher education can again provide a quality education for their graduates to assure the country a pool of young people able to lead it successfully into the future. Our health program has equipped clinics, trained health care workers and, in conjunction with UNICEF, provided crucial vaccines to millions of Iraqi children.

Some of our accomplishments:

- Vaccinated 5 million children through a monthly national immunization campaign in partnership with the Ministry of Health and UNICEF.
- Equipped 600 facilities in seven governorates to enable them to provide essential primary health care services.
- Trained 750 trainers who, in turn trained, 2,500 primary healthcare providers in maternal and child health services.
- Distributed high-protein biscuits to more than 240,000 children and pregnant and nursing mothers.
- Renovated 2,358 schools nation wide.
- Distributed 1.5 million secondary school student kits; 808,000 primary school student kits and 81,735 primary school teacher kits.
- Printed and distributes 8.7 million revised math and science textbooks in partnership wit the Ministry of Education and UNESCO.
- Trained 860 secondary school master trainers, who, in turn, trained 31,772 secondary school teachers.
- Awarded five grants, totaling 20.7 m to establish partnerships between American and Iraqi universities.

USAID is working closely with the Interim Iraqi Government and Iraqi civil society to jointly identify and address the obstacles that remain in the path to a more secure and democratic future. All of our work has a strong grass roots focus. The old saying that "all politics is local" is true. Be it health, education, infrastructure or democracy/rule of law, the GOI and those involved in development in Iraq must be cognizant of and responsive to the needs and concerns of the Iraqi people. When we succeed in that goal, we will be well on the way to reaching a stable and peaceful Iraq.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you very much, Mr. West.

What I would like is when I ask a question of any one of you, I want any of you to feel you can jump in. I would love a dialog like that. Just for continuity's sake, I would like to ask you the same question that I asked Ambassador Schlicher; and that is, I want to know the worst decision we made, and you do not need to give it too much context, the best decision, and the most important thing we must do in the year to come.

Mr. RODMAN. I will volunteer. For the best and the worst, I would really cite one decision that was made that had a bad and positive implication, and that is the way the war was fought. We made a decision to emphasize speed rather than mass. It guaranteed the quickness of the result, the thoroughness of the defeat of Saddam. It helped us avoid a lot of big disasters that we do not have to worry about—destruction of the oil fields, a protracted conflict that could have destabilized other countries. But the downside was that regime collapsed so quickly and so thoroughly that it left a vacuum that may have been more than we anticipated. Maybe there is a lesson here about the nature of totalitarian regimes. What we have been struggling with ever since then is to fill that vacuum. Obviously, we want new Iraq institutions to fill that vacuum. That is precisely what we are doing and what we have to do.

Mr. SHAYS. I am not going to ask you to answer it now, but was it a vacuum created because we destroyed their military, or was it because after destroying it, we said we were not even willing to reestablish a viable military? But I do not want you to answer that yet. Tell me the best decision.

Mr. RODMAN. Well, it is the same one. I think it was the right way to fight the war. And again, what we need to do now——

Mr. SHAYS. You sound like Alan Greenspan here. The best decision was also the worst decision. But I get you. I understand. What do we need to do?

Mr. RODMAN. I think we need to continue the political process. I would put the priority on that as the key to our strategy.

Mr. SHAYS. Can you define "political process?"

Mr. RODMAN. Helping the Iraqis build their institutions, have those institutions get roots in the society. In other words, June 30th is crucial.

Mr. SHAYS. I would say in response to that point that, and Mr. West, I think you rightfully point out, I was reading in my briefing that almost 90 percent of the Iraqi communities have some kind of council representation. Is that an accurate number, somewhere in that range?

Mr. RODMAN. Almost all have elected municipal councils.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. Exactly. But we are into the 90 percentile. I think that is something I had not paid enough attention to. I think that is quite impressive. And I know that a lot of that was done through the military as well as CPA.

General, the worst, the best?

General SHARP. Yes, sir. The decision, it was not really a decision, but how we trained the Iraqi police and the security forces. I think, as General Eaton has said, the concentration on leadership we needed to focus on earlier than we did. And we have made those changes now. We have established new academies that are working

at the mid-level and the upper-level leadership of the police, the ICDC, and the Iraqi army in order for them, as we start this partnership, to be able to take leadership roles within Iraq to be able to establish a secure environment.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me be clear what you are saying. You are saying one of the worst decisions was in the beginning how we trained the Iraqi policy and the quality of the people we were getting.

General SHARP. I will not say quality of people. I will say that we worked very hard to bring numbers in, quantity in, very quickly, and you saw those numbers grow very quickly. We started training both in the unit level with a short 3-week course, and then a longer 8-week course. But the concentration was on the basic level police skills, not on the mid-level managers or the district chiefs that could take responsibilities themselves.

Mr. SHAYS. Best decision?

General SHARP. I think the best decision continues to be the support of the commanders that we have over in Iraq. I have made several trips over also, and I think you would agree, if you ask any commander on the ground, at any level, he is getting the full support of the Department of Defense, of the U.S. Government, and Congress. There is not a thing that our commanders over there have asked for that we have not worked tirelessly, you have not worked tirelessly, in order to be able to get it to them.

And then the most important thing I think is the partnership. We have started this partnership with the Iraqis. It is not as if on June 30 we are standing up something new. We have been doing joint patrols with Iraqis within the police, within the ICDC, and within the armed forces. But we will go to a new level come June 30. The mechanisms, the coordination mechanisms that we will establish based upon the U.N. Security Council resolution and the letters that are attached to that to have full partnership, to share intelligence even better than what we are doing now, to be able to work on unity of command arrangements to be able to get after the security issues, is the most important thing that we get right and make that a full partnership.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. West?

Mr. WEST. In terms of reconstruction, I guess if I would look back and try and change one thing, I would have hoped that as a government we would have had developed more quickly a unique and a more unencumbered approach to going at reconstruction. We have tried to use existing structures of development, if you will, in very extraordinary situations and I am not so sure we really had all the tools nor the risk-adverse nature to do the things that might have worked best—of getting moneys directly to Iraqi organizations, of doing more in business and job creation, or governance that did not come out of the standard toolbox. So, with hindsight, I would have liked to see a more robust and very specific set of tools to take on this unique situation.

Mr. SHAYS. Does that mean you would have wanted to see more NGO's, like Save the Children, Mercy Corps, and others?

Mr. WEST. I would have thought that would have been a great way to go. There are those things we can do right now. I am thinking more, for instance, when the Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union came on the scene in development terms, we had

very, very specific legislation and ideas and concepts and were unfettered by a lot of the typical bureaucracy, if you will, to get the job done. And I think this is equally important and I would have liked to see very, very new ways of doing business and out of the box thinking that perhaps we did not do in this case.

Mr. SHAYS. General Patreaus, one of the many generals who did this, he did not wait for CPA. He had some money they found and they just went right into it.

Mr. WEST. It is a little easier to do when you are not dealing with appropriated funds.

Mr. SHAYS. Yes. But next door, we had a hearing on how we were appropriating funds and the potential speed that superseded costs, so costs became very high, and so on. I mean, we have some problems there as well that we are dealing with.

What is the best decision we made?

Mr. WEST. I think the construct in the areas of infrastructure. I think a lot of what happened we are going to see the benefits of in terms of the development of the Iraqi capacity in contracting, in employment generation. I believe there has been a very solid basis in the infrastructure area. Perhaps it has overshadowed some of the other areas, but I think there is a very solid——

Mr. SHAYS. I am kind of smiling because the implication is that it is kind of that the new Iraqi government may get credit for the infrastructure, the year of trial and tribulation we have gone through. And maybe that is kind of a good thing. But the implication is you think we have a pretty good foundation of infrastructure and they can build on it.

Mr. WEST. Absolutely.

Mr. SHAYS. The thing that it is most important for us to do, Mr. West?

Mr. WEST. Just repeating what I was emphasizing before, I believe a focus on Iraqi capacity particularly in an institutional sense.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Rodman, I had asked a question that I did not let you answer earlier. Could you just refresh me on your point.

Mr. RODMAN. The best and the worst?

Mr. SHAYS. Yes.

Mr. RODMAN. It was the way we fought the war. It had I think tremendous advantages and yet the vacuum——

Mr. SHAYS. That is it, the vacuum.

Mr. RODMAN. The army dissolved itself; I would make that point. More than that we made a decision, these institutions collapsed and we did not find an army that reported to duty to take on new assignments from us. It melted away and we were forced to reconstitute these institutions.

Mr. SHAYS. With all due respect though, that is the point I think, thank you for refreshing me, we did not invite them to come back. We did not say you have laid down your arms, you have gone, come back now and let us get you reestablished under new leadership or something. We did not do that.

Mr. RODMAN. Well, we reconstituted. We started building a new army and new police forces. In that process we have hired a lot of the same people who had that experience. On salaries we reversed ourselves. I think we made a mistake at the beginning to just leave

these people alone. After a while we realized that these people deserved some help, so we reversed course.

Mr. SHAYS. I would have thought that one of you would have said the worst decision we made was not to establish security early on. Allowing some Iraqis, and I want to say "some," Iraqis to brutalize their country and other Iraqis saw us stand and allow that to happen. I would have thought one of you might have said that. Does that rank up pretty high? I mean it was a policy decision to not have our military engage the looters.

General SHARP. When we moved in to establish a secure and safe environment in Iraq it was our responsibility to go after, and what we focused on was, the people at the time that were attacking us. As you will recall, the Fedayeen, the Saddam folks, were continuing to attack us and that is what our emphasis was to establish security based upon the folks that were attacking us.

Mr. SHAYS. But we knew, and it had been predicted, that there would be a lot of looting. So are you defending the decision not to protect the infrastructures and allow the looting to go forward?

General SHARP. I think as our capabilities allowed us, we stopped that looting.

Mr. SHAYS. So you think we did not have the capability to prevent the looting?

General SHARP. I think initially, as we moved in, as you recall, we moved in so quickly as we went throughout the country to be able to do that, where we saw looting we stopped it as quickly as we could.

Mr. SHAYS. There was implication that the Turkish government did not fully engage their legislative body to allow us to come in from the North because of Turkey's interest in pleasing the French and becoming part of the European Union. What was the significance of our not being able to come in? And the reason I am asking is I have been told by some military folks that had we been able to come from all directions we might have been able to capture some people instead of allowing them to kind of just go into the woodwork.

General SHARP. The military significance was that we had to adjust the plan. I think that General Franks did that very quickly to be able to move more in toward the South. Would we have liked to have been able to come in on all fronts? Absolutely.

Mr. SHAYS. I have told every one of my constituents that on a scale of 1 to 10, the removal of the regime was an 11. So I am not being critical of this amazing and very quick action which had its pluses and minuses. But what I have been told, and if it is not a valid argument I want to get it out of my mind, I was told that had we been able to come from all directions, we might have been able to capture some of the armies before they just went into the woodwork. If you do not think that is true—I do not want to put words in your mouth.

General SHARP. Sir, I do not believe that is true. I believe that as they saw how quickly we moved, they just completely dissolved. And you have to remember, just because we could not come in from Turkey, there were attacks by air across the country that did a lot of destruction to the armies both in the North and up Northeast of Baghdad. When we saw them move we were able to quickly de-

stroy them by air. So I think that immediate mass effect across the country dissolved them very quickly. If there would have been another front to be able to even more quickly do that, I think we would have had the same effect.

Mr. SHAYS. All right. A former U.S. advisor in Baghdad, now with Stanford University, has said, "If you don't have security in Iraq, you don't have anything. We have to throw everything we have, everything, into getting the new Iraqi forces operating effectively." First, I took the position, and I was thinking later that I really did not have the ability to agree or disagree with it, and that was the issue of how many troops we needed. And the argument that you seem to be implying as well is we did not have the forces to protect the infrastructure.

General SHARP. Well, I think we did protect a lot of the infrastructure. There were not any oil fields that were destroyed, or very, very few that were destroyed. We did not have massive refugee problems as we went throughout the country. Again, as Mr. Rodman laid out, I think the forces that we had we concentrated to move very quickly to Baghdad and it caused the insurgents to go into the woodwork and then came back out, and that is the issue we are dealing with now. So I would disagree that we did not have enough forces to be able to do it. I mean, how many days did it take us to topple the regime and to be able to move to Baghdad? Unheard of in history. We had the forces both on the land and in the air to be able to do the mission that was given to General Franks.

Mr. SHAYS. It is funny, I did not think we would go down this road because I did not think there would be much disagreement on this. I would like to be just a little more clear. I was in Basra. I have been in Baghdad. I have seen the hospitals without not just the windows, without the frames, without the doors, without anything in them. There was just total looting and destruction of things that Iraqis would have considered precious to them, and yet someone looted them. And I have seen pictures of American soldiers standing by as these looters went in. So what I am having a hard time understanding is why you feel that we did provide security. There is not an Iraqi I know who thinks that security was provided. And it either was a decision not to provide it, or it was a decision that we were not capable of providing it. But you are the first person I have spoken to, General, that has suggested that this was not a bad thing, that we protected what we had to protect. So I just have to say that to you. And I am happy to have you make a comment.

General SHARP. When we moved in and attacked and took out the regime, you obviously make decisions on what you do first in order to be able to accomplish your objectives. The phasing of the attack allowed us to move very quickly to Baghdad so that we could take the regime down, as we did. Simultaneously across the country with air attacks and ground attacks, we were able to take out their combat force so that we were able to topple the regime very quickly. That was the first phase.

As we moved into the cities then, because of that rapid movement up North toward Baghdad, as we moved into the cities the first several days after the war, we did not have forces that were

throughout the country that could stop all of the looting. But again I would say that I think the ability to be able to move quickly to be able to take down the regime saved United States, Coalition, and Iraqi lives because it ended the major combat operations very quickly. After that was established, we moved into the different regions that we are in right now and worked very closely to try to stop any of the looting at that time. It was a matter of phasing.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. I will leave it at this. I am the last one who should judge what your capabilities are, and I knew that you tried to do everything you were capable of. It just seems to me that we were not capable of having that security and that it was very costly in that it sent a message, it seemed to me, as I have been there these various times and have heard comments from so many Iraqis, that we were either incapable or chose not to. In either case, it was very unsettling to the Iraqis. And I think what I am hearing you say, General, is that because it was so quick, we could not have done anything different about it. I think that is your message to me.

I would love, Mr. Rodman, if you have comment in that regard. I wanted to address the same question to you about "If you do not have security in Iraq, you do not have anything. We have to throw everything we have, everything, into getting new Iraqi forces operating effectively."

Mr. RODMAN. My judgment of the military circumstances at the end of the war, my recollections, are the same as General Sharp's. We put a premium on speed and I think that saved lives. If we had done it differently and blanketed the country with lots of troops, it would have been a different kind of war and we would have paid the price in other ways.

The quote you read I totally agree with. Security is the precondition for everything else. It is a vicious circle right now. It is impeding the economic reconstruction that has so much to do with the Iraqi people's well-being and sense of well-being. So that is a priority. And as your quote said, we want to train and prepare and equip Iraqis to fill that vacuum and build those institutions.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. Let me just quickly ask all of you, why in your view did the U.S. authorities disband the Iraqi military? And I think from your standpoint, General, you think they did not disband it, they just disappeared. But we made a decision to disband it. That was a decision. We made a decision to disband the government, the army, and the police. My question to you is, why do you think the authorities decided to disband the Iraqi military?

Let us start with you, Mr. Rodman.

Mr. RODMAN. As I said, we found nothing there when we got there—no institution that we could recover, retrain, reassign. The units melted away. The officer corps, we were not sure who was reliable. And I think CPA made a decision to build a new army and a new police. With respect to the police, I have heard an additional factor, which is that the Iraqi police in the old days had a different approach to policing—they were much better at knocking down doors in the middle of the night than they were about patrolling the neighborhood. So, too, we really had to rebuild from the ground up. There were tradeoffs. We did hire a lot of people, we put a premium on numbers. We have had to make sure the training and

equipping caught up with their numbers. But we felt we did not have a lot of choice.

In addition, there is a political reason. The Iraqi people hated that regime. And anything that smacked of, well, we are going in there, we are just going to take the institutions, particularly the security institutions, as they are and replace a few people at the top—that would have had very negative political ramifications among the Shiites, the Kurds. So for that reason too, we wanted to reassure the Iraqis that the old regime was dead and that something new was about to be built. And, unfortunately, that takes time.

Mr. SHAYS. General, do you want to speak to this?

General SHARP. I just would like to add to what Mr. Rodman said as far as the army goes. When you think of the old Iraqi army, you cannot think of a Western army or an army like ours. It is absolutely, as you know, sir, totally different, where the officer corps almost across the board was corrupt and punished physically many times the enlisted soldiers underneath them. Virtually no non-commissioned officer corps whatsoever. It was an army of a dictator and that permeated throughout the army. And our belief at the time was a lot of it disintegrated because when the recruits that were forced into the army saw the opportunity to run home, they took the opportunity to run home. And to think we would be able to pull those back together as a unit, it would be very difficult when it would be asking them to come back to an institution that they only knew of as one that was corrupt, that they did not get paid correctly, they were forced to servitude in that organization. So the tactic that we took, and continue to take, is to start from the ground level, put a lot of money, a lot of effort into building up the Iraqi security forces with professionally trained individuals, as we have been doing really since last summer.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. West, I know it is a little out of your territory, but you do a lot of thinking about this in your work. So the question about the disbanding the army, the police, and the government.

Mr. WEST. I am actually going to take a bye on that one. I will just say that I think security, you cannot agree any more, security is the real issue. And just to note, security is more than just standing up a military and a police force. You cannot have enough police and military to secure every place, every time, if there is the intent within the society to undermine the new government. It is going to take a lot more in terms of earning the respect and the commitment of the people to make Iraq work. That is also part of this lessons learned: How do you build in the issues of security into the breadth of the programs of reconstruction, not just the police and the military, because all sorts of factors are going to affect the security and the ability to govern.

Mr. SHAYS. Would you speak to the issue of CPA's efforts to distribute aid and development funds, rebuild infrastructure, and create a stable economy generating jobs for Iraqis. There has been concern that the money has not gone out as quickly, that there have been restraints there that have hampered our effort to succeed.

Mr. WEST. There has been a lot of money spent and a lot of money spent well I believe in Iraq. I am not so sure that the amount of funds that has gone out the door is a measure of success or failure. I think in a fiscal sense, in a development sense, it is just amazing what CPA, military, USAID, and other organizations have done there. I think there really are a different set of issues and there are long lines of other questions in terms of institutions—the military, the lack of police, other issues. I do not think it is an issue of doing things more. Eighteen billion dollars is a mind-boggling number to me in terms of development in anyplace we have ever worked. The fact that it is taking perhaps a longer time to spend that amount of money to me has as many up sides as it does down sides. So I am not of the opinion that slowness in reconstruction has really been one of the major issues. As a matter of fact, I believe it is just amazing what the U.S. Government, broadly, has achieved in Iraq.

Mr. SHAYS. Before I go to the next panel, I would love each of you to address the issue of your sense of the success or failure of this new government. In other words, there was a lot of criticism that we were moving too quickly. I sense you all agree that this makes sense. Second, are you optimistic, moderately optimistic, not quite sure, want to wait 2 months to see what is going to happen? But if you had to make some predictions, tell me how you think this new government is going to work out.

Mr. RODMAN. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I think the sooner the better, for reasons I mentioned before. It is deadly for us to be in the position of an occupier, and the sooner we can shed that mantle and put an Iraqi face on events the better off we are and the better that helps us marginalize the extremists and empower the good people of Iraq.

Second, I think this is a superb group of people. It is a balanced ticket. These are representatives of all the moderate forces, all the regions, the ethnic groups, tribal groups. It is a well-constructed, broadly representative group of people. These are the leaders of moderate Iraq and I think they represent the majority. And even better, I am confident that they are going to be able to work together. And I agree with Ambassador Al-Rahim that the Governing Council was a success. It, too, was a balanced ticket. It included every group and they stuck together remarkably well in the face of repeated provocations and attempts by the terrorists to foment civil war. Those attempts failed. And so here too you see the Kurds, the Shiites, the Sunni working together. There are disagreements. The Kurds are making some demands. But this is political bargaining. This is politics. And they have resolved similar disputes over the past year with great political skill. The Iraqis are learning the arts of compromise and co-existence.

This group of people includes a lot of talented people, people we were able to see over the course of a year. We could judge who was good, who was not so good. So we had that year of experience in helping to pick the people and a very intensive consultation process that Ambassador Brahimi participated in, just, again, to see who was broadly representative in the country. So I think it is a good group of people, talented people. They are showing cohesion, political skill. They want us there, so they are going to cooperate with

us in the interests of their own country. We are convinced we can work with them. And we will treat them with the respect due a sovereign country. We will behave differently after June 30th. But this is a group of people that we will be able to work with. We will respect their judgment. We know that they want us there so we think any problems that arise are going to be solvable.

Again, we think the symbolism of this is tremendous. It is Iraqis running their own country. Secretary Powell made a good statement the other day that it puts the terrorists in an impossible position, that they are now attacking their own people, their own country. So I think we are going to be in a better position after June 30.

Mr. SHAYS. I hope we protect them. And I say that because I think of the police officers in Baghdad who were waiting for weapons and they did not have them and the terrorists got in and went from room to room and killed them. It makes you want to weep, because there were some very good officers being trained. Thank you for your comment.

General.

General SHARP. Sir, I am very optimistic, and for several reasons. Let me read one sentence from Prime Minister Allawi's letter to the U.N. Security Council which I think is really indicative of both him and the entire Iraqi Interim Government and the people of Iraq as they move toward free sovereignty.

Mr. SHAYS. Sure.

General SHARP. "Their government," and he is talking about the new Iraqi Interim Government, "is determined to overcome these forces." And he is talking about the forces who would tear down this government and this country as it move to new sovereignty, "and to develop security forces of capable of providing adequate security for the Iraqi people." And everything that Prime Minister Allawi has said, the Minister of Defense has said, the Minister of Interior has said, they have all been very forward leading as to saying this is our job, it is our responsibility. We need you there to help us, but we realize it is our responsibility for security. Sending that signal to the Iraqi people, as you talked earlier, sir, about the leadership need, it is starting from the top. So I am optimistic about that.

No. 2, I am very optimistic with what we are doing because of the lessons learned that we have had on training Iraqi security forces, all five lines. As you know, we have sent back in one of our great officers, Lieutenant General Dave Patreaus, who had great success in the North, he is now in charge, working with the Iraqis to be able to help train and equip all of the five Iraqi security forces again. I think that will pay great dividends as we work in this partnership with Iraqis after June 30.

And I think the last reason that I am optimistic is because of the U.N. Security Council resolution. The U.N. Security Council resolution, as the Ambassador pointed out earlier, invites member states to come in to help across the board in Iraq. It mentions specifically helping to protect the United Nations, critical in their work to be able to get elections moving so that we can go on the timetable. It invites member states to come in and help with security across the board. And this is a hope, but it is a hope that I think our entire

U.S. Government may ask everybody to continue to work hard for, is to talk to Coalition countries and make them understand the importance of helping out with this effort in Iraq because it affects not only Iraq, but the global war on terrorism which none of us can opt out of, and it is critical that we move forward.

So for all of those reasons, I am very optimistic that we are going to move forward and that the Iraqis are going to take charge and move forward with their country.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you.

Mr. West, I just learned to my horror that—I mean, I am grateful that you have a son who is graduating, but I just was told now. So if you need to leave at this moment not to be late, I want you to leave. You are the last person I am going to ask this question and then I will get to the next panel.

Mr. WEST. I will just finish the comment. Basically, I am very optimistic about the capacity, the intelligence, and the commitment of the Iraqis. I think it is going to be messy. I think neither the world nor the Iraqis have particularly the timeframe of what all the patience and hard work and sacrifice it is going to take. So, up close, a lot of times I think it will be disappointing. But the fact is you do not create a great democracy in 12 months or 2 years. It is going to take decades and a lot of hard work. But I am confident that they are on the right track and the pace of change is just mind-boggling there. I think a lot of good things are going to happen and will continue to. So I am an optimist.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. Thank you, Mr. West. And you should get on your way. Tell me you are not being late to your son's graduation or I will feel very guilty. OK.

I just want to ask if any of you want to put anything on the record before we go to the next panel. Anything else on the record? OK. Gentlemen, thank you for your service to our country, and thank you for participating in this hearing. We appreciate it.

And I thank the third, and final, panel for their patience. We have Dr. Samer Shehata, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University; Mr. Richard Galen, former director of Strategic Media, Coalition Provisional Authority, who I think spent 6 months in Iraq; and Ms. Danielle Pletka, vice president, Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute.

If you would please come to the table, I will swear you in.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SHAYS. I have a sense of guilt because I have a good friend, who is in the very middle, Mr. Rich Galen, testifying. So now that I have gotten that out in the open. I thank all of you for being here. I am grateful for all of your work and your contribution to this hearing. Obviously, Mr. Galen, I am very grateful that you would have spent 6 months of your life without your wife and family in Iraq. So thank you for that, and thank you for now allowing us to have the input of your knowledge.

So, Dr. Shehata, we will start with you. Thank you so much.

STATEMENTS OF SAMER S. SHEHATA, CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARAB STUDIES, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY; RICHARD GALEN, FORMER DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC MEDIA, COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY; AND DANIELLE PLETKA, VICE PRESIDENT, FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY STUDIES, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Dr. SHEHATA. Mr. Chairman, I am honored to be here and delighted to be asked to share my views with you on this important topic. My remarks today are only a summary of my longer submitted testimony and address the following questions.

First, what events caused the change in Iraqi attitudes toward the United States and the CPA from the fall of Saddam's regime to the present?

Second, and related this, what factors caused the security environment to deteriorate?

Third, why did Coalition and U.S. Government public diplomacy efforts fail to influence the Iraqi public?

And finally, and I think maybe I will have an opportunity to talk about this in the Q&A because I realize I only have a short period of time here, the overall question of U.S. public diplomacy in Iraq and the Arab world.

First, it is important to accurately understand Iraqi reactions to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the U.S. presence in the country. Although the majority of Iraqis were delighted to be rid of the Hussein regime, and many were and are thankful to the United States for accomplishing this, Iraqis were, from the beginning, ambivalent about a foreign military presence in the country and/or an American role in Iraqi politics. The subsequent course of events—a series of policy mistakes, poor decisions, and the failure to deliver on promises and meet obligations, as well as high expectations on the part of many Iraqis—have led to the current troubling situation with regard to Iraqi hearts and minds.

As a result, it would not be unreasonable to say today that the war for Iraqi hearts and minds might already be lost. I apologize for being direct, but only an honest appraisal of the situation is likely to be of any benefit to you.

The No. 1 issue in Iraq, as we have heard today, immediately after the war in April 2003 continues to be the No. 1 issue in Iraq today, 14 months later—security. Security is key, it is foundational to all public diplomacy efforts as well as post-war reconstruction, investment, commerce, civic involvement, education, and everyday life. Every element of Iraqi society is dependent upon the maintenance of security. And the absence of security acts as a bottleneck on what can be achieved in all of these fields.

The failure to establish basic law and order is the leading criticism Iraqis make of the CPA and the occupation. There is universal agreement across a wide spectrum of Iraqis, from those favorable to the United States to those critical of America, from religious as well as secular elements, from Sunni, Shiite, Kurd, Turkmen, and others, that security is the main problem facing the country. This is demonstrated by both public statements as well as the available polling data.

We must precisely understand what is meant by security however. When Iraqis speak of security they are not primarily referring

to attacks on Coalition forces or the targeting of U.S. soldiers. They are referring to the safety of ordinary Iraqis in the pursuit of their everyday affairs. The failure of the CPA to provide security against car-jackings, kidnappings, armed robbery, abduction, rape, and other kinds of theft and banditry, in addition to the insecurity caused by attacks on Coalition forces, is the primary complaint most Iraqis have of the occupation. Iraqis simply do not feel safe and many, quite possibly the majority, hold the CPA and the United States responsible for this situation. I experienced this myself in Baghdad last summer.

Let me move to the causes of the present security situation briefly. The unwillingness or inability of the Coalition forces to stop the widespread looting following the fall of the regime was a terrible beginning that produced a feeling that no one was in charge, encouraged criminal elements, and made the country's reconstruction exceedingly more difficult as a result of the pillaging of public utilities and ministries. The decisions to disband the Iraqi army and police force after the fall of Baghdad have also contributed to the continuing security problem in multiple ways.

The disbanding of the army and police produced two negative consequences: The country was left without the institutions most capable of maintaining law and order; and second, it produced thousands of disenfranchised men trained in military and security operations now without jobs or income, unsure of their future in the new Iraq, and embittered at the CPA and the United States.

Insufficient troop presence from the beginning coupled with the wrong types of forces, arguably, combat soldiers as opposed to trained peacekeepers and military police, has also negatively impacted the security situation.

Let me move to the second most important factor in determining how Iraqis view the CPA and the United States at the present; and that is the question of public services.

Many in the CPA have worked tirelessly to improve the situation in Iraq and much has been accomplished. But the fact remains that, in terms of public services, the overall picture is mixed. For example, with regard to the telecommunications sector, there actually has been quite a great deal accomplished. There are now today more telephone lines in Iraq than pre-war if we include the newly established cell phone service, for example, although the land line figure is actually still below, slightly, the figure that existed before the war.

Though there have been improvements in telecommunications, electricity remains the greatest obstacle in terms of public service provision. Electricity is the single most important public service that directly affects Iraqi opinion of the U.S. occupation as it has a direct impact on many aspects of daily life. It is crucial for refrigeration, air conditioning, water and sewage, lighting, security, effective hospital operations, commerce, and almost all elements of everyday life in Iraq. Iraq today has still not reached pre-war levels of electricity. For some electricity has become the metric for measuring the CPA's success or lack thereof in terms of delivering public services.

The DOD estimated pre-war levels of electricity production in Iraq to be 4,400 megawatts daily. The CPA estimated the 7-day av-

erage of peak electricity production for the week of May 22–28, 2004, to be 3,946 megawatts—still well below pre-war levels. This corresponds to Iraqi impressions revealed through polling data. In the USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll administered at the end of March and the beginning of April, which included roughly 3,400 Iraqis, 100 percent of Iraqis surveyed said they "go without electricity for long periods of time." This figure is actually up from 99 percent in 2003.

After security, electricity is the second leading criticism of the CPA and the occupation among Iraqis. And was said previously, many Iraqis remain incredulous that the most powerful country in the world cannot restore electricity to pre-war levels in Baghdad and elsewhere in the country 1 year after the war. Some Iraqis, I am sad to say, believe this is a deliberate policy on the part of the United States. I heard this myself when I was in Baghdad last summer. The failure to deliver electricity at pre-war levels 1 year later has negatively affected Iraqi attitudes toward the United States and the CPA.

There is not sufficient time here to compare all the levels of other public services and infrastructure in Iraq before the war and at present. Many however see these as small matters which the United States should have solved by now. Both Iraqis and others do not make evaluations of the present based on the possibility that things might, and probably will, be much better 5 years from now. They base their evaluations on what conditions are like today. Real people experience and think in days and months. Decades and generations are the timeframes of historians and academics.

Let me address another very important topic that has not received much attention today with regard to how Iraqis view the CPA and the occupation, and that is the question of unemployment. Accurate employment figures are difficult to obtain for Iraq. Mass unemployment, however, continues to be a serious problem and should be viewed, in part, as a security issue in addition to its importance for Iraqi public opinion. In addition to fueling frustration and resentment toward the U.S. occupation, large pools of jobless men could become a source of potential recruits for the insurgency.

In March, the CPA estimated unemployment at between 25 and 30 percent, while the Economist Intelligence Unit put the figure closer to 60 percent for the same month. According to the June 9, 2004 Iraq Index, which is put out by the Brookings Institution, unemployment is estimated to be between 28 and 45 percent in Iraq.

Let me talk about how many Iraqis—and I will be brief—experience the U.S. presence. How some Iraqis experience the U.S. military presence in their country has also negatively affected many Iraqi hearts and minds. Stories of house raids in the middle of the night with heavily armed troops kicking down doors, frightening women and children in the process, circulate in Iraq and have embittered Iraqis who experience such raids and who are neither involved in criminal activity or the insurgency, as well as other Iraqis.

Long, seemingly arbitrary detentions with little or no information provided to the detainees' families has been a grievance voiced by many. On some accounts, Iraqis also resent U.S. military con-

voys in urban areas and checkpoints. Civilian casualties, of course, are an altogether different matter.

Iraqis have an overall negative impression of U.S. military forces according to the various polling data. Recent CPA polling found that 80 percent of Iraqis have an unfavorable opinion of U.S. troops. The USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll produced similar findings.

The impact of house raids, wrongful detention, the disproportionate use of force, and civilian casualties goes well beyond the individuals directly involved. Every house raid on law-abiding families turns an entire street against Coalition forces, every wrongful detention creates a neighborhood opposed to the occupation, and every civilian casualty produces an extended family embittered against the United States.

The logic of militarily defeating an insurgency with a foreign army runs counter to the logic of winning the battle for the hearts and minds of the general population. Counter insurgency operations necessarily result in urban fighting, damage to neighborhoods, and civilian casualties. The case of Fallujah is particularly instructive. Because I have run out of time, I am not going to go through the case of Fallujah. But let me just say——

Mr. SHAYS. I will give you an opportunity in the questions.

Dr. SHEHATA. OK. In brief, that from the perspective of the war for the hearts and minds, the events of Fallujah were disastrous, infuriating most Iraqis, galvanizing opinion decidedly against the United States, and inflaming anti-American sentiment. Almost all Iraqis viewed it as unjustified, collective punishment and the disproportionate use of force, including our allies in Iraq like the current Prime Minister as well as Adnan Pechachi and others.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me do this. I know you have more in your statement, but let me get to Mr. Galen.

Dr. SHEHATA. Sure.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Shehata follows:]

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Prepared Testimony before the House Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, Committee on Government Reform

Hearing: *Iraq: Winning Hearts and Minds*

June 15, 2004

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am honored to be here and delighted to be asked to share my views with you on this important topic. I teach Middle East politics at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. I have lived in the Middle East and have traveled extensively in the region. I have been to Iraq twice, most recently last summer, in August 2003. My research includes following Arab attitudes and opinions toward the United States, media issues and public diplomacy.

My remarks today address the following questions:

1. What events caused the change in Iraqi attitudes toward the US and the CPA from the fall of Saddam's regime to the present?
2. Related to this, what factors caused the security environment to deteriorate?
3. Why did Coalition and US government public diplomacy efforts fail to influence the Iraqi public?
4. And, more generally, the overall question of Iraqi and Arab hearts and minds and US Public Diplomacy.

First, it is important to understand accurately Iraqi reactions to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the US presence in the country. Although the majority of Iraqis were delighted to be rid of the Hussein regime and many were and are thankful to the US for accomplishing this, Iraqis were, from the beginning, ambivalent about a foreign military presence in the country and/or an American role in Iraqi politics.[1] The subsequent course of events -- a series of policy mistakes, poor decisions, and the failure to deliver on promises and meet basic obligations -- as well as high expectations on the part of many Iraqis – have led to the current troubling situation with regard to Iraqi hearts and minds. As a result, it would not be unreasonable to say today that the

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[1] A number of prominent individuals who spoke before the war about Iraqis welcoming American troops mischaracterized the complexity of the situation. For example, Fouad Ajami, a Professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies said this to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 31, 2002 about how we will be greeted in Iraq: "We shall be mobbed. We shall be mobbed when we go there, by people who are eager for deliverance form the tyranny and the great big prison of Saddam Hussein. … *We shall be greeted, I think, in Baghdad and Basra with kites and boom boxes*, and we should understand this. And the embarrassment for those in Nablus and Cairo who will then protesting -- will be protesting an American war or an Anglo-American war, whatever label you put on that war, will be enormous." Kanan Makiya, an Iraqi Professor at Brandeis University and a member of the Iraqi National Congress made similar comments before the war. According to George Packer in his article "Dreaming of Democracy" (*New York Times*, March 2, 2003), "When Makiya and two other Iraqis were invited to the Oval Office in January, he told President Bush that invading American troops would be greeted with 'sweets and flowers.'" The problem with Makiya and Ajami's naively optimistic predictions (aside from the fact that they were, in part, politically driven) is that they completely failed to recognize the possibility of two propositions simultaneously being true: 1) Iraqis are happy that Saddam is no longer in power and 2) Iraqis are unhappy with an occupation and foreign troops in their country. The course of the occupation – how things have gone so far - has only made matters worse. Both propositions, however, are simultaneously true: Iraqis are happy that Saddam is no longer in power but they are also - simultaneously - unhappy with the American presence and occupation. Vice President Cheney quoted Ajami's views about how American troops would be greeted in Baghdad at the VFW 103rd National Convention on August 26, 2002. See
http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html
The Army War College's Report about post-war Iraq (completed in February 2003) was quite perceptive, in comparison. Entitled *Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario*, the report presciently stated that, "Long-term gratitude is unlikely and suspicion of US motives will increase as the occupation continues. A force initially viewed as liberators can rapidly be relegated to the status of invaders should an unwelcome occupation continue for a prolonged time. Occupation problems may be especially acute if the United States must implement the bulk of the occupation itself rather than turn these duties over to a postwar international force." (p. 18) also see p. 35. Available at:
http://www.gulfinvestigations.net/IMG/pdf/reconirc.pdf
Similar to this more nuanced assessment, when asked in the recent CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll (Nationwide Poll of Iraq) how they viewed Coalition forces *at the time of the invasion*, Iraqis were equally split with the same percentage of Iraqis viewing Coalition forces as liberators as those who viewed them as occupiers (43%). 9% said as "both equally" and 4% responded "don't know." When asked how they viewed Coalition forces at the time of the poll (late March and April 2004), 71% said as occupiers, 19% said as liberators, 8% said as both and 2% responded with "don't know." See the results of the entire poll at: See the entire poll at:
http://i.a.cnn.net/cnn/2004/WORLD/meast/04/28/iraq.poll/iraq.poll.4.28.pdf

war for Iraqi hearts and minds might already be lost. I apologize for being direct, but only an honest appraisal of the situation is likely to be of any benefit to you.

Security:

The number one issue in Iraq immediately after the war in April 2003 continues to be the number one issue in Iraq today -- fourteen months later: *security*. Security *is key* -- it is foundational to any public diplomacy efforts as well as post-war reconstruction, investment, commerce, civic involvement, education and everyday life. Every element of Iraqi society is dependent upon the maintenance of security. The *absence* of security acts as a constraint or bottleneck on what can be achieved.

The failure to establish basic law and order is the leading criticism Iraqis make of the CPA and the occupation. There is universal agreement across a wide spectrum of Iraqis – from those favorable to the US to those critical of America, from religious as well as secular elements, from Sunni, Shiite, Kurd, and Turkmen – that security is the main problem facing the country.[2] This is demonstrated by public statements as well as all of the available polling data.[3]

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[2] Prime Minister Allawi, President Al Yawer, and Adnan Pachaci (all friends of the US) have stated that security is the primary issue. Allawi made this clear on June 6, 2004, after unveiling the new cabinet, when he said that establishing "a state of law and order" was the first priority. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani also places security as the top priority. He said that the new Iraqi government faces four main tasks: "secure a UN resolution that returns full sovereignty to Iraqis, *return security to the country and put an end to organized crime*, provide public services and alleviate suffering and prepare for elections to take place in early 2005." See "Full text of Iraqi PM's address," BBC News, June 1, 2004 [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3767521.stm] and "Sistani gives cautious backing to Iraq Government," Middle East Online, June 3, 2004 [http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=10160]

[3] See the State Department Study of Iraqi Public Opinion (December 31-January 7), figures provided in *Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq*, Brookings. [www.brookings.edu/iraqindex] June 9, 2004. According to the CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll conducted in March and April 2004, 70% of respondents said that they had been afraid to go outside of their homes during the day for safety reasons. The figure was the same for 2003. 95% of respondents said that they had been afraid to go outside of their home at night for safety reasons. That is up from 88% last year (2003). The "key findings" of the poll are available at:

We must precisely understand what is meant by security however. When Iraqis speak of security they are *not* primarily referring to attacks on coalition forces or the targeting of US soldiers.[4] *They are referring to the safety of ordinary Iraqis in the pursuit of everyday affairs*. Naturally, Iraqis are more concerned about their own safety than the safety of American soldiers, just as Americans pay more attention to lost American lives than to Iraqi casualties.

The failure of the CPA to provide security against car-jackings, kidnappings, armed robbery, abduction, rape and every kind of theft and banditry imaginable -- in addition to the insecurity caused by attacks on coalition forces -- is the primary complaint most Iraqis have of the occupation. Iraqis simply do not feel safe and many, quite possibly the majority, hold the CPA and the US responsible, as the occupying power, for this situation. I experienced this myself in Baghdad last summer and I see and read about this in the Arabic and English press (print and television) daily.[5]

Causes of the Present Security Situation in Iraq:

The unwillingness or inability of coalition forces to stop the widespread looting following the fall of the regime was a terrible beginning that produced a feeling that no one was in charge, encouraged criminal elements and made the country's reconstruction exceedingly more difficult

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http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2004-04-28-gallup-iraq-findings.htm. Note that somewhat different figures are provided at: http://i.a.cnn.net/cnn/2004/WORLD/meast/04/28/iraq.poll/iraq.poll.4.28.pdf

[4] The US media is understandably primarily concerned with attacks on US and Coalition forces and American civilian contractors. As a result, the security situation for ordinary Iraqis is not sufficiently conveyed in much of the US media.

[5] See Samer Shehata, "Streets of Fear" in *Salon* on November 12, 2003. See http://www.salon.com/opinion/feature/2003/11/12/fear/index_np.html

as a result of the pillaging of public utilities (e.g. water and electricity) and ministries.[6] The decisions to disband the Iraqi army and police force after the fall of Baghdad have also directly contributed to the continuing security problem in multiple ways.

The wholesale and immediate disbanding of Iraq's army and police produced two negative outcomes: 1) the country was left without the institutions most capable of maintaining law and order (security personnel familiar with local communities and neighborhoods, fluent in Arabic and knowledgeable of Iraqi culture) and 2) thousands of disenfranchised men, trained in military and security operations, now without jobs or income, unsure of their future in the new Iraq and embittered at the CPA and the US.

A more narrow elimination of Saddam loyalists in both institutions is likely to have proven more effective at maintaining security in the post-war environment. This could have been coupled with (1) the continuous weeding out of individuals at lower levels suspected of abuses under the previous regime; (2) the complete overhaul of both institutions with the aim of fundamentally

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[6] Many have stated that the damage done to Iraqi infrastructure as a result of looting, in Ministries, public utilities and especially the electricity sector, was more severe than the damage caused by the war. Andrew Natsios, the head of USAID, said as much on March 17, 2004 in a briefing at the Washington Foreign Press Center. Natsios said, "In the infrastructure, we had a slower start mainly because we thought we were dealing with, basically, a minimal amount of damage from the war, and damage, certainly. The war damaged very little. *The larger damage was from the looting, which is a serious problem*, but the biggest problem was the lack of maintenance over the last 20 years." See http://www.usaid.gov/press/speeches/2004/sp040317.html. See also the interview with James Fallows (of the *Atlantic Monthly*) about this and other topics. When asked about the long-term consequences of the looting, Fallows says, "The immediate tangible consequences were to make a mockery of the precision bombing campaign the U.S. had actually carried out. I forget the actual statistic, *but something like 10 times as much of the power grid was destroyed in the couple of weeks after the war as was destroyed by U.S. bombing during the war. The bombing had been very careful; the looting was very indiscriminate.* So all the things that were going wrong then, in terms of hospitals being stripped bare, schools not being able to run, no electric power -- that was from the looting, not from the war. The intangible effect was that, instead of having this postwar sense that, "A new cop is in town, things are in order now, don't dare challenge the U.S.," there was instead what one person described as a magic moment where people realized that nobody was in control and there was disorder. And it has spilled over to the security situation since then. "http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/invasion/interviews/fallows.html

changing their cultures and character and; (3) infusing the army and police with newly trained recruits.

Insufficient troop presence[7] – from the beginning – coupled with the wrong types of forces – (combat soldiers as opposed to trained peacekeepers and military police) -- has also negatively impacted the security situation.[8] Experts on post-conflict situations have stated that, based on past peace-keeping missions, the ratio of troops/peace-keepers to civilians in Iraq is woefully inadequate. According to James Dobbins, an international security specialist who held senior positions under four US presidents and supervised operations in Haiti, Somalia, Kosovo and Bosnia, the ratio of troops to civilians in post-conflict situations should be approximately 2 peacekeepers for every 100 civilians. The ratio of foreign troops to civilians in Iraq is presently

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[7] General Eric Shinseki (at the time, the Army Chief of Staff) said in February 2003, in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee, that "several hundred thousand soldiers" would be needed for a post-war occupying force, based on his experience in post-war Bosnia. Several days later on February 27, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, contradicted Shinseki in front of the House Budget Committee stating that his estimate was "wildly off the mark" and that fewer troops would be needed. Wolfowitz continued, claiming, "I am reasonably certain that [the Iraqi people] will greet us as liberators, and that will help us to keep requirements down." "See AP, "Army Chief: Forces to Occupy Iraq Massive," in *USA Today*, February 25, 2003 [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2003-02-25-iraq-us_x.htm] and Eric Schmitt, "Pentagon Contradicts General on Iraq Occupation Force's Size, *New York Times*, February 28, 2003. Schmitt writes the following: "In his testimony, Mr. Wolfowitz ticked off several reasons why he believed a much smaller coalition peacekeeping force than General Shinseki envisioned would be sufficient to police and rebuild postwar Iraq. *He said there was no history of ethnic strife in Iraq*, as there was in Bosnia or Kosovo. He said Iraqi civilians would welcome an American-led liberation force that "stayed as long as necessary but left as soon as possible," but would oppose a long-term occupation force. And he said that nations that oppose war with Iraq would likely sign up to help rebuild it. "I would expect that even countries like France will have a strong interest in assisting Iraq in reconstruction," Mr. Wolfowitz said. He added that many Iraqi expatriates would likely return home to help." (my emphasis). Anyone with a passing knowledge of 20th century Iraqi history would know that ethnic and sectarian tension has been one of the defining characteristics of the country's politics. Interestingly, a December 2002 article from the BBC also states that "Mr Wolfowitz thinks ordinary Iraqis would greet American troops as liberators." The idea that American troops would be greeted as liberators was apparently in circulation for some time and repeated frequently. and See Brian Mason, "Analysis: Is Wolfowitz Waiting for War?," December 3, 2002 available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2539443.stm

[8] See *Establishing the Rule of Law in Iraq* (Special Report 104) April 2003, United States Institute of Peace. The report states: "As in previous peace operations, public order and basic rule of law functions will have to be performed by coalition military forces in the initial phase of the post-conflict period. But regular soldiers are neither trained nor equipped to undertake such duties … The U.S. military is particularly ill equipped to perform post conflict duties as it lacks a constabulary forces such as Italy's Carabinieri and France's Gendarmerie Nationale. These standing forces have characteristics of both military and police. …The are trained to maintain public order …conduct investigations, make arrests, direct traffic, and perform other police functions." p. 11.

less than 1 to 100 (it is approximately .64 to 100 to be more exact). In order for the appropriate ratio to be met, approximately 460,000 troops would have to be in Iraq (assuming, the country's population to be 23 million).[9] In Iraq, we have been asking too few troops, trained for combat operations and not peacekeeping missions, to act as peacekeepers, something they are not well equipped to do.

Public Services:

Many in the CPA have worked tirelessly to improve the situation in Iraq. Much has been accomplished (e.g. schools refurbished, restoring infrastructure, etc.), but the fact remains, however, that in terms of public services, the overall picture is mixed, with improvements in certain sectors while others have still not returned to pre-war levels.

Telecommunications:

Progress has been made in the area of telecommunications both in terms of telephone and internet access. Although the number of landline telephones has still not reached pre-war levels (833,000 subscribers pre-war compared with 783,263 at the end of May 2004), a significant number of cell phone subscribers have been added as a result of new cell phone service. Currently, there are close to 400,000 cell phone subscribers in the country making the total number of telephones in operation in Iraq higher than the pre-war figure.[10]

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[9] See James Dobbins (et. al.), *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand), 2003. For comparisons of ratios of peacekeepers to civilians in other post-conflict situations, see Barbara Slavin and Dave Moniz, "How Peace in Iraq became so elusive," July 22, 2003, *USA Today*.

[10] See the CPA's *Administrator's Weekly Report: Essential Services May 22-28, 2004* available at: http://www.iraqcoalition.org/ES/consolidated/June4_ES.doc

Electricity

Though there have been improvements in telecommunications, electricity remains the greatest obstacle in terms of public service provision. Electricity is the single-most important public service that directly affects Iraqi's opinion of the US occupation as it has a direct impact on many aspects of daily life. It is crucial for refrigeration, air-conditioning, water and sewerage systems, lighting, security, effective hospital operations, commerce and almost all elements of everyday life. Iraq today has still not reached pre-war levels of electricity. For some, electricity has become the metric for measuring the CPA's success or lack thereof in terms of delivering public services.

The Department of Defense estimated pre-war levels of electricity production in Iraq to be 4,400 megawatts daily. The CPA estimated the seven-day average of peak electricity production for the week of May 22-28, 2004 to be 3,946 megawatts, still well below pre-war levels.[11] This corresponds to Iraqi impressions revealed through polling data. In the USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll (administered at the end of March and the beginning of April to 3,444 Iraqis), for example, 100% of Iraqis surveyed said they "go without electricity for long periods of time." This figure is up from 99% in 2003.[12]

As summer temperatures rise, demand for electricity increases. The CPA's stated goal is to produce 6000 megawatts by July 1, 2004.[13] This amount is needed to satisfy peak Iraqi summer

[11] See the CPA's *Administrator's Weekly Report: Essential Services May 22-28, 2004* available at: http://www.iraqcoalition.org/ES/consolidated/June4_ES.doc
[12] See http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2004-04-28-gallup-iraq-findings.htm
[13] *Iraq Index*, op. cit, p. 20.

demand, according to some estimates.[14] At the end of May 2004, 9 of 18 Iraqi governorates received less than 8 hours of electricity per day. Eight governorates received between 8 to16 hours of electricity per day. This includes Baghdad which received 9 hours and Basra which received 10 hours of electricity per day, approximately.[15] Residents of Baghdad reported 3-4 hours of electricity followed by 3-4 hours without power. Some residents reported that the availability of electricity was unscheduled or erratic. Only one governorate – Dahok in the far north -- received more than 16 hours of electricity per day during the week of May 22-28.

After security, electricity is the second leading criticism of the CPA and the occupation among Iraqis. It remains a topic of conversation and bitter complaint, with many Iraqis incredulous that the most powerful country in the world cannot restore electricity to prewar levels in Baghdad and elsewhere in the country, one year after the war. Some Iraqis believe this is a deliberate policy on the part of the US. I heard this myself in Baghdad last summer. The failure to deliver electricity at prewar levels – one year later -- has negatively affected Iraqi attitudes toward the CPA and the US.

Water

Clean water and adequate sewage treatment remain serious problems in Iraq. There have been some accomplishments; most notably the recently completed 240 kilometer sweet water canal in southern Iraq at a cost of $38 million dollars by US AID. Becthel, the private contractor, "fixed two pumping stations and 14 treatment stations, and dredged and cleaned the canal and adjacent

[14] See the Iraq Country Analysis Brief (March 2004) by the Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy, http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/iraq.html
[15] See the CPA's *Administrator's Weekly Report: Essential Services May 22-28, 2004* available at: http://www.iraqcoalition.org/ES/consolidated/June4_ES.doc

reservoir."[16] Despite these achievements, much more work is necessary in order to make a substantive difference in everyday Iraqi life.[17]

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Before the war, Iraq pumped 3 million cu.m. (cubic meters) of water per day from 140 water treatment facilities. Today, facilities operate at about 65 percent of that capacity, mainly because of electricity shortages and the looting of water plant generators used to pump water and sewage."[18] US AID reports the same figures and states that "Baghdad's three sewage treatment plants, which together comprise three-quarters of the nation's sewage treatment capacity, are inoperable, allowing the waste from 3.8 million people to flow untreated directly into the Tigris River. In the rest of the country, most sewage treatment plants were only partially operational prior to the conflict, and shortages of electricity, parts, and chemicals have exacerbated the situation."[19]

Standing water was blamed for more than 100 cases of Hepatitis E in Sadr City in Baghdad at the end of March 2004. A World Health Organization official said that "Frequent power cuts stop water pumps that keep sewage from flooding the streets. Even worse, the sewage can get sucked into drinking water supplies once the pumps start again."[20]

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[16] Iraq: Briefing Paper on Water and Sanitation, May 24, 2004. Available at: http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=41227

[17] According to the USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll, 55% of respondents said they have "been without clean drinking water for long periods of time."

[18] Iraq: Briefing Paper on Water and Sanitation, May 24, 2004. Available at: http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=41227

[19] http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/accomplishments/watsan.html (website updated June 7, 2004).

[20] Quoted in "IRAQ: Inadequate sewage disposal blamed for hepatitis outbreak," UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, June 1, 2004. See http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=41360&SelectRegion=Iraq_Crisis&SelectCountry=IRAQ

Unemployment

Accurate employment figures are incredibly difficult to obtain for Iraq. Mass unemployment continues to be a serious problem, however and should be viewed, in part, as a security issue. In addition to fueling frustration and resentment toward the US occupation, large pools of jobless men could become a source of potential recruits for the insurgency.

Last summer (2003), the CPA estimated that unemployment was above 50%.[21] In January 2004, Dr. Ali Allawi, the Iraqi Trade minister at the time, stated that unemployment and underemployment were between 50-60% of the labor force.[22] In February, Thomas Foley, director of private sector development for the Coalition Provisional Authority, claimed that things had improved. Foley said that the "Ministry of Planning has released a 28 percent number, which conforms with two CPA numbers that put unemployment (rates) in the mid-20s."[23] In March, the CPA estimated unemployment at between 25-30%[24] while the Economist Intelligence Unit put the figure at 60% for the same month.[25]

The White House's Office of Management and Budget, which described unemployment as "a persistent source of insecurity and instability for the country," estimated unemployment to be between 20-30% of the workforce in March.[26] According to the June 9, 2004 *Iraq Index*, unemployment is estimated to be between 28-45%.[27]

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[21] http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2004/n02182004_200402185.html
[22] "Iraq Unemployment," BBC News, January 6, 2004. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/newsnight/3372029.stm
[23] http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Feb2004/n02182004_200402185.html
[24] http://abcnews.go.com/sections/wnt/GoodMorningAmerica/Iraq_anniversary_jobs_040314.html
[25] Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Report Iraq, March 1, 2004.
[26] Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Report Iraq, March 1, 2004.
[27] www.brookings.edu/iraqindex

There is neither sufficient time nor space to compare the level of other public services and infrastructure in Iraq before the war and at present. It should be noted, however, that Iraqi expectations were far greater than what has been achieved to date.[28] No one, for example, expected it to take this long to experience significant improvements in public services and daily life.

Many see these as small matters which the US should have solved by now. Both Iraqis and others do not make evaluations of the present based on the possibility that things might -- and probably will -- be much better five years from now. They base their evaluations on what conditions are like today. Real people experience and think in days and months. Decades and generations are the time-frames of historians and academics.

How Many Iraqis Experience the US Presence

How some Iraqis experience the US military presence in their country has also negatively affected many Iraqi hearts and minds. Stories of house raids in the middle of the night with heavily armed troops kicking down doors, frightening women and children and humiliating family members in the process circulate in Iraq and have embittered Iraqis who experience such raids and who are neither involved in criminal activity or the insurgency, as well as others. Long, seemingly arbitrary detentions with little or no information provided to the detainees' families has been a grievance voiced by many. On some accounts, Iraqis also resent US military

[28] This is another way of saying that the CPA has not met Iraqi expectations. 64% of respondents in the CNN/USA Today Gallup Poll said that "the actions taken by the CPA have turned out worse than expected." 22% believed that the CPA's actions have been better than expected, 12% responded with "don't know" while 1% did not answer the question. See http://i.a.cnn.net/cnn/2004/WORLD/meast/04/28/iraq.poll/iraq.poll.4.28.pdf

convoys in urban areas and checkpoints. Convoys are thought to be dangerous as they become targets for the insurgency. Civilian casualties, of course, are an altogether different matter.

Iraqis have an overall negative impression of US military forces according to the various polling data. Recent CPA polling found that 80% of Iraqis have an unfavorable opinion of US troops.[29] The USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll produced similar findings. 58% of Iraqis surveyed said that US forces had conducted themselves either "fairly badly" or "very badly" (up from 29% in 2003 and compared with 34% who reported that US forces had conducted themselves either "very" or "fairly well").[30] Another worrying finding was that the number of respondents who said that attacks against US forces in Iraq could be justified increased sharply from last year. In 2003, 42% of respondents in Baghdad said that attacks against US forces "cannot be justified at all." That figure fell to 14% in 2004. Similarly, the percentage of respondents who said that attacks on US forces could be somewhat justified jumped from 11% in 2003 to 26% in 2004. 67% of respondents in the same poll said that US forces do not try "at all" to keep ordinary Iraqis from being killed or wounded during the exchange of gunfire. 18% of respondents said that US forces try "only a little." A high percentage of Iraqis also said US forces show disrespect for Iraqi women and the Iraqi people during interrogations and searches and disrespect for Islam during the searches of places of worship.

The impact of house raids, wrongful detention, the disproportionate use of force, and civilian casualties goes well beyond the individuals directly involved. Every house raid on law-abiding families turns an entire street against coalition forces, every wrongful detention creates a

[29] The CPA poll is quoted in Edward Cody," Iraqis Put Contempt for Troops on Display," *Washington Post*, June 12, 2004.
[30] See the entire poll at: http://i.a.cnn.net/cnn/2004/WORLD/meast/04/28/iraq.poll/iraq.poll.4.28.pdf

neighborhood opposed to the occupation and every civilian casualty produces an extended family embittered against the United States.

The logic of militarily defeating an insurgency with a foreign army runs counter to the logic of winning the battle for the hearts and minds of the general population. Counter insurgency operations necessarily result in urban fighting, damage to neighborhoods and civilian casualties. Nervous soldiers under attack, risking their lives, who have seen their buddies killed are understandably more interested in staying alive than in winning Iraqi hearts and minds. Political success, however, cannot be achieved primarily through military means. The case of Fallujah is particularly illustrative of this.

Fallujah: The Iraqi Reaction:

The overwhelming majority of Iraqis perceived US military conduct in Fallujah as unjustified, collective punishment and the disproportionate use of force against a civilian population. From the perspective of the war for the hearts and minds, the events of Fallujah were disasterous, infuriating most Iraqis, galvanizing opinion decidedly against the US and inflaming anti-American sentiment.

The murder of four security contract workers on March 31 in the city and the gruesome mutilation of two of their bodies was unconscionable. The response of the US military, however, was universally denounced across the country. An entire town of nearly 300,000 residents was under siege for more than a week while the US Marines used heavy weaponry in civilian areas. The result was, as reported in the English and Arabic press and as seen on television, more than

600 casualties (and over 1200 wounded), many of whom were women and children.[31] Scenes of families burying their dead in the courtyards of their homes, in soccer fields and in hospital parking lots (because it was unsafe to bury the dead in cemeteries), elicited outrage and widespread condemnation from all quarters of Iraqi society. Images of scores of wounded pouring into hospitals with insufficient medicines and supplies, produced feelings of solidarity across Iraq with the residents of Fallujah. This was seen as a battle between David and Goliath with the US military being Goliath. Dozens of convoys of food, humanitarian supplies and medicine *from all over Iraq*, including from the Turkmen minority in Kirkuk, Chaldean Christians in Baghdad and from the country's Shiite majority – from the poor communities of Sadr city and other Shiite towns in the south -- demonstrated the extent to which Iraqis of all stripes sympathized with the residents of Fallujah.[32]

At the time, Iraq's human rights minister as well as the interior minister resigned in protest against US military conduct, calling it a clear violation of human rights. [33] The current President – Ghazi Al Yawer (who was also on the Iraqi Governing Council at the time) also threatened to resign during the crisis if fighting did not end. He described what was occurring as "genocide."[34]

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[31] See Dan Murphy, "Siege of Fallujah Polarizing Iraqis," in *Christian Science Monitor*, April 15, 2004. Murphy writes, "…the fighting in Fallujah …has turned the muddled center of Iraqi public opinion – where people were ambivalent about the occupation but not actively opposed – decisively against US-led Coalition Provisional Authority and its local allies." He goes on to quote an advisor to the CPA who tells him: "Fallujah has created a major polarization of Iraqi public opinion. There is no middle ground any more. Two weeks ago Iraqis wanted to see us make promises and deliver on them- rebuild, improve – but then they saw pictures of US bombs falling on mosques in Fallujah. Now they want us out."

[32] Deborah Pasmantier (AFP), "Baghdad's Muslims rush aid for Fallujah residents, Sadr city sends food, medicine," April 14, 2004.

[33] "Turki resigns from Iraqi Governing Council," See http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=9596 [April 9, 2004]

[34] Al Yawer said, ""If the Fallujah problem is not resolved peacefully in a way that preserves the dignity of its people, and if America does not fulfill its promises... and if they insist on using excessive force, then I will submit my resignation." He also stated, "How can a superpower like the United States put itself in a state of war with a small city like Fallujah. This is genocide." See http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/s1084808.htm April 10, 2004.

Adnan Pachachi (a former Ambassador and the nominee to the post of President who declined the position because he was afraid he was viewed as too pro-US) said at the time, "We consider the action carried out by US forces as illegal and totally unacceptable. We denounce the military operations carried out by the American forces because in effect, it is (inflicting) collective punishment on the residents of Fallujah."[35] The siege of Fallujah embittered many Iraqis against the US and the occupation, even among our friends, and solidified anti-coalition and anti US-sentiment.

Public Diplomacy:

Public Diplomacy is extremely important, although under-funded, and the US government has a number of highly successful programs long since in existence. However, we must be conscious of the limitations of public diplomacy from the outset. It is not a cure-all for America's problems in the Arab and Muslim world. The primary determinant of public opinion toward the US are American polices and actions, whether in Iraq or elsewhere. Public diplomacy is not a silver bullet and will not provide a quick-fix solution to the problem of how Arabs and Muslims, including Iraqis, view the United States. Furthermore, in order for public diplomacy to be effective it must be done intelligently.

The Office of Public Diplomacy has done some excellent work recently, including increasing funding for cultural and academic exchanges and traditional diplomatic outreach efforts. Some of the new public diplomacy initiatives undertaken, however, (including certain publications like *HI*, the Arabic Language magazine for youth, television commercials or mini-documentaries

[35] "US-picked Iraq leaders blast Fallujah offensive," ABC Online: http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/s1084808.htm

produced for the Muslim world about Muslims in America, Radio *Sawa* and *Al Hurra* Television, for example) reflect a profound misunderstanding of the basic problem. The overwhelming majority of Arabs and Muslims love freedom and democracy as much as we do. The problem is that from their perspective, U.S. Middle East policy is guided by neither of these two noble principles.

While some have claimed that anti-Americanism stems primarily from misinformation from local media and distorted Hollywood images of American values, the core problem results from specific U.S. foreign policies. Arabs and Muslims are profoundly angered by three policies in particular: a bias toward Israel in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; the Iraq war and the continuing violence and instability there; and Washington's consistent support for authoritarian regimes friendly to U.S. interests.

While public diplomacy can be effective, no amount of marketing, slick packaging or explaining our message loudly can solve this problem. Yet advertising and broadcasting are precisely the models that are primarily being used in new big-ticket public diplomacy efforts.

For example, the Office of Public Diplomacy produced 1.3 million copies of a pamphlet entitled the *Network of Terrorism*.[36] The publication has been translated into 36 languages and is now the most widely disseminated document ever produced by the State Department. Staggering illiteracy rates in the Arab and Muslim world, however, doom this massive undertaking to failure. According to the CIA World Factbook, for example, illiteracy in Morocco is about 43 percent for men and 68 percent for women. The figures for Egypt are 36 percent for men and 61

[36] See http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/terromet/

percent for women; 44 percent and 71 percent in Pakistan; and 52 percent and 85 percent for Afghanistan. If people cannot read, even the best of documents is sure to be ineffective.

Another new initiative well underway which has received much attention is the FM Arabic language radio station "Sawa." The new station, the Middle East Radio Network (MERN), is a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week service that began broadcasting in March 2002. Named "sawa" -- meaning "together" in Arabic -- the station is aimed at Arab listeners under 30 years old and is supposed to be more effective than the Voice of America because it will broadcast on AM and FM rather than shortwave, insuring a larger audience. I have listened to Sawa in Egypt and Jordan and my friends in the Middle East listen to Sawa regularly. While everyone enjoys the excellent choice of music, which accounts for the station's large listening audience, anecdotal evidence as well as personal experience suggests that it is having little to no impact on Arab public opinion. People are listening to the music and tuning out the four minutes of news that are broadcast every hour.

The BBC World Service did a program about Radio Sawa in which they interviewed young people in Jordan and Joan Mauer, Radio Sawa's Communications Director in Washington. The BBC Reporter asked three young Jordanians in Amman about the station – Samir, Dina and Nisreen. All said they listened to it. This is what they said:

"SAMIR: I listen to the music, *bas* I turn to another station once the news starts.

HATTAR (BBC Reporter): Why do you do that?

SAMIR: *Because its like listening to Israeli radio. Its biased. I feel like its propaganda to serve the Israelis* and the others...(UNINTELLIGIBLE)

HATTAR: Dina, do you want to talk about your impression regarding this station?

DINA: I have the same to say basically, because when you listen to what they say on the news, like they say Arab extremists, or Palestinian extremists, that is not fair at all. *Basically they're like, you know, a mouthpiece for the Americans.* And I think sort of they're brainwashing Jordanians, I think Syrians, whoever, you know is listening to these people.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, I've been listening to Radio Sawa since the first day it start launching to Jordan and I like to listen actually to the music.

HATTAR: Nisreen, what part of the radio you like to listen to mostly?

NISREEN: I think the songs, because they are so much updated and they have the mixture of the Arabic and foreign songs as well. But I think its biased somehow because maybe its sponsored by the USA or funded by them. Sometimes the news are shallow, not accurate.

ELIAS: *Well, sir, if we're talking about entertainments, songs and music, Sawa is number one. But if we're talking about news and media, the material they are providing is very cheap and they should be more balanced.* I think, I think there is one thing they can do to improve their news department. They have to live among Arabs and with Arabs to hear their problems. *We don't need advices and we don't need their point of view. When you are launching a news, you have to tell news, not sending message to people.*"[37]

The most costly new initiative is the satellite television station directed at the Arab world named *Al Hurra* (the Free One). The idea behind an American station directed at the Arab world reflects an obsession with Al-Jazeera, the highly successful Qatari-based satellite television station that gained notoriety in the U.S. for its broadcast of the Osama bin Laden videotapes.

Many in the U.S. have claimed that Al-Jazeera is anti-American and that its biased news reporting intentionally inflames passions against the United States. But Al-Jazeera has become an easy scapegoat, its power overestimated and its content grossly misrepresented.

[37] Transcript of BBC World Service – "Outlook," September 24, 2002. Also available at: http://www.electronicintifada.net/v2/article712.shtml

First, the model of the Arab television viewer that Al Jazeera's critics accept when decrying the station's influence is hopelessly simplistic. The station's critics assume that Arab television viewers are passive receptacles, blank slates, watching Al Jazeera and accepting everything the station has to offer.[38] Clearly Arab television viewers, like media viewers elsewhere, are capable of critical thought, evaluation and skepticism and, as a result of consuming years of state controlled media, Arab viewers are especially adept at critical media consumption.

Moreover, Al Jazeera is not inherently anti-American. In the fall of 2001, a Columbia University professor of Journalism and I conducted an informal study of Al-Jazeera for WBUR, the Boston Public Radio station. We compared coverage of the war in Afghanistan on Al-Jazeera and "NBC Nightly News" and concluded that Al-Jazeera was neither pro-Taliban nor anti-American and just as professional as the American news coverage. In fact, the station has often been critical of Arab regimes and has gotten into trouble as a result.

Arabs and Muslims view the new U.S.-funded radio and television stations with suspicion and skepticism, as they view all government-owned media. Many already have access to Western radio channels, including the BBC and the VOA, making the new station simply redundant. And polling evidence suggests that very few people in the Arab world are actually watching *Al Hurra*.

No matter what channel delivers the U.S. message, evidence suggests that Arab audiences are not likely to believe it. The widely reported results of the Gallup poll conducted in nine predominantly Muslim countries and released in February 2002 clearly demonstrate that Arabs and Muslims simply do not trust the U.S. government. Asked whether they found the U.S.

[38] (without intelligence or the ability to reflect and be critical)

trustworthy, the overwhelming majority of respondents said no.

Only 17 percent of Turks answered favorably. Only 7 percent in Kuwait, 5 percent in Jordan, 3 percent in Saudi Arabia and 1 percent in Pakistan said they found the U.S. trustworthy. If you don't trust the messenger, you will not trust the message.

Poorly conceived, quick-fix solutions are bound to fail. Yet while the primary problems are policy-related, public diplomacy -- if done properly -- can be effective in influencing public opinion among Arabs and Muslims.

Some of the most successful efforts to build bridges between the United States and the Middle East have been through the Fulbright and Hubert Humphrey Fellowship programs, the Visitor Exchange Program and the U.S. universities — the American University in Cairo and the American University in Beirut — which are now among the best academic institutions in the region.

Traditional public-diplomacy efforts work and need to be funded more generously. But in addition to increased funding for institutions and programs like these, the State Department should consider at least two new measures, which will be both highly effective and cost-efficient.

First, the U.S. should increase funding for basic and primary education in the Arab and Muslim world through literacy programs and English-language training. Education in the region is a major problem and literacy rates are abysmal in many of these countries. If one cannot read, one's exposure to a range of information is severely limited. And there is no better way of gaining the enduring gratitude of parents who do not have the resources to educate their children.

U.S.-funded classrooms would be highly visible and funding education would be a highly effective form of public diplomacy, as long as the U.S. did not try to impose a curriculum on the schools.

Second, the U.S. government should establish American Studies Centers at universities in Morocco, Egypt, Jordan or Lebanon, Pakistan and Indonesia. It is tragic that before September 11, 2001 not a single American Studies Center existed in Egypt, or anywhere in the entire Middle East to my knowledge. Today, two such centers exist in Egypt. Establishing American Studies Centers at universities throughout the region would train professionals who are knowledgeable about the U.S. and American culture, history and politics. These centers would produce local experts, opinion-makers and educators who would be called upon by local media to explain the U.S. and American society -- just as Middle East experts are called upon daily in the United States. For greater credibility, the centers should be hosted at national universities and funded through the endowment model, with few or no strings attached. This would provide freedom and independence, which would, in turn, ensure credibility.

We might not agree with all of the ideas of the educators and professors at these institutions, but the fact that they will have studied in the United States and be knowledgeable about American society, politics and history would help to ensure that the information they provide to their societies will not be based on ignorance.

While American policy has the single biggest role in shaping Arab and Muslim opinion toward the U.S., public diplomacy remains important. But we must do it effectively to make the most of our resources. Choosing real public diplomacy and delivering tangible benefits to ordinary

people (substantive programs that deliver real value added) are sure to be more effective than even the most expensive advertising and broadcasting campaigns.

Thank You.

Mr. SHAYS. I realize I may have erred here as well. You have been in Iraq since the——

Dr. SHEHATA. After the war.

Mr. SHAYS. After the war. Have you as well, Ms. Pletka?

Ms. PLETKA. Yes.

Mr. SHAYS. So thank you all for doing that. That just shows my bias to a good friend.

Mr. Galen, you have the floor.

Mr. GALEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to begin this portion with the conclusion of my written testimony, which is this: We should remember that the last time the United States was an occupying power was in Japan. We defeated Japan in 1945. We did not return sovereignty until early 1952—having signed the Treaty of San Francisco in late 1951. So we occupied Japan for just under 7 years. Japan was a monolithic society—one religion, one culture, one history. But Iraq is a multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and largely tribal in its history.

Japan is a series of islands, easily isolated. Iraq is surrounded by neighbors who are not particularly thrilled about a non-theocratic, at least semi-democratic, potential economic powerhouse building up right next door.

We fought a war of attrition against Japan. A significant number of Japanese young men who could have continued to fight had already been killed in the march across the Pacific. Iraq's military disintegrated in about 3 weeks and, indeed, we pointed with pride to our precision in military action in keeping enemy combatant deaths to a minimum.

In just 15 days from today, some 14 months, not 7 years, after the fall of Saddam, we will be returning sovereignty to the Iraqi people. And we should take justifiable pride in that accomplishment and have an optimistic outlook on what the ripples and echoes of that accomplishment will mean to the future of the region.

I want to speak for a second, sir, about some of the heroism that we saw in Iraq, not the least the three of you sitting in front of me, the chairman having been to Iraq some five times, at least three times without the cover of a CODEL. And as I put in my written statement, I have an endearing memory in my mind of meeting you and I think Dr. Palarino, and I did not know the gentleman from Virginia, Frank Wolf, outside the gate of the Green Zone—I know this is incorrect in its fact, but it is correct in its imagine in my mind—not getting out of a Humvee surrounded by crew served weapons, but crawling out of what appeared in my mind to be a 1957 Opel with rusted bullet holes in it.

Mr. SHAYS. We were grateful it was dirty.

Mr. GALEN. My point exactly. That is certainly heroism and it is under-recognized I think to go around the country as you did looking for ground truth, as we like to call it, and coming up with your own conclusions.

Another hero was here earlier, Ron Schlicher. We sat about 15 feet apart for most of the 6 months that I was in Iraq. I wrote about this in one of my columns during the explosion in Fallujah. Ambassador Schlicher and Ambassador Dick Jones went to Fallujah during the height of the unrest, of the chaos. And as I

wrote, they did not go dressed in bowler hats and in morning coats. They went in kevlar helmets and in flak jackets. It was, frankly, one of the bravest things that I saw while I was there.

The third hero, you pointed to earlier, is the Iraq Representative to the United States, Ms. Rend Al-Rahim, who at great personal risk has served her country very well, is clearly a brilliant spokesperson. I did not agree with everything she said, but she says it beautifully, she says it with passion. And as an example of how brave she truly is, during the time of the TAL negotiations, the Transitional Administrative Law negotiations, we were, frankly, out of security people; we just did not have anymore left, everybody was used up, and Ambassador Bremer's special assistant, a young man named Brian McCormick, called and asked if I was free for about an hour, and I said, sure, and he said, "Would you bring your gun." And to show how brave Ambassador Rahim is, I was her security detail when we transported her from the Ministry to Foreign Affairs back into the Green Zone. And if there ever was an act of heroism, I guarantee you, sir, that was it.

Mr. SHAYS. No. I think it was ignorance is bliss. [Laughter.]

Mr. GALEN. I just want to make one last point, sir, before I turn over the microphone. And that is, as we move through this, it is very difficult, impossible I suspect, to judge how high a tide will be by looking at one or a few waves as the tide moves in. It is not until the tide begins to move back out that we can tell how high it was. I am extraordinarily optimistic moving forward, having spent time both with the Americans, with the Coalition people, and with the Iraqis that these are a people who will not fail, they will not allow it to fail, their culture will not allow the terrorists to succeed. And I think if we sit here 1 year from today, we will be very pleased and maybe even surprised at how much progress will have been made. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Galen follows:]

Testimony
of
Richard A. Galen
before the
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats,
and International Relations
of the
Committee on Government Reform
in the
United States House of Representatives
June 15, 2004
2247 Rayburn House Office Building

Random Acts of Terrorism;
Random Acts of Heroism

Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on the issues which we continue to face as the United States and its coalition partners continue to move forward in Iraq.

My name is Richard A. Galen. I served in Iraq from early November 2003 until the end of April 2004 as a full-time civilian employee of the US Department of Defense.

My business is publisher of an on-line political column called "Mullings" which has an active e-mail database of some 21,000 people who receive the column three days per week. Mullings is also available on its web site, Mullings.com which averages about 7,500 page views per day.

During the period of my being a Department of Defense employee, after consultation with the DoD office of ethics, I was permitted to continue sending reports to my readers but they were in the form of weekly "Travelogues," describing my experiences while in Iraq, as opposed to the regular political columns.

According to the arrangement with the office of ethics, subscriptions were extended for the amount of time I was in Iraq – someone who was due for renewal in February, for example, will not be due until this coming August so that I was not, in effect, being paid to write the Travelogues while I was on the government payroll.

The catalogue of Iraq Travelogues is available at www.mullings.com/iraq_all.htm

Mr. Chairman, approximately 100 different Members of Congress, Senators and Governors have visited Iraq since the fall of Saddam. You, Mr. Chairman, have visited on some five different occasions and on at least three of those trips your trip was not an official Congressional Delegation (CODEL) but as part of a private visit with one or more non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

It is one thing, sir, to do a fact-finding tour of Rome, or Paris. It is something else to do a fact-finding tour of Tikrit when you go under the protection of the United States Government traveling in up-armored SUVs and military helicopters and have a series of briefings on the military compound under the control of the 101st Airborne or a Stryker Brigade.

However, traveling as you often did, under the radar in civilian vehicles visiting with Iraqis and Westerners in their homes and offices solely for the purpose of getting the kinds of information – the ground truth – which can only be gathered in the method you employed, should be recognized by your colleagues as the high act of government service and bravery which it was.

One of the endearing images I carry with me, Mr. Chairman, is meeting you and your colleague, the Gentleman from Virginia, Rep. Frank Wolf, outside a Green Zone gate late last year as the two of you piled out of – not an armored vehicle in a military convoy with crew served weapons at the ready – but out of (although this is not accurate in its detail, it is accurate in its impression) a 1957 Opel sedan with rusted bullet holes.

I have titled this presentation: Random Acts of Terrorism; Random Acts of Heroism with that vision in mind: Two senior Members of Congress, traveling – without fanfare and without protection – through a war zone looking for what truth there was to be found.

The job I was sent to Iraq to do was to set up an operation, within the division of strategic communications, to help bring the story of what was going correctly in Iraq to local and regional markets in the US.

That is, my job was not to get stories on the NBC Nightly News, but to get stories on the local stations in New Haven.

It took about six weeks to get the theory worked out and the pieces in place. The theory was this: No one in New Haven cared if a new bank opened up in Ramadi or a school had re-opened in Hillah. Unless someone from New Haven was involved in the bank or the school.

Then, it became a great local story – not because of the bank or the school, but because of the local connection.

At the height of this activity the US military lent me six videographers (of whom four were broadcasters and two were combat camera personnel) and two still photographers. I had a retired master sergeant from the Missouri National Guard as my assistant and one civilian trained as a press officer as my deputy.

We would shoot "B-roll" – background footage of whatever the story was about; and then do on-camera interviews with the individuals who had been responsible for the activity.

These were edited and sent via satellite back to the Pentagon News Channel in Alexandria, Virginia where the tapes were delivered to the Pentagon for distribution to the appropriate markets.

In the period starting in mid-December, until I left at the end of April we had sent over 500 individual stories and packages back to the US. The project continues to this day with people smarter and more creative than I now pushing it forward.

We also had a project whereby we would ask people to do phone interviews with their home-town radio stations. Other than the top half-dozen markets in the nation, there was always at least one radio station which was locally-oriented. My instructions to the manager of this project was: See if they announce the school lunch menu during the morning show. If they do, that's our station.

At its peak, we were doing some 50 interviews per week utilizing everyone from senior civilians to junior enlisted military personnel.

At one point a young Marine asked if he could ask his girlfriend to marry him on the air. The local station set it up; he did; she agreed and it became a story in Stars & Stripes as well as a Valentine's Day feature on CNN.

By the time I arrived in Baghdad, at the beginning of November 2003, the security situation had already deteriorated. We were warned, at briefings in Kuwait, that on the ride from the airport to the Green Zone we should not open the curtains on the bus other than to peek out for short periods. This, so that we wouldn't draw the attention of terrorists who might be looking for a target of opportunity.

Filled with apprehension, I boarded the bus at the airport, put my ill-fitting helmet on my head and wrapped myself in my extra-large (because that was the only size they had) flak jacket and prepared myself for the ride into Coalition headquarters.

That first trip became my personal shorthand for just about everything we found in Iraq: "Don't bother with 'Plan B' because you don't know where 'Plan A' will fall apart. But be assured 'Plan A' *will* fall apart."

In the case of the ride in from the airport the advice about keeping the curtains closed was superfluous because there *were* no curtains on the bus and as we drove through afternoon rush hour traffic people in cars were pointed at us and clearly discussing us with others in their vehicles.

Everyone who came to Baghdad came with the same expectation: Whatever had been done was probably done with the best of intentions, but now that I/WE are here, things will improve.

This optimism of the newly-arrived was looked upon by seasoned veterans with everything from quiet amusement to open hostility, depending upon how the individual was dealing with their personal latest round of frustrations.

As an example: I thought it would be a good idea to provide senior Coalition Provisional Authority officials to be interviewed by television broadcast groups. My thinking was that an interview by one anchor of a group which owned 10 or fifteen television stations would be used by all of the stations in that group with a minimum impact on the CPA officials' time.

My mentor in all of this was a man named Dorrance Smith. Mr. Smith was a senior producer at ABC News and was in Baghdad to provide – at that time – guidance in dealing with the US television networks.

Mr. Smith warned me that there would be problems with this project – problems which I would not be able to identify and, quite likely, would not be likely to overcome.

I, like all new arrivals, thought he had been in Baghdad too long and all it needed was my special brand of "get-it-done" attitude and all would be well.

It will not be a surprise to you when you find out that no interviews ever happened. The number of obstacles which presented themselves would have been rejected by any Hollywood producer as too unrealistic even for a Ben Stiller comedy.

Another example: Through sheer force of personality, Dorrance Smith got a satellite link up and running between the convention center – which is where our briefings were held – and the Pentagon.

I got permission for my unit to utilize this link when it was not otherwise in use to save us the time and money of sending video back to Washington via commercial services such as DHL or Federal Express.

The unit did their editing on Apple laptop computers and transferred the finished product to a DVD. The idea was to take that digital imagery, put it on the satellite, and have someone in Washington transfer it to video tape for further distribution.

Under the Plan A/Plan B rule which I noted above, everything worked perfectly except that we needed some way to get the DVD signal onto the satellite which required, not surprisingly, a DVD *player*.

There was not a DVD player anywhere to be found, so we couldn't send our first night's output. Or the next night's output.

Two days later I mounted a mission to the Airport where there was a fairly large PX – at this time the PX in the Green Zone was literally a trailer. There I purchased, with my personal funds, a portable DVD player which was used for several months until a unit purchased with official funds in Germany finally showed up.

The reason the mission to the PX took two days was because it took that long to round up enough armed military personnel in the Strategic Communications organization who could spare the three-to-four hours such an operation typically took.

Strategic Communications – which sent young civilians out into the Red Zone every day to work with reporters and ministries – did not have a professional security detail until late February or early March. We provided our own security.

Layer upon layer of frustration was the norm in Iraq. It is a testimony to the gallantry and persistence of the Coalition civilians and military that anything ever got done.

One of the questions the staff asked me to discuss is: Why did Coalition and U.S. Government public diplomacy efforts fail to reach the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people?

I don't know that this question is ripe quite yet. There are 27 million people in Iraq; most of them don't live in Baghdad, or Fallujah, or Najaf.

Five million of them live in Baghdad, but most of them don't live in Sadr City.

All of them, however, understand that Saddam is gone and a new era is dawning.

Most Iraqis are going about their regular daily routines – shopping, working, sending their kids to school, cooking and more recently, watching television sets which are connected to the world through a satellite dish on their roof.

Many Iraqis were shocked to find that the US forces could not instantaneously root out every terrorist – just as they were surprised to find that the industrial might of the US could not instantaneously restore power and water to every Iraqi household.

Even though – at least in Baghdad – there are dozens and dozens of newspapers available, and radio as well as television stations, the principal mechanism for Iraqis getting their news is through the local coffee shops.

There, news and rumor are mixed in the same way coffee and sugar are combined. And each consumer mixes each in the ratios he likes best.

Every rumor which I heard had one of three roots: (1) It was the Americans punishing us for [fill in the blank]; or (2) It was the Mossad; or (3) It was both.

Otherwise well-educated Iraqis would fall into this rumor trap. Every time the power went off in Baghdad or the water stopped running or a street was closed it was the Americans punishing the Iraqis or the work of the Mossad or both.

If it was ever the intention of the Coalition to "win the hearts and minds" of the Iraqis, it was a misplaced goal. We are reaching a different goal – the Iraqis getting used to the idea that they are in control of their own future – which is vastly more important.

Within that area, however, worked some of the heroes I would like to bring to the Committee's attention. There were military people like:

> Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt – an artillery officer by training and temperament, who was plucked out of Fort Bragg to be the military spokesman for the Coalition. It was not something he wanted to do, but as an officer he

devoted his full attention to bringing order to the public information management operation in the Iraq area of responsibility.

Lt. Col. Mike Ceroli – an infantryman who was the battalion commander of the Psychological Operations units in Iraq. He command extended throughout the CentCom area of responsibility, but he moved his command from the relative safety of Qatar to Baghdad, the better to lead his troops. I believe Mike Ceroli to be one of the best officers I encountered in Iraq.

Col. Ian Tunniclilffe – a British Colonel who is the seventh-generation military man in his family. Col. Ian was the head of the plans unit for StratCom and had the unenviable job of leading a bunch of Americans from the Army as well as the Air Force through the thickets of planning communications strategies.

Col. Bill Darley – was, and now is, the editor of a scholarly military journal published at Fort Leavenworth. Bill was the chief public affairs officer for CJTF-7 (Combined Joint Task Force-7) and built, from scratch, the public affairs operation for the military in Baghdad.

I would also like to point out some civilian heroes:

Jim Haverman – from Michigan was Governor John Engler's health commissioner. Jim came to Iraq in the early days to rebuild the Iraqi Health Ministry. He was ready to hand the ministry over to the Iraqis by early February, although the ceremony did not occur until April.

Traci Scott – was a staffer here on The Hill having been a reporter for a television station in Nevada. Traci is responsible for dealing with high-profile reporters who parachute into Iraq. She has done more to help deliver the messages of positive activities than any other single civilian.

Kristi Clemens – came to Iraq from the Department of Transportation. Kristi is one of those people who had a cushy job, in a safe place in the US government; dropped it all to come to Iraq. She will be coming home in about three weeks. Like many of the other civilians, she has no job to come back to.

Michael Fleischer – a successful businessman from Connecticut who felt strongly that he could use his business background to help get economic activity moving forward. Mike, the brother of Ari Fleischer, refused anything which would smack of special treatment, up to and including having to sleep in the "Chapel" - the dormitory – for his first several weeks in country.

This list, Mr. Chairman, could go on for several dozens of pages, but I wanted to point to these eight as individuals – civilian and military – who are in Iraq specifically to help move the process of self-government forward.

To conclude the "hearts and minds" question, I would ask this committee what they would think a better outcome twenty four months down the road: A parade of US military occupation personnel during which Iraqis waved little American flags? Or a parade honoring new Iraqi leadership during which Iraqis waved little Iraqi flags?

I believe we are getting closer, by the day, to that latter parade.

Two other questions were as follows:

(a) What events precipitated the change in Iraqi attitudes from jubilation over the fall of Hussein to a high profile insurgency against Coalition personnel?

(b) What factors caused the security environment to deteriorate?

These are essentially the same question. While I am not in any way an expert in military or intelligence matters, I spent a great deal of time with coalition military personnel – notably Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt who is the briefer on behalf of the coalition military.

To understand the security situation in Iraq – at least prior to the outbreak of the al-Sadr militia activity in April – we should understand how very thin the veneer of civilization is anywhere on the planet.

Consider, if you will, the following: At 7:30 tomorrow morning someone sets off what we called an improvised explosive device (IED) on the side of the Beltway near the Wilson Bridge in Alexandria.

Let's say that the same person, on Friday morning, sets off another device on the Beltway near Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda.

I think we would all agree that this region would shut down completely unless and until the public was assured that they were no longer in danger. People would stop traveling on the Beltway which would completely clog the secondary road system. Every accident involving a loud noise would be reported as another IED – rumors would rule the day. The multi-jurisdictional nature of the threat would further cause delays and confusion.

You can see how easily our region could disintegrate into chaos.

In fact, just a couple of years ago, two people randomly shooting out of the trunk of their car nearly brought the region to a halt – even though any individual's chance of being targeted was no better than one in several million.

Now, consider that this isn't happening just twice in one week; but twice or three times in any given day. And if you add in the fact that the local police agencies either don't exist are at their earliest stages of re-establishment so that the coalition forces are the principal investigators; and, if you add in that each attack fuels the rumor machine that the "Americans could stop this if they chose to, so they must be punishing us," it is easy to see how difficult the situation became and how quickly it spun out of control.

However, most Iraqis do not see the violence on a daily basis and, having driven through Baghdad in a private vehicle at normal speeds, it is remarkable – paradoxical – to see a city which, in large measure, has its people going about their normal daily affairs just as in any major city in the world while those other major cities are being treated to image after image of chaos and mayhem.

That leads to the final question in the sequence which was sent to me:

> To what extent has the United States Government succeeded in building Iraqi confidence in, and cooperation with, Coalition efforts to create social cohesion, democratic governance, respect for human rights, and economic well-being in Iraq?

The answer to that is easy: It is working.

Take the matter of the Moqtada al-Sadr activity in April as a jumping off point for this discussion.

It is clear to me, as an interested observer not an expert, that the ability of someone like Moqtada al-Sadr to build, train, equip, clothe, and deploy a 3,000 person militia without our knowing about it must be looked at as a failure of the military intelligence operations in the Iraq theater of operations.

But, having said that, it is also important to note that al-Sadr did not generate the kind of popular support he (and, one assumes, *his* intelligence advisors) had counted on. There was no outpouring – even from the slums from which he drew his militia members – to join his crusade. Nor, was there any support from the mainstream Shi'ite leadership. In fact, when the Shi'ite leadership announced its support for the interim government (no small success in itself) they specifically and publicly did not contact al-Sadr nor include him in their announcement.

Remember, if you will, when we were told that the Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani was going to torpedo all of the Coalition efforts unless elections were held prior to the June 30 hand-over? We haven't heard much of that recently.

Remember, if you will, the reports of unemployment ranging upwards of 40 percent? We haven't heard much of that recently.

Remember, if you will, the notion that the Shi'ite majority was going to demand an Iran-like theocracy; and the Kurdish minority was going to demand a separate nation; and all of the other "sky-is-falling" scenarios which were absolutely going to befall our efforts in Iraq.

Almost none of them – perhaps absolutely none of them – has come true nor will they come true.

I taught a class in democracy to about 80 Shi'ite women outside Hillah in January. When I was invited to teach the class, I thought it might be populated with college-aged women, in western clothing, who were at the cutting edge of secular society in southern Iraq.

In the event the women were all in their 40's and older, all dressed in traditional robes, with their heads covered, and all were tremendously interested in their role in the governance of Iraq in which they were, without any question, planning to have full participation.

As the economy of Iraq continues to gather steam it will have the effect of helping to suffocate the terrorists. It is one thing to be unemployed and hear of a plot to blow up an

electrical transmission tower; it is something else again to be employed in a factory or an office which depends upon that electricity and overhear the same plot.

The assumption must be that as the economy grows, more people will have a stake in an orderly society and, when some plot is being hatched, more Iraqis will be disposed to tell *Iraqi* authorities about what they have heard.

Finally, the who issue of the Transitional Administrative Law – the TAL – which was negotiated and signed by all the members of the Iraqi Governing Council is a model for progressive governance anywhere in the world, much less in the Middle East.

While the TAL has not had the impact in the day-to-day discussions of the elite levels of Iraqi society we might have hoped, the mere fact of the TAL's existence and the fact that it will be the mechanism by which Iraq is to be governed over this transitional period is highly significant.

Iraq's neighbors have been introduced to the TAL through both US and Iraqi diplomatic channels and the notion of a document which clearly lays out the rights of individuals and groups who have traditionally been unable to fully participate in society is a major accomplishment of the Coalition Provisional Authority.

In conclusion, we should remember that the last time the US was an occupying power was in Japan. We defeated Japan in 1945. We did not return sovereignty until early 1952 – having signed the Treaty of San Francisco in late 1951.

We occupied Japan for just under seven years.

- Japan was a monolithic society – one religion, one culture, one history. Iraq is multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and largely tribal in its history.
- Japan is a series of islands, easily isolated. Iraq is surrounded by neighbors who are not particularly thrilled about a non-theocratic; at least semi-democratic; potential economic powerhouse building up right next door.
- We fought a war of attrition against Japan: A significant number of Japanese young men who could have continued the fight, had already been killed in the march across the Pacific. Iraq's military disintegrated in about three weeks and, indeed, we pointed with pride to our precision in military action in keeping enemy combatant deaths to a minimum.

In just 15 days from today – some 14 months after the fall of Saddam – we will be returning sovereignty to the Iraqi people.

We should take justifiable pride in that accomplishment and have an optimistic outlook on what the ripples and echoes of that accomplishment will mean to the future of the region.

Mr. SHAYS. I would love you, when I come back, to explain to me, you say, "their culture will not allow them to fail," I would love you to talk more about that.

Ms. Pletka.

Ms. PLETKA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am grateful for having been invited today. I am going to do my best to stay under 5 minutes. I think everybody knows the six questions by heart by now since we have all been through them.

I do want to digress for a second. I was really happy to hear you, Mr. Galen, saying really hopeful, really positive things, and recognizing some of the interesting parallels with our previous experiences during World War II. If you go back and you look at some of the coverage in the first 5 and even 10 years after World War II, you see a lot of echoes of the kind of criticism you see right now of the United States in Germany and Japan. There is a famous series in Life Magazine from 1947 by John Duspasov which I commend to you because it has pretty much every single complaint that you have heard here only you have to substitute——

Mr. SHAYS. Is one of them a headline that says "Truman Fails?"

Ms. PLETKA. It is remarkable and I think it is important that we have some historical perspective. Rome was not built in a day. Democracy is a huge challenge. We have had more than 200 years of practice and we do not always get it perfect. I think the Iraqis have done pretty well. And the other thing is that it is enormously tempting to sit in Washington and dump on people in Baghdad, and I am going to do that in just a moment. But before I do that, I want to recognize that they are in an enormously challenging situation. And even for those who make mistakes that we perceive and criticize, they are serving their country and they deserve great recognition for that.

And now, now that I have said something positive. We have made a lot of mistakes. Probably the most fatal mistake that we made was in not understanding that liberation means liberation. When you live under someone like Saddam Hussein you want to be liberated not in order to be turned over to Jerry Bremer. I think that a lot of Iraqis, and I agree with them, resent that, and rightly so. In our failure to understand that, we have frittered away a lot of the political capital that I think we earned in deposing a horrible dictator.

And if you look at the Interim Government that was just formed in Iraq to which we will hand sovereignty on June 30, I ask myself how it is in any way different from a government that would have been formed more than a year ago, indeed, a day after the statue of Saddam Hussein fell in the central square. It is governed by an exile leader with close ties to the United States and not that much of a constituency within the country, which is a familiar criticism but it was made of others, and I do wonder why we needed to wait a year to find him.

We have lost credibility in other ways as well. The CPA, the Coalition Provisional Authority, has reversed itself on key decisions, such as de-Baathification; it has abandoned the Kurds to the political fates recently; the CPA has announced that we are against Baath terrorists, but then made deals with them in Fallujah; it authorized the indictment of Muqtada al Sadr as a murder, but then

made deals with him too. I think that in these reversals, some of which we can debate about, we have signaled weakness. And terrorists have taken advantage of those weaknesses.

And that brings me to the question of the security environment. It is safe to say, and many people have, that there are a lot of factors that caused the deterioration in the security environment. But I think that one of our key mistakes, and one that we continue to make, was the failure of military authorities to work with and to trust Iraqis. And you could actually see that even during the period of the invasion when we did not have Iraqis with our military troops who could have, in fact, been helpful. We have very little experience in dealing with Iraq and we could have relied far more heavily on the expertise of Iraqi allies. Instead, we have played a lone game. We have also allowed the borders to remain largely open, and that has allowed in all sorts of, shorthand, bad guys that are causing us and the Iraqis problems.

On the question of political reform, it is really only fair to call Iraq a work in progress. The Coalition I do not think has done enough to build civil society, to empower political parties, or to educate Iraqis about the building blocks of democracy. And without those efforts, it is going to be very difficult for us to help them maintain a stable political system.

Instead, what we have done is we have relied on known political quantities, sectarian and tribal leaders, and we have failed to understand that a lot of those divisions that we believe are real inside Iraq are much more relics of 30–40 years under totalitarianism. If we allow the United Nations for the future to impose a proportional representation electoral system on Iraq, as the U.N. has in fact already announced earlier this month, I think we are going to further handicap all but a very few politically savvy Iraqis in Baghdad.

I am going to wrap up quickly and just comment on the question of how we hand out assistance. As far as the economy is concerned, it is pretty easy for us to condemn the CPA, and the contractors, and AID, and the NGO's, but that really does them a terrible disservice. It is almost impossible to rebuild a country according to OSHA standards, which is what Congress demands. And with the kind of oversight, that you rightly demand, over appropriated funds——

Mr. SHAYS. Surely you jest. We do not have OSHA in Iraq.

Ms. PLETKA. Seriously speaking, if you are willing to put things together with chewing gum and make them work, they will work for the necessary period when we are there. And so what if it all falls apart once we leave? That has been the attitude of many occupiers and it's irresponsible and we are not doing that. But that means it costs more and it takes longer. And the Iraqis are frustrated, and we understand that.

Finally, I just want to address the question of hearts and minds. I think I have a slightly different take on it than some of your previous speakers. You asked us: "Why did the Coalition and U.S. Government public diplomacy efforts fail to reach the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people?" I think that misses the question of what public diplomacy really is about. People are not reached through hearts and minds campaigns. They are reached through

deeds. They do not need advertising campaigns. And that has been one of the biggest flaws in our public diplomacy.

America has done an unbelievable service for the Iraqi people. We need to remind everybody that what we did was a great thing, and to understand that if we keep doing the right thing, even in the face of great challenges, difficulty, and criticism, that 1 day Iraq will an invaluable ally to us. And that is really what winning hearts and minds is about. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Pletka follows:]

Testimony before the House Committee on Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations

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Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to join you here today. You have asked the witnesses to address a series of questions; the answers to most are complex and subjective, and I will not do them justice in this brief statement. It is also important for people like me, outside the government watching events from afar to remember that reconstructing a devastated country is an enormous challenge. Americans serving in Iraq -- the Armed Services, the Foreign Service, and the many private citizens doing contract work -- deserve great credit for their efforts. But for them, Iraqis would be living under Saddam Hussein. For millions of Iraqis, for decades on end, that was a fate worse than death.

Unfortunately, the coalition that won a brilliant military victory in Iraq last year has handled the peace less brilliantly. There were some core mistakes, and if we do not learn from them our efforts to bring democracy to the rest of the Middle East will suffer.

Our most fatal mistake was in the failure to understand that liberation means liberation. Iraqis were thrilled to be rid of Saddam Hussein, and rightly so. No one should denigrate the enormous accomplishment of our troops, nor the relief felt by the Iraqi people that they could live in freedom. But Iraqis who had lived for decades under a ruthless tyrant did not want him removed in order to be governed by foreigners. In our failure to understand that, we frittered away much of the political capital we had earned with the Iraqi people by taking on Saddam in the first place.

Indeed, looking over the interim government to which we will formally hand sovereignty on June 30, I ask myself how it differs from the government we could have formed on April 10, 2003, the day after Baghdad fell. Iraq is governed by an exile leader with close ties to the United States and little constituency within the country. Did we really need to wait a year to find him?

And we have we lost credibility in other ways as well. The Coalition Provisional Authority has reversed itself on key decisions, such as deBaathification; it has abandoned the Kurds to the political fates; CPA announced we are against Ba'ath terrorists, but then made deals with them in Fallujah; it authorized the indictment of Muqtada al Sadr as a murderer, but has then made deals with him too.

We have signaled weakness, and two bit terrorists have taken advantage of that weakness to attack us. Osama bin Laden has said that only the strong horse will succeed; though we are the strong horse, we have played the weak horse in Iraq.

On the question of the security environment, it is safe to say that many factors caused deterioration. A key mistake was in the failure of military authorities to work with and trust Iraqis. We have little experience in dealing with this country, and could have relied far more heavily on the expertise of Iraqi allies. Instead, we often played a lone game, and as a result, failed to intimidate or arrest potential enemies. In addition, we have allowed the borders to remain open, and Wahhabis, Iranians and other terrorists have taken advantage.

Regarding political reform, it is fairest to call Iraq a work in progress. The coalition has not done enough to build civil society, to empower political parties or to educate Iraqis about the building blocks of democracy. Without those efforts, it will be difficult to help build and maintain a stable political system.

We have relied on known political quantities, sectarian and tribal leaders, failing to understand that these divisions are relics of Saddam's era rather than natural divisions within Iraq. If the United States allows the United Nations to impose a proportional representation system on Iraq, as the UN has already announced, we will handicap all but a few political savvy Iraqis in Baghdad.

As far as the economy is concerned, it is easy to condemn the CPA, contractors, AID and the NGOs working in Iraq as incompetent. However, that does them a terrible disservice. This is a country that was neglected for decades, and rebuilding it according to OSHA standards, which is what the US Congress demands, is nigh on impossible. A great deal of good work has been done in education, in infrastructure and elsewhere, but this is a project that must be judged over decades, not months.

Finally, we have been asked, "Why did Coalition and U.S. government public diplomacy efforts fail to reach the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people?" To answer such a question, we must go to the heart of what public diplomacy is about: People are reached through deeds, not through advertising campaigns. One soldier helping a child in the street does more good than days of speeches on satellite TV.

America has done an incredible service for the Iraqi people. It is important to remind people that we did a great and a noble thing, and to understand that if we continue doing the right thing for the people of Iraq, they will be grateful, and will build a country that will be an invaluable ally. But in order to continue to earn their gratitude, we have to return to them the control they lost when Saddam took over. If we help Iraqis to build their own nation, and we enable them do it in peace and security, then we won't have to waste our efforts on empty campaigns for hearts and minds.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you all three for your really excellent statements. I am going to ask some questions and then I am going to invite my staff to ask some questions as well. I do not want to forget about Fallujah, but I would like to ask first what you all agreed with—in the first and second panel, tell me what you reacted to that you agreed strongly to, and what you might have disagreed with. Let us take the disagreed first. In the first panel the Iraqi Representative, in the next panel, what was said that you thought I do not buy it, I do not agree, I think they are wrong?

Dr. SHEHATA. Well, what struck me, sir, was what we heard in the previous panel, actually, panel II, about the sufficient force presence in Iraq or the day after, as it were, and then the importance of looting. I guess I could not disagree more with those issues.

Mr. SHAYS. Yes.

Mr. GALEN. Sir, the point on which I would have disagreed with Ambassador Al-Rahim was on the issue of communications, which, as it happened, was my job, although not internal to Iraq.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me be clear. You were not in charge of the stations and all that. But this is your expertise.

Mr. GALEN. Yes. The fact is that we did not do a good job in setting up what became Al-Iraqiya, which is to say we asked an engineering firm to be a creative company and it did not work and we should not be surprised at that. But we did an enormous amount of work in getting word out to Iraqis as to what was going on to the best of our ability. Let me take just 2 seconds to explain this. When I first got there in early December, when we had the briefings with the Iraqi press corps, which in the beginning we did separately, we finally got smart and put them together with the Western press, the Iraqi reporters were remarkably unsophisticated and they would not ask why is there no electricity in Basra today. They would ask why is that army vehicle parked at the end of my block. There was just a lack of sophistication that over time they got much better at, with our help, by the way, especially General Kimmett, who, as the military briefer, spent an enormous amount of time, and still spends an enormous amount of time, one-on-one, one-on-two, one-on-three with Iraqi reporters helping them ask tough questions. So the notion that we completely failed in driving the message out into the Iraqi society I think is incorrect, within the bounds of the ability to physically move around, which was difficult.

Mr. SHAYS. Before you move on. It is true, though, that we contracted with an engineering firm and so we lost a whole 7 months, did we not?

Mr. GALEN. But that was not the only mechanism. The Ambassador was correct. The rumor activity in Iraq is fairly remarkable. Every Thursday—I would get a report from the Iraqi analyst who looked at the local media everyday—on Thursday they would report the rumors that they had picked up. Now some of them they made up just because they had to have something to say. But over time, the rumors fell into one of three categories: a) It was the Americans punishing us. I remember specifically the 24-hour blackout. The rumor was that the Americans were punishing the Iraqis because power went out in Cleveland and that was the punishment.

So either the Americans are punishing us for whatever, or it is the Mossad, the Israeli Intelligence Service, or both.

But the rumor mill is very powerful. And that is a cultural underpinning not just in Iraq, but throughout the region. It is very difficult to overcome that. And, frankly, it is not so different here. Remember 2 years ago when we had those two guys running around shooting people out of the trunk of their car, we were all looking for a white panel truck because that was what they were supposed to have been driving. That was the rumor that was running around rampant. In fact, it turned out to be a burgundy sedan.

Ms. PLETKA. I was not here for Ambassador Rahim's presentation. But since she is a very old friend, I am not going to disagree with her publicly even had I heard what she——

Mr. SHAYS. Let me just tell you one thing she said. She said we should never have been occupiers; never. And the implication was that we could do in May or June, I think she said June, what we are doing 1 year later.

Ms. PLETKA. I said something very similar in my statement, and I agree with her entirely. In fact, if we were willing to put in an exile government and a bunch of other exiles——

Mr. SHAYS. I want you to start over again. You spoke so quickly. Slow down.

Ms. PLETKA. I am sorry. It is because I have said it so many times. If we were willing to put exiles in power, in the position of Prime Minister, as we did with Ayad Allawi, and had proposed to do with Adnan Pachachi as President and subsequently did not, then I think we could have done it a year ago. And we could have used the political capital that we had gained in toppling Saddam to give credibility to that transition in Iraq. Instead, we used up the political capital in order to give credibility to the Coalition Provisional Authority and they spent more than a year frittering it away. I think that it is important to understand that it does not matter how much good will any person has toward your liberator if, in fact, that liberator becomes an occupier, he will eventually be disliked.

May I ask your indulgence. This issue of looting has come up again and again. I have a very contrarian view about this. It is desperately unfair for us to sit here and criticize American troops for failing to take police action to protect things in Iraq. We need to remember what was stolen. You commented very accurately about things like window frames, panes of glass being stolen, and we all remember pictures of people lugging things like mattresses.

Mr. SHAYS. There was nothing left in the building. Nothing.

Ms. PLETKA. Right. People who steal mattresses are not out joy riding. People who steal mattresses steal them because they do not have them, because they have not had anything new or anything decent in years on end. And to have asked American troops to take guns to those people and threaten them and possibly injure them or kill them would have been quite a challenge, and I think we would have actually lost more hearts and minds in so doing than in not doing it. So I really think that this requires a little bit more of a nuanced look.

Mr. SHAYS. Yes.

Dr. SHEHATA. Could I say something about that, sir?

Mr. SHAYS. Sure.

Dr. SHEHATA. I really could not disagree more. It is not a question of U.S. soldiers shooting Iraqi civilians running out of hospitals with medical equipment or mattresses. Clearly, if there were one, more troops present at the time, that is the day after, and two, if they would have had the orders to stop the looting, to stand guard in front of certain places other than the oil ministries, then this would have been a deterrent. That is the way these things work. It does not work otherwise. You do not have to shoot every single person who has the desire to loot. You only have to create the desire on their part, change the incentive system, for them not to be able to loot. So I disagree completely.

Mr. SHAYS. I would say, Ms. Pletka, I do believe that if there were one or two instances where the looting was not successful, I do not think it would have necessarily happened elsewhere, but I understand your perspective. At the time, I did not want to see any American shoot any Iraqi. But what is interesting is we had the State Department warn us this would happen. They said iraq is going to be no different than Watts, and they went through. They were oppressed people, much like folks in Watts felt they were. But there was a warning. We were told this would happen.

I am happy, Mr. Galen, if you want to make a comment.

Mr. GALEN. I would like to just look at it from the other side, because I wrote a column about——

Mr. SHAYS. Which side? We have heard two sides. Do you have a third side?

Mr. GALEN. The other side from your side. And that is, imagine the reaction in the United States had we lost a soldier or 5 soldiers or 10 soldiers protecting mattresses or window frames. I think there was a real issue of, on the one hand, letting this three decades of pent up whatever to blow off, which some people took advantage of, obviously nobody needed to steal an icon from a museum, that is clearly just criminal behavior. But I think that the notion of having a pitched gun battle involving American soldiers, which was fairly likely given the number of AK–47s, as you know, that exist on the street in any city in Iraq, protecting mattresses and window frames. I think if we go back in time and think that through, I think we would see that it may have been an insolvable situation, but I am not sure that we made the wrong decision.

Mr. SHAYS. What I wonder, though, is are we mixing cultures? Different people react differently to certain events. I was led to believe that in Iraqi culture a sense of security and protection is viewed differently than we would view it.

Mr. GALEN. That gets us into that area you wanted to discuss. I was in Kuwait just a year ago at the behest of the Kuwaiti government to watch their elections, their brand of democracy, which is only called democracy because they choose to call it that. There are 2.1 million inhabitants and 130,000 get to vote. But that is what they do and they seem to be OK with it.

But more to the point here, I was in a discussion with a university professor who was adamant about the fact that stability was more important than freedom, than democracy. That the notion of having a stable society under a Saddam was better for the Iraqi

people, in his view, than going through the turmoil of overthrowing Saddam and all the things that you and your panels have discussed here today. That is I suppose a legitimate viewpoint from his point of view. I do not think it is from our point of view because we have fought wars over the centuries to overthrow stable but unfair governments here and abroad. But that is part of what we are discussing here today. Is stability more important than having a society go through the throes of instability to get themselves to an end state that over the next, not 3 months or 14 months as it has been, but over the next 14 or 1,400 years will have proved to be the right direction taken.

Mr. SHAYS. Any other comment on this issue?

Dr. SHEHATA. Well, I would just say that it is not an either/or question. Also, it is not a question of stability. It is not about the longevity of a regime and its brutality. It is about maintaining basic security. Security is a precondition for freedom. If I am supposedly free to voice my opinions but I do not have security, then that is worthless. So it is not an either/or situation. It is simply that security is a precondition for freedom.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me ask you, you wanted to talk about Fallujah, makes some comments? I think you had some questions on that. I want to just tell you a reaction I had just to start this process off. First off, with al Sadr, I was told by Mr. Bremer that a year ago he wanted to deal with this guy when he had 300, and it did not happen, and then he had thousands. I had this conflicted view. In one sense, I wanted—talking about security—I wanted to have our folks get this guy and end his ability to influence. But I kind of rejoiced in a way that you all of a sudden saw the Iraqi Council come in to play, the Kurds were coming in, and they were trying to solve a problem. They did not solve it the way we wanted it necessarily, I am not sure quite how we wanted it, but they put restraints on us, and in the end he is still there. But I felt like there was a little bit of Iraqi pride that they were given an opportunity to try to deal with this. And so, I think I was left with the feeling that, in the end, was a good thing.

So that is my reaction. I want to know what your reaction is.

Dr. SHEHATA. Well with regard to Muqtada al Sadr, I am in complete agreement with you. I think we saw clearly other Shiite clergy as well as other individuals, prominent Iraqis try to intervene and try to calm down the situation. I think it was a mistake to go after Muqtada al Sadr in the way that the CPA did. I think the reason that this got to this terrible point was because Muqtada al Sadr was completely, or at least he felt, he was actually, excluded from the political process. But what we have seen, and as a good general rule, is the fact that inclusion generally produces moderation. So, for example, Muqtada al Sadr quite recently said, just several days ago, that he accepts the legitimacy of the Interim Government as long as they work for the ending of the U.S. occupation and elections. I think that is a very good thing. I think if you exclude political players, you radicalize them. And that is dangerous. So what has to be done is inclusion even of those people who we might disagree with fundamentally.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Galen, given your background in the media, were you the one who decided to shut down Sadr's paper?

Mr. GALEN. No, sir, I was not.

Mr. SHAYS. Were you consulted?

Mr. GALEN. No, sir, I was not. Let me speak to that just for a second. That al Sadr saying that he accepts this government has all the import of me saying that I accept this government. The fact is that al Sadr has been marginalized by his own activities and by the other Shiites who we were afraid were no more moderate but in fact have stepped up to the plate, to use an American phrase, and have begun to assume the mantle of power and the mantle of democracy and the mantle of diplomacy.

One of the reasons that al Sadr has been marginalized is because one, we killed a lot of his militia, which is a good thing; and two, he did not gain the support of the large number of Iraqis. I think you can make the conclusion that when he went into Najaf and the area down there that he expected there to be a huge outpouring of support for his revolt. And, frankly, that did not happen. And so, in the end, it proved that, not what my friend to my right is saying, that we should have included him in the first place, but that if you do take radical action when others are trying to build a democracy, that you will be marginalized.

Going back to your specific question. I asked the question when we shut down al Sadr's newspaper in Baghdad and then arrested his lieutenant, I was in Riyadh at the time, when I got back I asked, who was in the meeting, putting aside the military part, because I do not know about that, but who was in the meeting, I asked, that said these are the potential outcomes from an information standpoint and a communication standpoint, and based upon those potential outcomes, what does the CPA and CJTF–7, the military coalition's response going to be? And I asked that of enough people because I wanted to make sure that I had the right answer. And the answer was, that meeting never happened.

Mr. SHAYS. In other words, I want to be clear, a decision to close down the paper, and you are asking did anyone think of what the consequences might be of closing down that paper. Is that correct?

Mr. GALEN. Well, I assume somebody did, but if they did they did not share it beyond my guess is the three star and Ambassador rank. That was a problem. Not that we would have changed the direction, not that we could have influenced it at all, but I think it was a failing on the part—you are going to ask later what is the greatest failing, and in my mind the greatest failing is having a pro council. It runs against my conservative grain to have centralized planning of any nature. And I think this is the sort of situation you get yourself into when you begin to close down the decision process to one or two people. And then when events spin out of control you find yourself unable to respond quickly enough because the response mechanisms are not in place.

Mr. SHAYS. Ms. Pletka, do you want to respond?

Ms. PLETKA. I do not quite know what to respond to. I agree with a lot of what Mr. Galen said. I think that the consequences of shutting down the paper were manifest. There was a decision made to take on Muqtada al Sadr. The reason was, as far as the paper is concerned, that he was using it to incite violence against American and allied forces and against Iraqis with whom he disagreed. The idea that somehow a person who is excluded from a political proc-

ess has somehow a right or that it would be natural for them to turn to violence is really I think unacceptable. There are plenty of people who are excluded from the political process in lots of places and they do not generally kill their opponents as a response. So I think we need to recognize that Muqtada al Sadr is someone who embraces terrorism, someone who embraces murder as a political tool. He is not a part of the political process and he was not driven to it because he was excluded. We have a long record of his speeches saying terrible things, exhorting people to violence long before he was "excluded."

Mr. SHAYS. It would be interesting and the thinking now—my general reaction was a pretty big mistake to get rid of the paper because, in essence, it gives it more credibility. But the proof would be is there a paper now that has replaced it. In other words, have we made that paper more significant, or does it simply not exist anymore?

Ms. PLETKA. It no longer exists.

Mr. GALEN. It no longer exists. And I do not disagree at all with what you were saying. I was not suggesting that we should not have shut down the paper.

Ms. PLETKA. Oh, no, no.

Mr. GALEN. But your point, sir, I think is correct, that the proof is that no paper, to my knowledge, has arrived to take its place. Now you could make the case that people are afraid to start such a paper. But there are a lot of newspapers, they do not all publish every day, but there is no shortage of public discourse, at least in Baghdad, in terms of varying points of view. We do draw the line even in our country at shouting fire in a movie theater. That does not fall under free speech.

Mr. SHAYS. Great observation. I will let the staff ask a question here. Our subcommittee is doing hearings on the whole issue of oil for food and the outrage, frankly, of some of our allies who were involved in allowing Saddam to get $10 billion out of this process. But what I love is that this story was outed about the U.N. from the Iraqi press. Our people were not covering it well, the Europeans were not covering it well, and the Iraqi press, and even if we determine it was Chalabi and whatever we think about him, the bottom line is the press got the story, the press ran with the story, they pointed out 200 names, and the rest is history. So I think that is kind of an encouraging thing that you actually saw this initiative.

Mr. GALEN. And something, sir, that we did not see 7 or 8 months ago. They would not have had the sophistication, they would not have understood that they were permitted to do that.

Mr. SHAYS. So you leaked this story?

Mr. GALEN. No, no. No. I was in the same briefing as you were, sir. But the fact is that it is another one of those hopeful signs that a free Iraqi press, not an al Sadr press, not a medium that is inciting to violence, but the notion after three decades—look, independent thought was not a positive idea in Iraq for three decades. It got you at least some body parts cutoff or got you killed. And that is one of the things I was discussing earlier, that as we moved through time a more sophisticated level of activity on the part of the Iraqi press led to that whole notion of the oil for food program

story, which, in fact, led to a requirement that every governate go through all of its paper and preserve all the documents dealing with oil for food, which probably would not have happened without, as you say, the Iraqi press bringing it up.

Mr. HALLORAN. Thank you. We have read the section of your testimony on Fallujah. I want to center some questions for all of you on that. It is portrayed as an instance of heavy-handed military tactics in response to a provocative incident which then kind of galvanized Iraqi political support and political debate about a response, which then prompted a U.S. tactical response in terms of how to deal with the security situation on the ground, which to some became a whole kind of strategic shift on how we deal with security in Iraq—that it is an Iraqi problem, not an American issue or problem. That politically, when the United States decides security is our No. 1 mission, a lot of people with a lot of different motives suddenly make it their No. 1 mission to prevent that, whereas if it is an Iraqi priority or Iraqi mission, a lot of Iraqis with the same motives have an interest in making that mission succeed.

So I want to ask all three of you, if Fallujah was a paradigm shift, as it were, not in its provocation but in its response and that perception of security?

Dr. SHEHATA. I am not sure I understood the question, actually, I am afraid to say.

Ms. PLETKA. I would be happy to answer it and then everybody can disagree with me. I think Fallujah was a paradigm shift and I think it was a terrible one, actually. I know that people disagree with that. We made a decision to confront a problem that we had with insurgents in Fallujah. This was not just Baathists and Saddam loyalists heavily armed, but also outside terrorists. And we went in. We were I think moderately heavy-handed. We did not bring enough troops to bear in the beginning, but we added additional troops. At a certain moment, we decided that we should embrace a different model, which is now being called the Fallujah model. We brought in briefly a former general in the Revolutionary Guards, General Jasamsela, another hideous mistake on our part, to head up an Iraqi brigade.

Yes, everything is quiet right now. But what kind of a compromise has brought that quiet? The Washington Post had a very interesting article about this last week that made very clear that once you go into Fallujah, the terrorists and the Baathists are in power. Now that means that for the moment they have decided to remain quiet. What will happen when they decide they no longer wish to be quiet? Will we have to go back in? Will there be another compromise? And what kind of compromises should we make with local warlords, with terrorists, with Baathist recidivists? I am not sure. But we are opposed to making those kind of local compromises from place to place in Afghanistan. And I think we should be opposed to doing it in Iraq. Either you are someone who is opposed to the government, you are a terrorist and you must be gotten rid of, or you are not. But we need to decide which is the model that works. And for me, we are just delaying the pain by going with this latter Fallujah model.

Mr. HALLORAN. Dr. Shehata.

Dr. SHEHATA. Sure. I think I understand the question now. I think, clearly, from the perspective of the U.S. military and how we deal with these kinds of things, Fallujah probably did signify a paradigm shift. At the same time, we are getting close to the handover of sovereignty, so this might be, hopefully will be, a mute question.

I disagree significantly with Ms. Pletka that it was a moderate use of force. Clearly, in the English press as well as in the Arabic press, the number of civilian casualties was well over 600. But it is not important, and this is the key point that I want to make, how any of us view Fallujah. What is important is how the Iraqi public viewed Fallujah. And what I am saying is simply that Fallujah was a crucial moment. It was at that moment after Fallujah that I started telling my students that I was afraid that the war had been lost. Because everyone in Iraq reacted negatively to the way the United States handled it. For them, it was four contractors were killed and, as a result, the disproportionate use of force, a whole city was under siege, a city of 300,000, and over 600 people, many of them civilians actually, and the pictures show that, killed as a response. So that clearly did a tremendous amount of damage for how many Iraqis view us and view the occupation.

I do not know and I am not qualified to say what the military reaction should have been. But I think it is clear that it should have been significantly different than that. And you are right, Iraqis, and Iraqis who think more closely to Ms. Pletka and all of us here, would probably have an interest in dealing with the situation in some way. And I think that any imaginable way that they would have come up, that is, Iraqis of authority, would have been better than the way that Fallujah was handled.

Mr. GALEN. It was not just a matter of four contractors being killed. The manner in which they were killed, the manner in which their bodies were mangled afterwards, and the fact that what was left of their bodies was hung from a bridge for all to see was the issue at hand. And I will tell you, I do not know how angry the Iraqis were afterwards, but as far as the Coalition civilians and the Coalition military were concerned, an appropriate response, I will speak for myself, not for anyone else, would have been to flatten Fallujah, make it into a parking lot, we would have known it was over when the paint in the lines dried. That is how angry everybody was about the horror that had happened. And not just the horror that it happened, Mr. Chairman, but the fact that there was so little reaction against that kind of senseless brutality. These were guys that were protecting a food convoy. They were not out there gunning down women and children in the street, they were protecting a food convoy. And it was the lack of any kind of remorse, other than the very narrow statements that desecrating a dead body is anti-Islamic, and I am not Islamic so I can only take that as read. But that I think was the part that infuriated more people.

This happened, let me just say from a tactical standpoint, this happened to occur, to use an American basketball phrase, during a transition. The 82nd Airborne was moving out, there headquarters had been up in Ramadi, and the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force was moving in and they were setting up headquarters much closer to Fallujah. There had been some disagreement, you may re-

member, between the marines and the airborne and the army about how they had handled things in the Western provinces and there was some reason to suspect that this may have been the work of agents provocateur just to see what we had, what do the new guys have. The marines, for their part, although this is lost in the reporting, the marines held off for a long time. It was not like the four contractors were killed and that night we started bombing. The fact is that the marines held off for many days, maybe a week or so, before they decided on what the response would be. And their reasoning was they were trying to get the best possible intelligence so that when they did go in and kill people, which they were going to do, that they could kill bad guys with some reasonable expectation that they were hitting the right targets.

So I disagree with Dr. Shehata that this was an unmeasured response. It was a very measured response to an act of brutality that almost belies description.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you.

Dr. SHEHATA. Can I just say one small thing about the question of Fallujah.

Mr. SHAYS. Sure. This is a very interesting panel. I like the disagreement, and I agree with both of you. Mr. Greenspan speaks. [Laughter.]

Dr. SHEHATA. Certainly, what happened to the four contractors was horrific and I could not get myself to actually watch the footage on television. But I think that we have to understand Fallujah actually in its historical context. So, for example, if we go back to immediately after the end of the war, in April 2003, there was an incident which really set us on the wrong track in Fallujah to begin with, which was the American soldiers who had taken over the school and there was a demonstration, from all press accounts a peaceful demonstration of residents of Fallujah outside in which 13 Fallujans were killed. So, clearly, from the very beginning there is a context here that differentiates Fallujah from other parts of the country as well and it has to be understood if we are to understand the mutilation of the bodies, which cannot be in any sense rationalized. And then before the four contractors were killed——

Mr. SHAYS. That statement confuses me. Because you say you have to put in context—I cannot put it in context with anything. I can put in it context but it is hard for me to.

Dr. SHEHATA. Sure. What I am saying is not the way that they were killed but the anti-American feeling in Fallujah, putting that in context. Not to justify it but just so that we can understand it. So in April 2003, there were the 13 civilians killed. And then before the incident with the four contractors, there was a search operation in Fallujah a week or so before which, it was not intended to end this way, but resulted in the killing of 15 Fallujans. So if we are to understand the anti-American feeling in Fallujah, we have to understand that.

But there was another larger point about what has been called the Sunni Triangle that I think needs to be made that possibly would help steer us in a different direction with regard to the Sunni community. No one understood, it seems, that the people who had the most to lose and therefore we would have an interest

making them buy-in to the new Iraq were the Sunnis. I mean, of course, the Shiites have an interest in a post-Saddam Iraq, and the Kurds it is not clear and so on, depending on what they get, but the losers in this game were going to be the Sunnis. And therefore, we should have gone out of our way to make sure they do not exit the process by including their leaders, by using money as ammunition in Sunni areas and so forth just from a strategic point of view.

Ms. PLETKA. I am sorry. May I just give one quick word. First, I agree with you, Mr. Chairman, there is no context; 13 deaths, 20 deaths, 68 deaths, 500 deaths do not really excuse the mutilation of four civilians. So I do not think there is much context for that.

But as far as the Sunni Triangle is concerned, I was with General Patreaus in September of last year and actually objected a little bit to his strong outreach to the Sunni community. To suggest that the forces that were in place in the Sunni Triangle were not reaching out to moderate community leaders, to tribal leaders, were not spending money wherever possible does them a terrible injustice. To the contrary, he used an expression which I disagreed with strongly. He said, "There can be no losers here." For my part, I thought there should be losers there. But that said, he bent over backward, as did everybody subordinate to him, to try and find Sunni leaders and Sunni community members who could be helped, who could be made part of the process, and who could be empowered as part of the new Iraq.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. Yes, sir?

Mr. GALEN. Mr. Chairman, could I just make one last point with respect to Fallujah?

Mr. SHAYS. Sure.

Mr. GALEN. This did not get any publicity so I am not sure anybody knows that it was going on. There was an ongoing effort that was called the Fallujah Project and it included, oh, I do not know, I would say 20 fairly senior people and then me around the CPA and CJTF–7 and we were specifically charged with looking for projects in Fallujah to which we could bring to bear civil affairs, cultural affairs, building. There was a big argument should we build a hospital or should we build another school. But there was an ongoing and real effort to use positive influence of money and of civil affairs projects in Fallujah. We got shot at once when we were over there, because we had told them we were going to come and meet with them, and we never went back.

Mr. SHAYS. Interesting. We are going to conclude. I do want to know what you think is the worst thing we did, the best thing we did, and what is the most important thing we need to do in the months to come. Also, and I wish I had asked the others, and so I am not going to be able to do some comparison here, but there are 150 tribes, some obviously more important than others, there are religious leaders. It is my sense that we were reaching out to the religious instead of the tribes. Should we have been reaching out to the tribes? If you have no opinion, that is OK too.

Dr. Shehata, let me start with you.

Dr. SHEHATA. Sure. Certainly, there are going to be losers, and those are the Saddamists. But I think you are right that we did not reach out enough to tribal leaders. But to be fair, up until quite recently we did not reach out really to Grand Ayatoliah Ali Al-

Sistani. He was the bad guy, the spoiler. But nevertheless, I agree with you completely, sir, that tribes should have been focused on.

In terms of the mistakes, I think insufficient troops the day after, allowing the looting to spread, disbanding the army and police, the blanket de-Baathification, the inability to get basic services, public services, electricity, up and running again.

Mr. SHAYS. If you give me a long list of mistakes, you have to give me a long list of successes.

Dr. SHEHATA. OK. I think the handover on June 30 is hopefully going to be a success, and it seems like, as I mentioned before, and I am thankful that this is the case, that there is buy-in on the part of many Iraqis. Certainly, including Lakhdar Brahimi and the United Nations I think was a wonderful thing and hopefully that will continue. And, hopefully, we will see more success with the deliverables because that is what really, as Ms. Pletka said, I agree with her completely, that is what determines public opinion in hearts and minds; that is, product, performance, delivery. So hopefully security and electricity will see some improvements in the days to come.

Mr. SHAYS. Was not another success, an obvious one, the monetary policy, being able to change the currency. There was no collapse, there were no epidemics. So there were a lot of things.

Dr. SHEHATA. Sure. There were all kinds of things that we thought might happen that did not happen, the million refugees, for example.

Mr. SHAYS. But they did not happen in part, though, because of what we did.

Dr. SHEHATA. I think that is true. And I think that the currency conversion and the strength of the Iraqi dinar actually is another thing that has been surprising. So I put those among—I mean, there are all kinds of accomplishments and I go through some of them in my testimony, including some of the waterwork that has been done by USAID, including the telecommunications which I mentioned, and so on.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. Thank you.

Those two questions.

Mr. GALEN. First on the tribal issue, sir, I think if you have the opportunity you might want to bring Ambassador Schlicher back in just for a chat. That was his brief. He was responsible for outreach to the governate. And my understanding from him is they spent a good deal of time dealing with tribal leaders, not from Baghdad but actually from where it counted, out in the governate. So you may want to chat with him about that.

Mr. SHAYS. Do you think some of the effort to provide these local government bodies was through the tribal process?

Mr. GALEN. Yes. Well they were brought into the process at the governate level, at what we would call the county level. That was Ambassador Schlicher's principal role so he might be the right one to talk to about that.

Mr. SHAYS. Best and worst?

Mr. GALEN. The worst, as I said, is the centralized decision-making process. I am not sure there was a good way out of that but it certainly did lead to decisions that had to be made and then had to get unmade because, as we all know, part of the way of suc-

cessful decisionmaking is having strong opposing views that are fully aired and then letting the decisionmaker choose from those. But when you only have one person and a very small cadre of people around him, as we did with Ambassador Bremer, who, by the way, is brilliant and to the extent that there has been any success, and I think there has been great success, he gets all the credit. If he is going to get any of the blame, he has to get the credit because he literally works 20 hours a day, 7 days a week. But I think from a policy standpoint having a pro council was a mistake, it did not work with General Gardner, and I am not sure it was as successful as it might have been.

Mr. SHAYS. Best?

Mr. GALEN. The best thing, clearly, was the decision last November to set a date certain, which happens to be June 30, for the handover.

Mr. SHAYS. Which was criticized pretty strongly by a lot of folks.

Mr. GALEN. Well, again, that goes back to my earlier statement, sir, is you do not know how high the tide is going to get until it goes back out again. But I think as we move through time we are going to find that rather than having uncertainty and having new roadblocks and having people like Mr. Brahimi and the United Nations decide one thing while we are deciding something else and the French deciding something else again about what constitutes a time when we could actually hand over sovereignty, setting a hard date certain and forcing everybody—I mean everybody in the palace in the Green Zone has been absolutely focused on that June 30 deadline ever since November 15th.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. And you left out one thing. Biggest need in the months to come?

Mr. GALEN. I think the biggest need is for everybody to step back and give this thing a chance to ripen. This business of on an hourly basis deciding on whether we are succeeding or failing is destructive beyond any measure. You cannot do it that way. We have to let the situation ripen. We have to let the new government, the Interim Government actually get their feet on the ground to deal with the ins and outs. The Transitional Administrative Law is a brilliant document and if they use that as at least a guideline for how they build the future of Iraq, it is going to have a huge impact moving forward through the region.

Mr. SHAYS. That is a strong word, a "brilliant" document. I am happy to hear you feel that way.

Mr. GALEN. Happily, I got to sit in on some of the negotiations and it was really interesting to watch.

Mr. SHAYS. Ms. Pletka.

Ms. PLETKA. Tribes, yes? It is very important to understand how Iraq is made up and that it is in many ways a tribal society, it is a sectarian society, but it is also a very urbanized, highly educated society. We should reach out to tribal leaders but we should not have a cartoonish view of how Iraqis think and feel. Under a dictator when there is no political freedom, the natural tendency is to turn to your family members, your village leaders, your tribal leaders, and your co-religionists, to use a dreadful word, for political allies. But that is not a natural political or democratic order. Ideas are what should be what organizes the Iraqi people, whether it is,

if I can start on an extreme, communism-liberal democracy, different ideas about how to organize themselves politically, and that should not be based on who my family looks like, where I go to mosque, or what my great-great-grandfather's last name was. So I think that is very important as we look forward.

In terms of our successes and failures, one of our greatest failures, as I think has been made clear, is in our failure to trust the Iraqi people to govern themselves, to trust them to make the mistakes that they needed to make to learn how to be responsible leaders, to believe in them in the way that justified their liberation. And so that was a terrible mistake. And insofar as we continue to denigrate Iraqi leaders, usually anonymously in the press, I think that we do them a huge disservice.

Our greatest successes are a reflection on the United States, and it sounds simplistic to say it, but it is that we believed that the liberation of 25 million people from tyranny was something important enough to sacrifice American lives, to fight for in the international community, and to stick with to this day even when people continue to snipe at us.

The future. One of the greatest mistakes I think that we can make, and I alluded to this in my testimony, is if we allow the imposition of a system of proportional representation on Iraq for their election process which concentrates power in the center, in the hands of established political groups. We will exclude different regions, we will fail to vest all of the people of Iraq in the political process, and we risk creating a political system that brought us 50 governments in post-war Italy and I do not know how many governments but I know they did not work very well in Israel, the two places that have proportional representation systems. So I think that will be a huge mistake and we should be very vigilant as we move forward.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you all very much. I really have enjoyed this panel and I have enjoyed the hearing that we have had today. I have learned a lot. I was struck by—and I am reacting, Ms. Pletka, to your comment, because I was trying to sort out what I felt about Fallujah. Because I happen to agree, that if we could have acted the way we wanted, we would have taken the kind of action I think needed to happen. But I rejoiced in the fact that we were trusting Iraqis to kind of have their day. And even though I thought they made the wrong decision, I rejoiced in that we were starting to try to trust them and they were getting some confidence. So that is why I said I agreed with both sides. You by your last answer helped me realize that I did agree with both sides. Bad mistake, but we trusted them and that was a good thing. Thank you all very much. Is there any one last statement that needs to be put on the record? Sometimes that is usually the best. If there is not, this hearing is closed.

[Whereupon, at 6:30 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the Chair.]

[Additional information submitted for the hearing record follows:]

State Department Coordinator for Iraq
Hearing Before the House Committee on Government Reform
15 June 2004

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, it is my honor today to report to you today on where we stand in the State Department in terms of being prepared for the upcoming transition to Iraqi sovereignty on June 30, and in preparing to stand up our new Mission in Baghdad in a way that helps both us and the Iraqis meet the challenges that lie ahead. Let me thank you in advance for the interest and support you and the Congress as a whole have afforded to our personnel, both military and civilian, on the ground in Iraq.

The State Department is also organizing itself to be better able to meet the challenge of transitioning to lead agency in managing and representing US interests to a sovereign Iraqi government. Our first Ambassador to the new Iraq, John D. Negroponte, is eminently well-prepared for the challenges at hand as one of the most capable and seasoned diplomats our nation has to offer. He is assisted by his Deputy Chief of Mission, Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, who was serving as our Ambassador in Albania before he answered the call to serve in Iraq. Ambassador Jeffrey is already on the ground in Baghdad leading an advance team to smoothe the transition. Ambassador Negroponte and Ambassador Jeffrey have put together a superb, very senior new country team that collectively features an impressive mixture of regional experience, management skills, and technical expertise. This management team will supervise a large Mission totaling up to 1000 permanent American staff, as well as around 500 locally-employed staff. Our security upgrades for our temporary chancery are proceeding on schedule and it will be ready by July 1. We have also chosen a site for a permanent Chancery and would like to come to agreement with the Iraqi government on the way forward on this project as soon as possible.

In preparing for the transition, there has been a remarkable effort undertaken by Ambassador Frank Ricciardone and General Mick Kicklighter, who led a combined team to work out how State and DoD will work together in the new post-June 30 context. Thanks to their work, the two agencies have finalized agreements between each other on respective roles, missions, resources, responsibilities and authorities so that they will complement and support each other.

Inside the State Department, we are also in the process of organizing ourselves to better handle the challenges posed. Inside the near East Bureau, we are creating an operation known as "NEA/I," - "I" for Iraq - which will entail my office as Coordinator, a Deputy, a political office, an economic office, a public diplomacy office, a political-military office and an office of a Coordinator for Iraq Reconstruction headed by Ambassador Robin Raphel. This team in Washington will be responsible for close coordination on a constant basis with Ambassador Negroponte's team in Baghdad and with the interagency process here.

The new U.S. team in Baghdad will work in partnership with the new sovereign Iraqi Interim Government to achieve our shared goals on achieving security and stability,

improving the delivery of services and economic opportunity, and in ushering in Iraq's first democratic elections no later than January 2005. The UN will also remain an important partner in the effort to organize the elections.

As a natural consequence of the Iraqis re-acquiring sovereignty, we will find ourselves in a more standard situation as far as the manner of conducting bilateral business goes. On the diplomatic side of the house we will be doing business as a country team, which is organized in a manner that achieves a comprehensive approach to a given issue by airing issues and shaping responses by considering each interested agency's or party's prism on the issue. This integrated approach to the pursuit of our goals is especially vital in Iraq, of course, given the enormity of the tasks at hand on both the security and reconstruction and democracy sides.

During the coming period, as we work with the Interim government and the UN to assure free and fair elections, it will be very important that we keep a clear focus on what average Iraqis and the political class are doing, saying, and thinking about the momentous events through which they are passing. In this regard, the new country team will be able to build on the contacts and outreach established by CPA and Ambassador Bremer's team over the last 14 months -- this task was a very difficult one after a decade and half's absence from the country, but CPA has made great strides in this regard in its time in Baghdad. Our Mission will also be aided greatly by the presence outside Baghdad of regional centers in Mosul, Kirkuk, Basra, and Hillah, and by the embedding of FSO's with division-level military commands in the field. This range of assets should help Ambassador Negroponte and our military commanders keep well abreast of the local context in which they are operating.

Thus, with the establishment of a strong new Mission, with clear ideas about how we will coordinate the achievement of our policy and security goals, and with the establishment of the security partnership with the IIG described by General Sharp, we are well-placed in institutional terms to meet the challenges before us.

We are also hopeful that the preparations that the United States and Coalition countries have made over the course of more than a year will help assure that the Iraqis are ready to resume sovereignty. Our efforts have been from the ground up and from the top down. First, we have provided the training, advice, equipment, and facilities to help establish and strengthen local, regional, and national governing institutions. As of our last count, there are 16 governorate councils, 90 district councils, 194 city councils, and 445 neighborhood councils. At the national level, we have already turned over 16 (check number) ministries to direct Iraqi control and the rest will be transferred over in the two weeks leading up to June 30. We will continue to offer to the Iraqis liaison officers to help provide the technical expertise which they judge they need to run their ministries in the most effective manner possible. We also supported the Iraqis as they drafted and adopted clearly-defined principles and targets in the Transitional Administrative Law, which will be in effect as of July 1 and will stay in effect until a constitutionally-based elected government takes office. On June 1, the former Iraqi Governing Council adopted with our full support the Annex to teh TAL that reflected the results of extensive

Testimony before the House Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations, Committee on Government Reform:

Submitted by
Save the Children
Rudolph Von Bernuth
Vice President
Children in Emergency and Crisis

June 15, 2004

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for providing Save the Children the opportunity to testify before your committee. I especially want to thank Save the Children's hometown Representative, Congressman Chris Shays, for his leadership and support of Save the Children's work in Connecticut and around the United States and in more than 40 countries around the world.

Of the questions submitted to witnesses we will address the coalition's efforts in distributing aid and development funds, rebuilding infrastructure and the creation of a stable economy generating jobs for Iraqis. We will draw upon our experience in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Iraq. From that experience we will discuss the challenges that we are encountering in providing humanitarian assistance in Iraq and finally the solutions that we recommend for overcoming these challenges in Iraq and in future conflict situations.

Firstly, I would like to inform the Committee of the work currently being undertaken by Save the Children in Iraq. We are located in the southern province of Iraq in Basra and have two sub-offices in Samawah and Nasiriyah. Our offices employ 151 aid workers of which 90% are Iraqis. Save the Children is working with and mobilizing communities to help strengthen their capacity and promote child protection. In addition, Save the Children is enabling thousands of Iraqi children and their families to reclaim their lives by providing education, food, water, cooking fuel, shelter, medicines, and other basic necessities. Staff security remains a major concern for us in the planning and running of our programs as serious security situations can occur with little or no warning, and staff members remain on high alert.

Save the Children is also working with Iraqi citizens in over 100 communities to launch development projects aimed at rebuilding war-torn neighborhoods in southern Iraq. Our sister agency, Save the Children UK, is continuing its programs in northern Iraq where it has been working since 1991.

Our programs dealing with education and protection will assist 50 urban and rural schools by rehabilitating school buildings and restocking classrooms with recreation, teaching and music kits, developing teacher-training curricula for landmine awareness, health and safety lessons and setting up parent-teacher associations. Through the development of four story books and several posters we are educating children about landmines in the schools. Another important initiative is the sponsoring of 14 summer camps for more than 8,500 children in southern Iraq to help educate children about the dangers of landmines and unexploded ordinances while also helping to inject a sense of normalcy into the lives of children. Finally, through the training of teachers from over 85 schools we are tooling teachers with the ability to ensure health and safety, landmine and UXO awareness and the psychosocial support for children and their parents.

Through our community development programs our staff have assisted Iraqi citizens in 100 communities launch more than 445 development projects to rebuild war-torn neighborhoods. To date, over 241 projects have been completed, with the remaining

projects in various stages of completion. Top priorities include providing clean water and sanitation to local neighborhoods and rehabilitating looted schools and clinics.

Lessons learned from the distribution of aid and development funds

We had the privilege of speaking to this Committee one year ago and we reiterate many of the issues that we raised that day.

One of vital lessons we have learned over 85 years of providing humanitarian assistance is the necessity of building good relationships with the community. In our programs in the US and in the 40 countries in which we work, this is a hallmark of our programs – involving the community in identifying their own needs and in working with them to solve their problems. Although building relationships, which translates into building ownership, takes some time, it engenders the trust and credibility needed to move forward with the support of the community to accomplish our joint humanitarian goals and improve security.

To ensure good relations with the local community it is important to hire local staff to lead, coordinate and represent the organization on the ground. The backbone of our programs around the world are our local and national staff that have the cultural skills and knowledge to move forward our programs in communities where US nationals could never work. We have learned that together we can share our varied expertise that result in cutting edge development and humanitarian assistance programming. I have heard over and over from my colleagues that the strength of our programming in Iraq is our Iraqi staff. We have worked side by side with them and they "own" programs there. In addition, gaining acceptance locally for our mission and activities through the efforts of all our staff, but particularly our Iraqi staff, is the foundation to our approach to security.

An area of concern for NGOs in delivering humanitarian assistance in Iraq was the interaction between humanitarian organizations and US military actors on the ground. While interaction between civil and military actors on the ground is both a reality and a necessity, particularly in sharing information about security, the impartiality and neutrality of humanitarian workers and organizations must be maintained. NGOs working in Iraq have been uncomfortable with the influence that the US military has tried to exercise over relief operations through organizations as the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) in Kuwait and ORHA (Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance).

Save the Children and other agencies that are/were providing humanitarian assistance in Iraq drafted a series of principles clarifying what would constitute an unacceptable degree of military control over assistance. We need to be constantly aware of these issues and are monitoring the situation in the field closely to make sure our impartiality and neutrality is maintained.

The Department of Defense must understand that there are very delicate cultural and political issues at play throughout Iraq. For example, in a meeting with Shiite clerics in Kerbala, a colleague noted that he heard tremendous anger and concern about US tanks rolling up next to some of the holiest Shiite shines, and fears this could spontaneously erupt in a bloodbath. We need an experienced leadership that knows how to deal with these cultural and political issues. Rebuilding societies at the individual and communal level requires personal training and experience, just as winning a war does. Unfortunately, not enough people trained in the business of rebuilding societies and communities were enabled to do so.

In the planning and development of responses to the conflict despite repeated requests, the Administration delayed sharing even unclassified details of its humanitarian emergency contingency plans with the NGO community. Without access to such plans, it is virtually impossible for relief agencies to plan properly. We as a community were also stymied for months in our efforts to obtain the required paperwork to conduct assessment missions in Iraq and its neighboring nations. It was not until six months after InterAction first raised the issue – that the Bush Administration streamlined the process for obtaining necessary licenses from the Treasury Department. This was then a welcome and long-overdue development.

Further, funding and forward planning on the issue of protection and the psychosocial needs of a population need to be given a priority whether they be in Iraq or any other country in crisis. The success of any reconstruction effort is that the society itself feels that they too have been assisting in rebuilding their own lives. Many of the people I spoke to said that, "I too need to be rebuilt and reconstructed, where is the help and assistance for us?"

Finally, large-scale contractor plans must include the input, consultation, and ownership of the Iraqi people. Without the partnership of the Iraqis, schools, orphanages, hospitals, and government works will continue to be targeted for looting and destruction. People only really comprehend reconstruction when they themselves are given ownership in the process and pride in the accomplishment.

Lesson learned in rebuilding infrastructure

We have learned that reconstruction requires patience – that rebuilding societies, cities, towns, mosques – doesn't happen overnight. It is vital that communities are given realistic expectations in relation to reconstruction so that disappointment arising from expected delays does not hamper their faith in recovery. In an age where we all are driven to deliver progress in a matter of hours or days, our practical experience demonstrates that the successes after World War II and the Korean war were measurable after many years if not decades.

Not only does building local commitment require patience, we have also learned the lesson that reconstruction must focus not only on material outputs – how many schools

are built, pantries stocked, hospitals supplied – but also on the social infrastructure. Do the women and children feel *safe* enough to go to school or to visit the hospital? Do communities feel enough ownership of physical infrastructure to protect it and maintain it?

Barriers to providing humanitarian assistance in Iraq

The main barrier for anyone working in Iraq continues to be security. Although in some ways life in Iraq is returning to normal – stores are open, people are leaving their homes, children are slowly returning to school – more needs to be done. When we were able to operate in Baghdad parents told us that they would not be letting children attend school because roving criminal gangs were kidnapping children from the neighborhoods.

We are often slow in recognizing a "crisis in protection" whether that be in Uganda, Sudan or indeed in Iraq. Without security and without interventions aimed at ensuring the protection of vulnerable groups in societies any intended benefit can be eroded and mitigated by the lack of protection.

We had reports from our staff in the field that friendly US soldiers were allowing children to ride around on tanks. This is not and was not acceptable from a protection stand point – just consider what would happen if one of these children fell beneath the wheels (and we understand that this did happen with the food trucks). This does not send the right message to our children. In neither the initial Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance program support instruments to NGOs, nor USAID's more recent request for application for community rehabilitation has women and child protection been listed as a prioritized project activity. The US government and NGOs must prioritize the protection needs of women and children in the onset of our humanitarian response

As we have all seen US military, UN and Iraqi officials being targeted for violence by those committed to resisting occupation authority. NGOs are at a growing risk of becoming targets themselves. While I totally agree that the US government should be recognized for their generosity in providing humanitarian assistance, this recognition should not endanger the lives of humanitarian workers and should be handled differently in different situations. There must be a balance between the safety and security of our staff and the need for providing recognition of the funding source.

An important element in ensuring protection and security is a functioning police force. We feel that the US military should have responded sooner in establishing a functioning police force that could have restored order. Until basic order is restored, life-saving humanitarian assistance cannot be delivered with the speed and quantity that is now needed. Many of our European allies have experienced police trainers who are skilled at providing policing and at training the local force at the same time. Kosovo provides a good example of this sort of key policing support.

Recommendations/ Lesson learned

Distribution of aid and development funds

- The USG must ensure that Iraqi people are central to the planning and implementation of projects in Iraq to enable building good relationships with the community. Central to achieving that aim is the importance of hiring local staff to lead, coordinate and represent the organization/ efforts on the ground.

- The US government and NGOs must prioritize the protection needs of women and children in the onset of our humanitarian response.

Rebuilding infrastructure

- The USG should facilitate an expanded role for the United Nations and other international partners for post conflict reconstruction -- the rebuilding of societies should involve those organizations and bodies with the most experience to do so. Further, that reconstruction must focus not only on material outputs but also on the social infrastructure.

Security

- The USG should ensure that Iraq has adequate security by prioritizing the establishment of a functioning police force that can restore order.