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U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS AND STABILIZATION ACTIVITIES IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

FEBRUARY 3, JUNE 23, SEPTEMBER 29, 2005

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CONTENTS

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WITNESSES

U.S. Military Operations and Stabilization Activities in Iraq and Afghanistan

FEBRUARY 3, 2005

	Page
Wolfowitz, Hon. Paul, Deputy Secretary of Defense	6
Myers, Gen. Richard B., USAF, Chief, Joint Chiefs of Staff	22
Schlicher, Ronald L., Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Coordinator for Iraq	24
Quinn, Maureen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Coordinator for Afghanistan	129

U.S. Military Strategy and Operations in Iraq

JUNE 23, 2005

Rumsfeld, Hon. Donald H., U.S. Secretary of Defense	158
Myers, Gen. Richard B., USAF, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff	165
Abizaid, GEN John P., USA, Commander, U.S. Central Command	166
Casey, GEN George W., USA, Commanding General, Multi-National Force-Iraq	167

U.S. Military Strategy and Operations in Iraq

SEPTEMBER 29, 2005

Rumsfeld, Hon. Donald H., Secretary of Defense	245
Myers, Gen. Richard B., USAF, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff	246
Abizaid, GEN John P., USA, Commander, U.S. Central Command	247
Casey, GEN George W., USA, Commanding General, Multi-National Force-Iraq	255

U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS AND STABILIZATION ACTIVITIES IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2005

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m. in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator John Warner (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Warner, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Collins, Talent, Dole, Thune, Levin, Kennedy, Byrd, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Dayton, Bayh, and Clinton.

Committee staff members present: Judith A. Ansley, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Charles W. Alsup, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Gregory T. Kiley, professional staff member; Thomas L. MacKenzie, professional staff member; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; Scott W. Stucky, general counsel; and Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Democratic staff director; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Evelyn N. Farkas, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, minority counsel; Peter K. Levine, minority counsel; and William G.P. Monahan, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Alison E. Brill, Catherine E. Sendak, and Nicholas W. West.

Committee members' assistants present: John A. Bonsell, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Chris Arnold, assistant to Senator Roberts; Arch Galloway II, assistant to Senator Sessions; James P. Dohoney, Jr. and Mackenzie M. Eaglen, assistants to Senator Collins; Lindsey R. Neas, assistant to Senator Talent; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Meredith Moseley, assistant to Senator Graham; Christine O. Hill, assistant to Senator Dole; Sharon L. Waxman and Mieke Y. Eoyang, assistants to Senator Kennedy; Christine Evans and Erik Raven, assistants to Senator Byrd; Frederick M. Downey, assisant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Davelyn Noelani Kalipi and Richard Kessler, assistants to Senator Akaka; William K. Sutey, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric Pierce, assistant to Senator

Ben Nelson; Todd Rosenblum, assistant to Senator Bayh; and Andrew Shapiro, assistant to Senator Clinton.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER, CHAIRMAN

Chairman WARNER. The committee meets this morning to receive the testimony of Secretary Wolfowitz, General Myers, and Mr. Schlicher on the broad range of issues relating to Iraq, Afghanistan, and the other trouble spots in the world. It is the hope of the chair, and I think joined by the ranking member, that we can move along swiftly.

I am going to ask unanimous consent that my full opening statement be placed into the record. But I do want to observe that this past weekend the world had the observation of a courageous people, the Iraqi people, fulfilling the dreams that have been repressed in that nation some half century. That is one dream that we accept on a daily basis here in this great nation, the right to vote.

It was an extraordinary moment, not just in Iraqi history, but world history. It sent a strong message far beyond the borders of Iraq. That event took place because of the sacrifices of the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States, the men and women of the Iraqi Armed Forces, and most importantly the sacrifices of the courageous people of Iraq.

On March 20, 2003, U.S. and coalition forces crossed the borders to start the liberation of those people. We are not finished yet. We will dwell this morning in some detail on where the professional witnesses here view this situation and what remains to be done.

But our President I think most eloquently stated on the afternoon of the election, "Today the people of Iraq have spoken to the world and the world is hearing the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East."

We should also be very mindful that in Afghanistan the elections have been held, after a brutal battle against the Taliban and efforts to eliminate the forces of al Qaeda. These elections were held on October 9, 2004. President Karzai was inaugurated on December 8.

In the aftermath of these historic elections, the committee meets today to receive this testimony, and we have foremost in our mind the sacrifices of so many that made them possible. There were 200 instances of terrorism in the course of the weekend of the elections. The Iraqi forces deserve great credit in showing their professionalism to step up and deal with the polling places and the security situations to enable this election. Coalition forces were at the ready, but, in the words of General Casey, they were really there but not called on. The Iraqi security forces did the job.

We hope that harkens for the future, because our plans are to strengthen in every way possible the effort to train these forces, and we are anxious to hear from General Myers particularly this morning as to the plans of Generals Abizaid and Casey and the recommendations of General Luck and his team that went over there.

We learned that there will probably be a concept of integrating small numbers of our forces into the Iraqi units. It seems to this Senator a very wise and sound tactic. But I congratulate certainly our President, the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy, the Chairman,

the Secretary of State and his team, and all that made it possible for these accomplishments to date and making clear what remains to be done.

We will hear, I think, from the Secretary this morning in some detail the steps that must be now taken to put in place the new government. It is going to be somewhat time-consuming in the judgment of this Senator. The election results have to be confirmed, then a series of steps must be taken to put in place a prime minister, and a series of other ministers have to be ratified. The basic security for each of these individuals must be developed as well as the infrastructure in which to bring this enlarged and new interim government, preparing to write a constitution and to have subsequent elections in December.

So I conclude by again expressing my deep reverence and concern and compassion for all the sacrifices that have taken place to enable the success that we have had thus far.

The Iraqis understand, however, very clearly the need for U.S. and coalition forces to stay and assist them in developing the capacity to ensure the security of their country. I quote interim President al-Yawer, who stated on Monday: "It is only complete nonsense to ask the troops to leave in this chaos and vacuum of power."

I commend our distinguished colleague Senator Lieberman, who earlier today in a public setting addressed the issues as he saw them—and I agree with you, Senator—on what lays ahead on the road for the eventual return of our forces and other coalition forces.

So with that I conclude and put the balance of my statement in the record, and I turn to our distinguished colleague the ranking member.

[The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JOHN WARNER

On March 20, 2003, U.S. and coalition forces crossed the Iraq-Kuwait border and began the liberation of Iraq. Twenty-three months later—last Sunday—the Iraqi people took a bold, courageous step—in defiance of the terrorists—on the path to liberation. This important milestone would not have been possible without the contributions of the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces, their coalition partners, and the Iraqi security forces. President Bush characterized it eloquently on Sunday afternoon when he said, "Today the people of Iraq have spoken to the world and the world is hearing the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East."

Similarly, 3 years after U.S. forces initiated operations to liberate Afghanistan from the brutal rule of the Taliban and to eliminate al Qaeda training bases and sanctuaries, elections were held on October 9, 2004 and President Karzai was inaugurated on December 8. The Taliban is gone and al Qaeda is scattered and on the run. The Afghan people have spoken in favor of freedom and democracy.

In the aftermath of these historic elections, the committee meets today to receive testimony on continuing U.S. policy and military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We welcome our witnesses: Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz; General Richard B. Myers, USAF, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Ronald L. Schlicher, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraqi Affairs. We look forward to your testimony.

Many of us take the freedoms and liberties we have in our country for granted. How humbling and awe-inspiring it was to watch the Iraqi people—in defiance of the terrorists—go in large numbers to vote, in pursuit of their dream for a free, prosperous nation. How heartening it was to see the Iraqi security forces step up to the task, and perform admirably in providing a relatively secure environment for the voters. This has inspired pride and confidence in the Iraqi security forces, as evidenced by the fact that over 3,000 Iraqis volunteered to join the new Iraqi Army in the days immediately after the election.

Clearly, there remains much to be done to help the Iraqi people realize their dream, but they have seized the moment to free themselves of a tyrannical past and to soundly reject the insurgent violence of the moment. We can be justly proud of being their partners in this worthy endeavor.

I want to congratulate each of you, and the countless men and women who you represent, for this historic accomplishment. Many had begun to question whether the sacrifices our soldiers and diplomats were making in a decidedly difficult environment were justified. The efforts of these brave Americans were given a strong vote of confidence on Sunday by the courage of the Iraqi people.

The elections in Iraq and Afghanistan have stoked the fires of liberty and democracy in these lands and in the entire region. In this moment of optimism for the future, our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who have been lost or seriously wounded defending liberty on distant shores, helping oppressed nations find their way to freedom.

While I do believe that a measure of optimism is warranted, we should harbor no illusions about the difficult work ahead. The Iraqis must construct a constitution and a government that is inclusive of all ethnic, religious, and tribal elements that represent the richness of the Iraqi nation and its heritage. We must help them develop the security forces that will enable political and economic development.

As we absorb the significance and meaning of this election, the question highest in the minds of the American people is: "When are our troops coming home?" It is an important question, but a complex one, and one our witnesses will address today.

The question of an exit strategy has been the subject of much discussion in recent days. I prefer to talk about an overall strategy to achieve our goals—goals that are tied to clear milestones and objectives; not to dates on a calendar. Once those goals are achieved, we can and should begin an orderly departure.

The Iraqis understand the need for U.S. and coalition forces to stay and assist them in developing the capacity to ensure the security of their country. As President al-Yawer stated on Monday, "It's only complete nonsense to ask the troops to leave in this chaos and vacuum of power."

As we discuss the way ahead, we must make it clear to Iraqis and all others that we remain committed to successfully completing the mission. We will adjust tactics as goals are achieved, giving the Iraqi forces as much responsibility as they believe they can assume. It worked in this election; it can work in the future.

It has become apparent in recent months that a key element of our strategy in Iraq is the training, equipping, and mentoring of the Iraqi security forces—in sufficient numbers and sufficient quality—so that they will be able to take over responsibility for defending their nation from both external and internal threats. The performance of these forces in providing security for the elections was a promising sign, but they are far from ready for the full range of current and future missions.

Over the past several months, many members of this committee have traveled to the region. Most of us have met with General Casey and Lieutenant General Petraeus to discuss the security situation and the status of efforts to train the Iraqi security forces. It is a difficult undertaking. We all recognize that a young person who has just gone through a few weeks of training is not a seasoned, ready combat troop or a street smart cop. Readiness to take over full responsibility for security involves many dimensions in addition to the number of "trained and equipped" soldiers or police. It involves competent, trustworthy leadership; equipment readiness; patriotism; unit cohesion; and acceptance by the people, among many other things. Building forces fully prepared to undertake these responsibilities takes time. The committee received a comprehensive briefing from the Department yesterday on this mission and what remains to be done. We must not lose patience now when the path to success is clear.

The days and months ahead will not be easy and more sacrifice of American lives and treasure will be required to transform Sunday's election into the permanent symbol of Iraq's march to democracy it deserves to be. The insurgency will not go away immediately. Those determined to return to the past will not give up easily. They can be defeated however, with our help and with our willingness to stay the course, not only militarily, but across the broad spectrum of political, economic, and social development.

Finishing the liberation and democratization of Iraq is a worthy cause, and a cause about which our men and women in uniform can be justifiably proud. It is my sincere hope that the elections and the optimism they have produced will be perceived as a great opportunity for more nations to join in this noble endeavor. It is not only the United States and its coalition partners that have a stake in Iraq. The whole world will be a better, safer place with a free, democratic, prosperous Iraq that will serve as a model of hope and inspiration for the region and beyond.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Senator LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Last weekend millions of Iraqis, many at great personal risk and many who walked long distances, exercised their right to vote in the elections. They walked through a door that was opened by our soldiers and marines, who worked so bravely and tirelessly in the development and execution of a complex security plan that made the election possible.

The challenge now is to defeat the continuing insurgency, to find a way to involve the Sunnis in the political process, and to ensure that minority rights are enshrined in a new constitution, which is scheduled to be considered by referendum this fall. It is essential that we develop what should have been developed before we initiated military operations: an exit strategy. Once we see who the new government is, we should discuss with that government what our exit strategy will be.

Part of that strategy should be to promptly end our status as an occupying power. The insurgents have used that status against us in their propaganda. If the new Iraqi Government invites the international community, including us, to stay on, that invitation would end our status as an occupying power because we would then be there at the invitation of a democratically elected Iraqi Government, just as we are in South Korea at the invitation of a democratically elected South Korean Government.

Such an invitation from an Iraqi Government could also for the first time bring the military forces of Muslim nations into the international coalition.

In the meantime, we should move ahead on an accelerated basis with the training and equipping of the Iraqi security forces. Part of that effort must be a realistic assessment of the capabilities of those forces now. We should stop exaggerating the number of Iraqi security forces that have already been fully trained and are capable and willing to take on the insurgency. We need to mix a healthy dose of realism with our hopes. Currently we have no way of measuring the capabilities of Iraqi security forces. We have to establish badly needed training and equipping standards for Iraqi units, which will allow an assessment of their readiness and capability.

We already have a model in the unit status report system, by which we judge the readiness of our own military forces. Only in that way will we be able to determine and apply the resources required to establish and maintain the necessary readiness and capabilities in Iraqi units which will allow American units to turn over security responsibilities to Iraqis.

The elections in Iraq were an important milestone in a long process. That process will continue to require sacrifices of our military personnel and significant additional resources. I am satisfied those resources should be provided and will be provided. Regardless of the differences over the policies which isolated us from most of the world and all of the Muslim world when we went into Iraq, regardless of the mistakes that were made in failing to have a plan for the post-combat stability phase and in thoughtlessly disbanding the Iraqi Army, it is essential that we support our troops. Now that we are there, we must succeed in leaving Iraq secure and free of major civil strife.

I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses laying out the plans for the next phase in Iraq, as well as addressing the next steps in Afghanistan.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

I note that yesterday afternoon this committee had an extensive briefing from members of the Department of Defense (DOD). I know other members present here expressed their appreciation for a detailed briefing which I believe, Senator Levin, went a long way to clarify the means by which we are assessing the degree of achievement in training and the professional capabilities of the Iraqi spectrum of security forces from police through and including the Guard and Reserve.

That by necessity was behind closed doors, but I feel that our witnesses today will make some reference to the same material we received yesterday.

I also am very pleased to note the presence, at the invitation of the chair and the ranking member, of Ambassador Maureen Quinn, the Coordinator for Afghanistan. Good morning, Madam Ambassador. We thank you and perhaps at some point in the course of the questioning we will ask you to join the panel.

Secretary Wolfowitz.

STATEMENT OF HON. PAUL WOLFOWITZ, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity. We meet in an historic week in the history of Iraq and our relations with Iraq. There are some appropriate cautions that people give about avoiding euphoria at this moment. I think those cautions are correct. I think the right way to think of what happened on Sunday is that it was a major victorious battle in a war that is still not yet won, and it is appropriate to celebrate that victory, but it is also important to think about the way ahead.

As we do so, I think it is particularly appropriate to pay honor to the memory of the 1,417 Americans that have been killed so far in this effort, but also to the 1,342 Iraqi police and army that have been killed and 126 other coalition members that have been killed. This has been a victory that has been won at considerable cost.

That sacrifice has not been lost on the Iraqi people themselves. An Iraqi blogger—which are the people who post their news on Web sites—this one named Allah, publishes his views on a Web site called "The Mesopotamian." He stated it eloquently on election day when he wrote: "My condolences to the great American people for their recent tragic losses of soldiers. The blood of Iraqis and Americans is being shed on the soil of Mesopotamia, a baptism with blood, a baptism of a lasting friendship and alliance for many years to come through thick and thin. We shall never forget the brave soldiers fallen while defending our freedom in the future." I think we had a most vivid expression of that in that remarkable hug that we all witnessed last night.

I would like to thank the members of this committee and the entire Congress for your continued support to our great men and women in uniform and to their civilian counterparts, including sev-

eral State Department officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq.

At the end of the day, the indispensable heroes of Sunday's historic events were the Iraqi voters who risked their lives, and at least 35 of whom paid with their lives to vote for their government representatives for the first time in their lives. As Lieutenant General Thomas Metz, the Commander of the Multinational Corps Iraq, said in congratulating his troops for the magnificent job they did on January 30: "The one thing we could not do for the Iraqis was vote and, impressively, millions of them had the courage to do so."

One of the most impressive examples of that courage occurred in Baghdad when a bomber approached the line of voters outside a primary school polling place. A 14-year police veteran named Abdul Amir al-Shuwayli pushed the bomber away, yelling: "Let me save my people, let me save my friends." As a result of al-Shuwayli's heroism, the bomber was only able to detonate his belt of explosives 50 feet away from the voting line, saving the lives of countless Iraqis but taking the life of this brave Iraqi policeman. This is one of several instances in which Iraqi police and soldiers gave their lives to shield Iraqi voters from suicide bombers and insurgents trying to penetrate the security rings around polling sites.

I think it might be appropriate on this occasion, Mr. Chairman, to put up the article from USA Today and the picture of Sergeant al-Shuwayli. I think he deserves that kind of recognition.

[The information referred to follows:]

USA TODAY · WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2005 · 9A

World

Iraqi policeman gives his life to protect young democracy

Allawi hails officer who saved voters

By Gregg Zoroya
USA TODAY

BAGHDAD — Policemen guarding a polling station in Baghdad's Mansour neighborhood Sunday recognized the suicide bomber immediately. The young man was wearing Chinese-made high-top tennis shoes, a leather jacket and a red head scarf — the same kind of clothes as worn by an attacker at another site that same day.

Fourteen-year police veteran Abdul Amir al-Shuwayli, 29, acted without hesitation.

The bomber was steps away from a line of voters heading into Al-Zahour Primary School when Shuwayli moved toward him, police Capt. Firaz Mohammed Ali said. According to Ali, Shuwayli yelled, "Let me save the people. Let me save my friends."

Shuwayli threw his arms around the bomber and drove him backward about 50 feet into an intersection. The rush seemed to catch the suicide attacker by surprise. The bomber had a hand grenade but failed to throw it. A second or two passed before he detonated a belt of explosives, police Lt. Col. Kadham Abbas said.

The blast shredded Shuwayli, whose body took the brunt of the explosion. It also tore the bomber apart, leaving only his face intact. Shrapnel injured three other officers and perforated walls around the intersection. Windows in nearby homes shattered.

Voters continued to line up.

"Suicide bombers are not the only ones willing to give up their lives," said Ali, one of Shuwayli's commanders. "We have some people who are ready to die as well."

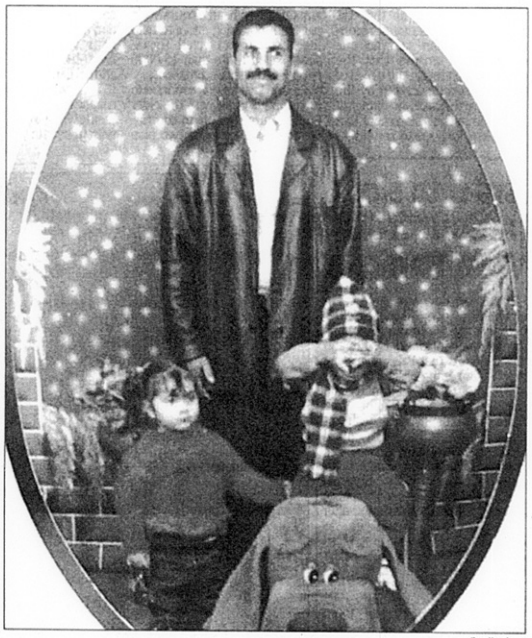
On Monday, interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi eulogized Shuwayli in televised remarks and declared him a young democracy's first champion. "The martyr gave his life for his country," Allawi said. "Abdul Amir is a real hero of our nation."

At the policeman's funeral Tuesday, held under a bright red tent on a street outside the home he shared with his four brothers and three sisters in southern Baghdad, family members said it was the kind of sacrifice they had long dreaded.

"We were expecting him to be killed," Shuwayli's younger sister, Amir, said softly. She wore a black head scarf and dress, her face a mask of sorrow.

She said her brother was a news junkie who followed every detail of Iraq's struggle against the militants who have killed so many civilians and police.

"He was ready to give of himself to others," Amir said as she sat in her brother's bedroom. "We knew that about him."



Family photo

"Hero of our nation": Abdul Amir al-Shuwayli, 29, appears with two young relatives in a photo displayed at his funeral. He died Sunday when he thwarted a suicide bomb attack.

The family has left the room as he kept it. Abdul Amir's jacket and shirt hang neatly from a peg on his bureau. His favorite incense burns, and his water pipe sits at the foot of his bed.

Shuwayli, a Shiite Arab, had decorated the walls with religious imagery and a family tree for the prophet Mohammed.

The third of eight adult children, Abdul Amir was a single man, following an Iraqi tradition of waiting for his sisters to marry before choosing a wife. As a police officer, he earned $235 a month.

As roast lamb and rice were served under the funeral tent, and family and tribal members gathered to mourn, Iraqi police convoys kept driving up to the house so fellow officers could pay their respects.

The family's neighborhood is rife with insurgents, and the convoys would not linger. Officers fired rifles into the air to disperse traffic so the police vehicles could leave quickly before becoming targets.

"He hated the insurgents," Amir said of her brother as the truckloads of police wheeled into the neighborhood. "His main interest was in fighting them."

Police Capt. Ali, interviewed at the Mansour police headquarters where Shuwayli was stationed, said he visited the blast site minutes after the explosion Sunday.

He was surveying the scene of carnage when he saw something he found remarkable.

Residents began coming out of their homes and lining up in even greater numbers after the explosion.

"They were stepping on the bits and pieces of the insurgent with their feet as they walked in to vote," Ali said.

I would note that in fact, according to our reports, of eight attempted suicide bombings, every one of them was stopped by Iraqi security forces at the outer security perimeter. That is a pretty impressive 100 percent record. From what we can tell from reports—and we are still checking on this—that life-giving sacrifice by Po-

liceman al-Shuwayli was not the only such incident. There seems to be another one in which a policeman was inspecting an attacker when he discovered the explosive-laden belt. The attacker pushed him to the ground, ran toward the polling station, and this policeman pursued him, tackling him outside the station in a body embrace that triggered the explosives. There seem to be, from what we can tell, two separate instances of devotion far above and beyond the call of duty.

Although the final tally of votes will not be known for several days, it is already clear that Sunday's election has been an epoch-making event. But as impressive as that election was, Iraq still faces a very difficult road ahead to defeat the terrorist threat and to achieve stability, much less freedom and democracy. Nevertheless, I think it is appropriate to take just a few moments to dwell on the breath-taking images we saw this past weekend.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, I thought, since a picture is worth a thousand words, I could save you many words and some minutes by handing out this packet of photos that my staff pulled off the Internet. I am not quite sure about copyright, so I am a little concerned about distributing beyond the members of the committee. But I think if you look at them, there is just an incredible story there of Iraqi passion for democracy.

[The packet of photographs referenced by Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz has been retained in committee files.]

Two of my favorites, if I could hold them up for a minute, are this one of an old man crying as he puts his ballot in; and then this one of two young women hugging each other and crying.

We saw an incredible display of passion for democracy. But I would say even more significantly, we saw incredible bravery. It is important to remember that. This demonstration of Iraqi commitment to the newfound democracy took place in the face of a systematic campaign of terror and intimidation that is almost unimaginable to most Americans. It included assassinations and beheadings of election workers. It included threats to the children of candidates and threats to ordinary voters, not just risking their lives when they went to the polls, but fearful of what might happen to them afterwards.

We who are lucky enough to take for granted that our elections will take place in complete peace and security can not appreciate the significance of what Iraqi voters have just done. Indeed, I think some of the most remarkable stories from last Sunday are about the courage of these voters. Two in particular that I heard from General Hamm, who is our commander up in Mosul, are worth repeating.

At one polling station in Mosul—and I would point out it was in a Sunni Arab neighborhood—the polls had been open for 2 hours and no one had come to vote, but there was a crowd gathered some distance from the polls to watch what happened. Finally, an old woman who seemed to be in her late sixties came forward and said, "I have waited all my life for this opportunity," and she came forward to vote and the rest of the crowd followed.

At another polling place in Mosul, also in a Sunni Arab neighborhood, the enemy actually brought a line of voters under small arms fire, wounding one of the voters. No doubt they expected the other

voters to run. They did exactly the opposite. They stayed in line. They shifted the line and crouched down to protect the wounded voter while Iraqi soldiers evacuated him to a hospital.

Forty-four Iraqis lost their lives attempting to cast their ballots. By 1 p.m. Sunday, terrorists had launched a record seven suicide bombings in Baghdad and one south of Baghdad. Despite that violence, the Iraqis did not leave the lines that they had waited all their lives for.

Before the election there was concern that this purple dye that was used to mark voters' fingers—as a fraud prevention measure—could become an intimidation instrument, that people would be fearful that it would target them from the terrorists. But rather than deterring people, these marks have become a purple badge of courage, as you will see in these photos I am sure you have seen already.

One Sunni voter raised his forefinger and declared: "This is my badge of honor and, no, I am not keeping my hand in my pocket." Another Iraqi wrote: "When I moved to mark my finger with ink, I dipped it in deep, as if I was poking the eyes of all the world's tyrants."

Mr. Chairman, this election also helps to clarify without a doubt who the enemy is in Iraq. Our enemy in Iraq is not the Iraqi people. It is not a nationalist insurgency. It is an unholy alliance of old terrorists and new terrorists. The old terrorists are the ones who brutalized and tortured the country and murdered hundreds of thousands of their countrymen over the course of 3½ decades.

These secret security forces of the former regime, best analogized I think to the Gestapo and the SS of the Nazi regime, are now allied with the new terrorists drawn from across the region. Like their Baathist allies, these new terrorists are ideologically opposed to democracy and fearful of what the success of freedom in this important Arab country will mean for them.

Just 1 month before the election, Osama bin Laden declared, "Any Iraqi who takes part in this election consciously and willingly is an infidel." With that statement, bin Laden made preventing the Iraqi election one of al Qaeda's highest priorities and provided ideological justification for murdering Iraqi voters.

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, bin Laden's appointed prince in Iraq, also denounced the election. Indeed, he denounced democracy more broadly, declaring "a fierce war on this evil principle of democracy and those who follow this wrong ideology." "Democracy," he said, "is based on the right to choose your representatives and that is against the rule of God."

Through their opposition to elections and democracy, the terrorists have demonstrated that they are not interested in winning hearts and minds, but rather to simply intimidate the Iraqi people into submission. Unlike almost every other historical insurgency, they offer no positive agenda beyond their own pursuit of power, and they explicitly seek to deny Iraqis a voice in their future. That is why Iraqis refer to such men as Abdul Latif Humain, a so-called "religious" adviser to Saddam before the fall of the regime, who fled the country with large amounts of money, leaving his recruits behind, as terrorists.

Yet the determination of the terrorists to disrupt the election was defeated by the overwhelming majority of Iraqis, who want democracy to prevail. As Major General John Batiste, commander of our 1st Infantry Division, said, "Iraq votes are bullets to the hearts of the terrorists." Iraqis know who they are fighting and they know they are fighting people who want to take them backwards to some new form of dictatorship as terrible as the one they have just been liberated from.

Mr. Chairman, as dramatic a moment as these elections were, this is not a time to sit on our hands congratulating ourselves, nor to declare victory and abandon a task that is only half accomplished. Although I find it hard to agree with anyone who would say that the election was just the easy part—it was hardly easy—there is no question that there is still much hard work to be done, principally by the Iraqis themselves, but also by those of us upon whom they still depend for support.

While the election clearly demonstrated that the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people do not lie with the terrorists, no one should imagine for one moment that these would-be tyrants will quit just because of Sunday's vote. The next few months will be particularly challenging because, while this election will produce a national assembly, that body will still face a formidable challenge to putting together a government, and it must do so in the face of a continuing war against a brutal enemy.

Mr. Chairman, while attempting to think about our immediate focused efforts in the next few months, I would suggest there are five. First is to recognize that success in this effort will require the integration of all elements of national power, both U.S. and Iraqi, as well as those of our coalition partners and hopefully others who may join in now. This is not a military effort alone and there must be equal and parallel efforts in governance and infrastructure, in economic development, in strategic information. Governance in particular presents important challenges, not only in standing up a government and writing a constitution, but in establishing government ministries that can both function effectively, which is enough of a challenge, but also that will serve the interests of the people, not their own personal agendas. The entire international community has an interest in the success of that effort.

Second, there will be many difficult compromises that will have to be made among different Iraqi groups, on everything from fundamental constitutional questions to practical questions involving the sharing of power and resources. Iraqis will have to work out these compromises. That is a big part of what democracy is really about. But we have enormous influence in Iraq and we should use it, not to advance our own agenda, but to constantly remind Iraqis of the importance of resolving these issues in ways that preserve national unity in the face of a ruthless enemy.

Third—and I will talk more about this in a few minutes—on the military side, the key to victory clearly lies in developing more and increasingly capable Iraqi security forces. That effort has produced important successes so far and we need to learn the lessons from those successes so that we can build on it and hopefully accelerate it.

Fourth, we and the Iraqis need to attach high priority to the development of an effective legal and judicial system, one that enforces the rule of law, that punishes the guilty, that protects the rights of all citizens, and that provides the equal justice under law that is not only a key hallmark of democracy, but which is also crucial for fighting corruption and promoting economic development.

Iraq's currently weak judicial system is not yet able to punish lawbreakers effectively, even those who are guilty of the most serious crimes against the Iraqi people and against coalition forces. Finding ways to protect judges from intimidation needs to be a high priority. We also need to help the Iraqi Government strengthen the tools of law enforcement through everything from better communications equipment to identification systems for criminals and foreigners to forensic bomb analysis capability.

Fifth, we need to work with the Iraqi Government to keep up pressure on neighboring countries, particularly Syria, to stop the activities of Baathists and other terrorist supporters working from outside Iraqi and to stop the flow of foreign fighters into the country. Some of Iraq's neighbors probably fear a free Iraq, but they need to understand that it will be much more harmful for them if they try to obstruct Iraq's progress toward freedom.

Let us remember that we are facing an enemy who is not only ruthless, but adaptive and fiendlishly clever, an enemy who obviously did not give up just because Baghdad was liberated, that did not give up just because Saddam Hussein was captured, and that did not give up just because the interim government was stood up successfully on June 28. It is an enemy that will adapt, and we need to be prepared for its adaptations and anticipate them and try to be ahead of them.

But the good news, Mr. Chairman, is that this enemy does not offer anything positive to the Iraqi people. It is not an enemy that can ever defeat our soldiers one for one on the battlefield. It is an enemy that has shown itself to be horribly clever and viciously evil, with no respect for the laws of civilization or for the Iraqi people. But that will be their undoing. Ultimately it is the Iraqi people who will defeat them, with our continued help.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Schlicher I think will discuss in more detail the political process going forward. I have already emphasized the critical importance in that process of compromise. There has been a lot of attention given to the fact that the election results may be distorted by the fact that intimidation was much more severe in predominantly Sunni areas, not because I think Sunnis predominantly support the insurgency, but because the insurgents are predominantly Sunni and that is where they live. That is I think why the vote was particularly low in places like the Al-Anbar Province.

What I find encouraging is that the non-Sunnis have been very forceful in expressions like this one that came from the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) chief, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, who leads, I believe, or is near the top of this United Iraq Alliance list. "The National Assembly"—and this from a Shia cleric—shall represent all Iraqi strata and we will make an all-out effort to this end. We will defend the rights of our Sunni brothers just the same way we do for those of the Shiites."

I think these statements are good indicators that Iraqis will work to form a transitional government that will attend to the interests of all Iraqis, including those Sunni Arabs whose vote was suppressed by severe intimidation in some places.

Mr. Chairman, I know this committee has a particular interest, as do we in the DOD, in the development of Iraqi security forces. I think it is worth recalling that last year we intercepted a letter from Abu Musab al-Zarqawi to his al Qaeda colleagues in Afghanistan. In that letter he warned of the dangers of Iraqi sovereignty and especially the creation of capable Iraqi security forces. He wrote, "With the spread of the Iraqi Army and the police, our future is becoming frightening. You end up having an army and police connected by lineage, blood, and appearance to the people of the region. How can we kill their cousins and sons? This is a democracy; we will have no pretext."

Mr. Chairman, the endeavor to create those forces has not been without setbacks and disappointments. Most significantly, barbaric acts of intimidation have targeted Iraqi soldiers and police and their families, thinning the ranks of some units and rendering others ineffective. Let me recall that since June 2003 nearly 1,400 Iraqi soldiers and policemen—I would say that is by our count, which may well be an underestimate—nearly 1,400 Iraqi soldiers and policemen have been killed in the line of duty as they sought to defend their newfound freedom.

Through it all, however, the coalition and the Iraqis have continued to press forward, modifying training programs, adapting operational constructs, and increasing equipment authorizations. Throughout that we have had strong support from this committee and from the U.S. Congress that has been critical in making that progress possible.

Mr. Chairman, this progress does not always transfer into quantifiable measures, and the quantifiable measures we come up with are sometimes undone by the shifting in categories. The shifting in categories is a necessary adaptation to circumstances and I know it gets confusing, even to those of us who track it every day.

One that I think has caused particular confusion, and let me just try to clear it up, has to do with this change when we were carrying numbers on the order of 200,000 and it seemed to suddenly drop to 130,000. Those 70,000 people are people we had always identified as the least trained, I sometimes call them a kind of Pinkerton Guard Force, the so-called Facilities Protection Service, and we took them out of our counts, frankly, because the Iraqis took them out of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior and shifted them over to individual ministries where they were protecting oil or protecting electricity. Since they are not part of the training responsibility of General Petraeus's command, we thought it was better not to keep them in the number count. They are still there. They performed even on election day.

More generally, we have repeatedly tried to caution against making too much of raw numbers when there are large qualitative differences that are generally more important. The term "trained and equipped" when applied to Iraqi forces cannot be analogized to how we measure readiness in American military units.

One impressive metric is the one I mentioned last Sunday, the number of suicide bombers that were stopped at the outer security perimeter of the polling sites. That was 100 percent out of a total of eight attempted attacks and it is an impressive record.

Measurement is also complicated by the fact that there has been a consistent development of new kinds of units with different capabilities. One such unit is the special police commando battalions, which are an entirely Iraqi invention. The first one I believe was formed only last November. They are among a number of different kinds of units that have the important capability that they can be deployed anywhere in the country, not just in their local area.

Since Prime Minister Allawi took office last June, 44 deployable military and police battalions out of a total of 85 battalions overall have been established. The additional battalions include regionally-oriented National Guard battalions that were recently incorporated into the Iraqi Army. These deployable battalions have the feature that they can be moved anywhere in the country and in many cases currently are deployed in the most challenging areas. They are responsible in no small measure for the successful security that we achieved in Mosul and Baghdad on election day. There were seven such battalions helping maintain security in Mosul, nine in Fallujah, three in Samarra, and at least seven in Baghdad.

At the same time, none of these Iraqi forces are capable of replacing coalition units on a one for one basis. In fact, they may never be one for one the equivalent of our forces. But in some respects they will always be superior. What do I mean by that? I mean that they bring to the fight skills that our soldiers will never possess, particularly their understanding of the languages and cultures of Iraq, their ability to immediately recognize just by how someone speaks whether he is an Iraqi or a foreigner—that is no small talent—and they will contribute even more as we and Iraq leaders continue their development, replace their losses, and help develop their higher headquarters, combat support elements, and logistical units and systems needed for their support.

As we try to increase the speed with which they grow and with which, more importantly, they improve qualitatively, a major component in the effort will be the substantially increased emphasis that General Casey, our great commander in Iraqi, has directed be given to Iraqi security force development this year. Increasingly, I think you could say Iraqis have what I would call the hardware force component of personnel, equipment, and infrastructure. Their most important gaps are in the intangible components that all successful military units need, what you might call the software: leadership, command and control arrangements, experience, and unit cohesion. These intangibles take time to develop. Some of them are, frankly, best developed by actual combat experience. Some of the most important development will therefore take place on the job, in active military operations.

Mr. Chairman, the President and Secretary Rumsfeld are committed to providing the resources needed for this endeavor and the forthcoming request for supplemental funding will include a substantial funding request for expansion of the Iraqi security force effort. We are counting on your support and I am confident we will have it.

In sum, we believe that considerable momentum has been achieved in the development of Iraqi security forces. However, much remains to be done as we help Iraq build not just battalions, brigades, and divisions, but the institutions that support them and the civilian ministries that direct them. That is an enormous endeavor. It is historically unprecedented. It has encountered challenges and suffered setbacks. But in recent months we have seen the results of the coalition's investigation, most importantly in the performance of Iraqi units deployed to hot spots on January 30.

Mr. Chairman, democracy is on the march in Iraq and this past Sunday Iraq's own army and police force helped to safeguard that march. Their performance was captured in an anecdote related by another Iraqi blogger, this one named Ali, on his Web site, which is called "Iraqi Lib," I guess meaning "liberation." He describes an encounter with one of the guards. He does not say whether he was a soldier or a policeman. The guard actually apologized to the voters for searching them. He said: "We do not know how to thank you; please excuse any inconvenience on our part. We wish we did not have to search you or limit your freedom. You are heroes."

I think that politeness from an Iraq soldier was something that is probably also a bit unprecedented in that country. This Iraqi voter said: "I thanked him back and told him that he and his comrades are the true heroes and that we can never be grateful enough for their services."

Mr. Chairman, today we all share that gratitude for the courage of the Iraqi forces and for the courage and sacrifice of American service men and women who have done so much to help bring Iraq to this moment and, hopefully, soon to many more like it.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Wolfowitz follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. PAUL D. WOLFOWITZ

HEROISM AND SACRIFICE

Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee, I am happy to be here today to testify on the Iraqi election and on our strategy for Iraq in the coming months. On the eve of the election, an American lieutenant stationed near Baquba wrote:

> The soldiers of 2–63 armor battalion are out there hardening the election sites and working around the clock to provide security for the Iraqis. I'm pretty excited about being out there for something historical. Not all my soldiers can be out there but I have guys begging to be taken out in sector. Seeing how bad these locals want the elections to happen has been pretty inspiring for us.

I believe it goes without saying that Sunday's events, both in the bravery of the Iraqi people, as well as in the dedication of our men and women in uniform, is inspiring to all of us as well.

It is impossible to say enough about the heroism and sacrifice that it took to make this day possible. U.S. troops and our Iraqi and other coalition partners did an incredible job in preparation for the election, safely moving more than 3 million tons of election programs, and helping to secure more than 5,000 polling stations throughout Iraq.

American soldiers, marines, sailors, airmen, and coast guardsmen, as well as their civilian colleagues serving in Iraq, have performed magnificently, not just on election day but throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom. Each day for almost 2 years, American men and women have put their lives on the line to protect our security, and to help bring freedom to Iraq. Whether rooting terrorists out of strongholds such as Najaf and Fallujah, or rolling up their sleeves to rebuild and paint Iraqi schools, they have performed their duties nobly and without complaint. They have

done everything that has been asked of them and more. More than 1,400 Americans have lost their lives in the process, and thousands more have been wounded.

This sacrifice has not been lost on the Iraqi people themselves. The Iraqi blogger named "Alaa"—who publishes his views on the Web site called The Mesopotamian—stated it eloquently on election day when he wrote:

> "My condolences to the great American people for the tragic recent losses of soldiers. The blood of Iraqis and Americans is being shed on the soil of Mesopotamia; a baptism with blood. A baptism of a lasting friendship and alliance, for many years to come, through thick and thin, we shall never forget the brave soldiers fallen while defending our freedom and future."

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of these brave young Americans, I'd like to thank the members of this committee and the entire Congress for their continued support to our great men and women in uniform and to their civilian counterparts.

At the end of the day the indispensable heroes of Sunday's historic events were the Iraqi voters who risked their lives—and at least 35 of whom paid with their lives—to vote for their government representatives for the first time in their lives. As Lieuteant General Thomas Metz, Commander of the Multinational Corps-Iraq, said in congratulating his troops for the magnificent job they did on January 30, "the one thing we could not do for the Iraqis was vote"—and, impressively, millions of them had the courage to do so.

Sunday's election in Iraq was also a heartening testament to the growing capabilities of the Iraqi security forces. On election day, those forces—and millions of Iraqi citizens—stood very tall, demonstrating courage and determination in the face of over 100 attempts to disrupt the voting process.

Coalition planning, backup, and assistance were very important on Sunday; however, it was alert, determined Iraqis who ensured that the elections were not disrupted throughout the country—and who suffered the vast majority of the casualties.

One of the most impressive examples of Iraqi heroism occurred in Baghdad when a bomber approached the line of voters outside the Al-Zahour Primary School. Fourteen-year police veteran Abdul Amir al-Shuwayli pushed him away yelling, "Let me save my people. Let me save my friends." As a result of al Shuwayli's heroism, the bomber was only able to detonate his belt of explosives 50 feet away from the voting line, saving the lives of countless Iraqis, but taking the life of this brave Iraqi policeman. This is one of several instances in which Iraqi police and soldiers gave their lives shielding Iraqi voters from suicide bombers and insurgents trying to penetrate the security rings around polling sites.

The performance of Iraqi soldiers and police this past week is the most visible and tangible evidence of progress from our substantial investment in Iraqi security forces over the past year—and, in particular, over the past 6 months.

AN EPOCH-MAKING EVENT

Although the final tally of votes will not be known for several days, it is already clear that Sunday's election in Iraq has been an epoch-making event. As President Bush noted, by successfully conducting free elections, Iraqi men and women have taken rightful control of their country's destiny, and have chosen a future of freedom and of peace. There is almost no precedent for this event in modem Arab history, where too often the voice of tyrants and terrorists has predominated. But on Sunday, the voice of liberty resounded from the center of the Middle East.

As impressive as Sunday's election was, Iraq still faces a difficult road ahead to defeat the terrorist threat and achieve stability, much less freedom and democracy. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to take a moment to dwell on the breathtaking images we saw this past weekend, and the stories of Iraqi bravery and fortitude that have emerged from this election, because this election was not only a demonstration of the passion of the Iraqi people for the opportunity they have been given for self-government—although it was certainly that. It also had strategic significance in the ongoing war, because it was a demonstration of Iraqi bravery and also a statement of the "correlation of forces," a statement to both the old terrorists who used to run the country and the new terrorists like Zarqawi who have joined them to fight democracy that the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people do not support them. That is the meaning of scenes like these:

- Iraqis, some dressed in their finest clothes, could be seen dancing and singing as they waited in line to vote. Mohammed Nuhair Rubaie, the director of a polling station in Baghdad's Sunni neighborhood of Tunis, said: "It's like a wedding. I swear to God, it's a wedding for all of Iraq. No one has ever witnessed this before. For a half-century, no one has seen anything like it."

• Crowds of Iraqis formed phalanxes to protect themselves as they marched, almost parade-like, to the polling centers. When a polling station closed in one Sunni town, thousands of people lined the highway as they walked 13 miles to Gazalia to vote for the first time in their lives.

• Samir Hassan, who lost his leg in a Baghdad bombing in October 2003, stated: "I would have crawled here if I had to. I don't want terrorists to kill other Iraqis like they tried to kill me." In Sulaimaniah, a 94-year old woman was carried to a voting center in a wheelbarrel by her son.

• When a shortage of ink at some polling sites was reported on Diyala Radio, callers said they would gladly use their own blood on their thumb to seal their ballots.

• The Mayor of Baghdad, Alla Al-Tamimi, said, "I can't believe my eyes. This is the greatest moment of our history. This is the future of our children. . . People are voting for women, for freedom, for no more violence against our family, for tomorrow, for no more hunger . . . Iraqis are ready to sacrifice their life for this moment!"

Mayor al-Tamimi's statement is even more poignant considering the terrorists' threat to make the "streets run with the blood of the voter." For this demonstration of Iraqi commitment to their new-found democracy took place in the face of a systematic campaign of terror and intimidation that is almost unimaginable to most Americans—including assassinations and beheadings of election workers, threats to the children. of candidates and threats to ordinary voters, not only at the polls but even in their homes afterwards. Americans—who are able to take for granted that our elections will take place in complete peace and security—can appreciate the significance of what Iraqi voters have just done.

Indeed, some of the most remarkable stories from Sunday's election are about the courage of ordinary Iraqi voters. Brigadier General Carter Ham, the commander of coalition forces in Mosul, told me recently about two particularly impressive occurrences:

• At one polling station in a Sunni Arab neighborhood in Mosul, no one had voted by 9 a.m., 2 hours after the polls had opened. But a crowd of several hundred people had gathered to observe the polling place from a distance. Finally, an old woman who appeared to be in her late sixties came forward saying "I've waited all my life for this opportunity," and came forward to vote. The rest of the crowd followed shortly behind her.

• Another polling place in Mosul—also in a Sunni Arab neighborhood came under enemy small arms fire and one of the voters waiting in line was wounded. No doubt the enemy sniper expected the other voters to run. Instead, they staved in line, while crouching down, and shifted to provide cover for the wounded voter while Iraqi soldiers evacuated him to a hospital.

Forty-four Iraqis lost their lives while attempting to cast their ballots. By 1 p.m. Sunday, terrorists had launched a record seven suicide bombings in Baghdad. Despite this violence, Iraqis did not leave the lines they had waited all their lives for. To the contrary, the lines of voters at the polling centers grew steadily throughout the day.

Before the election, there was concern that the purple-dye used to mark voters' fingers as a fraud-prevention measure would also make voters targets for terrorists. But rather than deterring people, these marks have become a "purple badge of courage" in even the most dangerous areas. In the Doura neighborhood, normally a haven for terrorist activity, one Sunni voter raised his forefinger and declared, "This is my badge of honor. No, I'm not keeping my hand in my pocket." Another Iraqi wrote, when "I moved to mark my finger with ink, I dipped it deep as if I was poking the eyes of all the world's tyrants."

In addition to the remarkable bravery demonstrated by the Iraqi people on this historic day, we should also remember the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi victims of Baath Party rule who did not live to see this day. I do not have to recount for the members of this committee the extent of Saddam's brutality, and the degradations he imposed on a proud people. The haunting images of mass graves and of Halabja that we have all seen speak for themselves.

After voting, one Iraqi, whose father was jailed and executed as part of the mass murders following the failed Shia uprising after Operation Desert Storm, said:

> "My father helped bring this election today. This election is the fruit of every drop of blood that was shed in 1991. I thank my father. He had three sons who married. None of us had a wedding party, out of respect for him. Today, we can celebrate. Today, we will have a wedding party."

This election was made possible in part by the courage and sacrifice of countless Iraqis who died resisting Saddam and did not survive to see this day.

WHO THE ENEMY IS

This election also helps to clarify without a doubt who the enemy is in Iraq. Our enemy in Iraq is not the Iraqi people. It is not a nationalist "insurgency." It is an unholy alliance of "old terrorists" and "new terrorists." The old terrorists are the ones who brutalized and tortured the country and murdered hundreds of thousands of their countrymen for 35 years. These secret security forces of the former regime are now allied with new terrorists drawn from across the region. Like their Baathist allies, these new terrorists are ideologically opposed to democracy and fearful of what the success of freedom in this important Arab country will mean for them. One month before the election Osama bin Laden declared that "any Iraqi who takes part in this election consciously and willingly is an infidel." With this statement, Osama bin Laden made preventing the Iraqi election one of al Qaeda's highest priorities. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, bin Laden's appointed "prince" in Iraq, also denounced the election, stating: "We have declared a fierce war on this evil principle of democracy and those who follow this wrong ideology. Democracy is . . . based on the right to choose your religion" and that is "against the rule of God."

Through their opposition to elections and democracy, the terrorists have demonstrated that they are not interested in winning the "hearts and minds" of the Iraqi people, but rather to simply intimidate them into submission. Unlike almost every other historical insurgency, they offer no positive agenda beyond their own pursuit of power, and they explicitly seek to deny Iraqis a voice in their future.

This is why Iraqis refer to men such as Abed al Latif Homayen, a "religious advisor" who before the fall of the regime received more than 2 billion Dinar from Saddam to recruit Iraqis for Jihad and then cravenly fled the country with the money, leaving his recruits behind, as terrorists, not insurgents. Yet the determination of the terrorists to disrupt the election was defeated by the overwhelming majority of Iraqis who want democracy to prevail. As one Iraqi woman told Major General John Batiste, Commander of the 1st Infantry Division, Iraqi votes are "bullets to the hearts of the terrorists." Deputy President Ibrahim Ja'fari declared that "Iraqi voters today have proven the strength of their votes is more powerful than the strength of bullets." Iraqis know who they are fighting, and they know they are fighting people who want to take them backwards to some new form of dictatorship as terrible as the one they have just been liberated from. Iraqi voters have demonstrated that the true nationalists are those who express themselves with ballots rather than with bombs.

THE WAY AHEAD

As dramatic a moment as these elections were, this is not a time to sit on our hands congratulating ourselves, nor to declare victory and abandon a task that is only half accomplished. Although I find it hard to agree with people who say that the election was "just the easy part," there is no question that there is still much hard work to be done—principally by the Iraqis, but also by those of us upon whom they still depend for support. While the election clearly demonstrated that the "hearts and minds" of the Iraqi people do not lie with the terrorists, no one should imagine for a moment that these would-be tyrants will quit as a result of Sunday's vote.

The next few months are going to be particularly challenging, because, while this election will produce a National Assembly, that body will still face a formidable challenge to put together a government. It will have to do so in the face of a continuing war and a brutal enemy. Among the principal things we need to focus on the next period leading up to writing of a Constitution and two more votes before the end of the year are:

1. Number one, I think, is to recognize that success in this effort is going to require the integration of all elements of both U.S. and Iraqi national power, as well as those of our coalition partners. This is not a military effort alone, and there must be equal and parallel efforts in governance and infrastructure, economic development and strategic information. Governance presents particularly important challenges, not only in the writing of a Constitution but in establishing government ministries that can function effectively and serve the interests of the people, not their own personal agendas. The entire international community has an interest in the success of this effort.

2. Second, many difficult compromises will have to be made among. different Iraqi groups, on everything from fundamental constitutional issues

to practical questions involving the sharing of power and resources. Iraqis will have to work out these compromises themselves. That is a big part of what democracy is really about. But the United States has enormous influence in Iraq and we should use it—not to advance our own agenda but to constantly remind Iraqis of the importance of resolving these issues in ways that preserve national unity in the face of a ruthless enemy.

3. Third, on the military side, the key to victory clearly lies in developing more and increasingly capable Iraqi security forces. That effort has produced important successes so far, and we need to figure out how to build on it and accelerate it.

4. Fourth, we and the Iraqis need to attach high priority to the development of an effective Iraqi legal and judicial system—one that enforces the rule of law, that punishes the guilty, that protects the rights of all citizens, and that provides the equal justice under the law that is one of the key hallmarks of democracy and is also so important for economic development. Iraq's currently weak judicial system is not yet able to punish lawbreakers effectively, even ones who are guilty of the most serious crimes against the Iraqi people and against coalition forces. Finding ways to protect judges from intimidation needs to be a high priority. We also need to help the Iraqi Government strengthen the tools of law enforcement, everything from communications equipment to identification systems for criminals and foreigners to forensic bomb analysis capability.

5. Finally we need to work with the Iraqi Government to keep up pressure on neighboring countries, in particular Syria, to stop the activities of Baathists and other terrorist supporters working from outside Iraq and to stop the flow of foreign fighters into the country. Some of Iraq's neighbors probably fear a free Iraq, but they need to understand that it will be much more harmful for them if they try to obstruct Iraq's progress toward freedom.

It is critically important to remember we are facing an enemy that is not only ruthless but adaptive and fiendishly clever; an enemy that obviously didn't give up just because the Baghdad was liberated, that didn't give up just because Saddam Hussein was captured and did not give up just because the interim government was stood up successfully on June 28. It's an enemy that will adapt and we need to be prepared for its adaptations and anticipate them and be ahead of them.

The good news is that the enemy does not offer anything positive to the Iraqi people. It's not an enemy that can ever defeat our soldiers one for one on the battlefield. But it is an enemy that's shown itself to be horribly clever and viciously evil, with no respect for the laws of civilization or for the Iraqi people. Ultimately, it is the Iraqi people who will defeat it, with our continued help.

THE POLITICAL PROCESS

In the coming days, after the votes are counted, the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) will form a new government and begin the ardous process of drafting a new Iraqi constitution. In October, this permanent constitution will be put to the Iraqi people for ratification through a popular referendum. In December, Iraqis will again return to the polls to elect a new, permanent government under the rules of that constitution.

As Americans know well, democracy should not impose a "winner-take-all" system on a nation. Successful democracy requires leaders to respect the rights of minorities and of those who did not vote for them and to attend to the aspirations and interests of all citizens. Many leading political figures in Iraq have already demonstrated both their commitment to respecting minority rights and that most crucial of democratic skills, compromise.

This was evident in the drafting of an impressive document, the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), sometimes described as Iraq's interim constitution. Many of the current candidates for the TNA were instrumental in the negotiation of the TAL—which lays out the framework in which the present political process is taking place—and which also contains important assurances of freedom of religion, expression, assembly, and of the press. The TAL guarantees equal rights for all citizens of Iraq regardless of ethnicity, denomination, or sex. The TAL is already the freest basic governance document in the Arab world, and gives promise that in the future, Iraq will not belong to one dictator, one clan, or one tribe.

Recent statements by Iraqi leaders suggest they are strongly committed to ensuring that the TNA will represent the entire Iraqi nation, rather than a narrow sectarian or ethnic interest.

• In a recent press interview, Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) chief Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim said that "the National Assembly shall represent all Iraqi strata, and we will make an all-out effort to this end. We will defend the rights of our Sunni brothers just the same way we do those of the Shiites."

• Mowaffak al-Rubaie, Iraq's former national security adviser and a confidant of Grand Ayatollah Sistani, said, "The Shiites will form a majority, but there has to be a prominent presence of Sunnis in the government. Now is the time for the Shiites to exercise statesmanship."

• On Monday Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi noted, "The whole world is watching us. As we worked together yesterday to finish dictatorship, let us work together towards a bright future Sunnis and Shiites, Muslims and Christians, Arabs, Kurds, and Turkmen."

These statements are good indicators that Iraqis will be able to form a transitional government that will attend to the interests of all Iraqis, including the Sunni Arabs whose vote appears to have been suppressed somewhat by the severe intimidation they face in some provinces.

IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

This election, in fact, is part of a larger 2-year process that, despite setbacks and tragedies, is still on track. The key to this process has been enabling Iraqis to emerge from the shadow of dictatorship and gradually become more self-reliant. Nowhere is this process more important than in the development of the Iraqi security forces.

Last year we intercepted a letter from Zarqawi to his al Qaeda colleagues in Afghanistan, in which he warned of the dangers of the advent of Iraqi sovereignty, especially the creation of capable Iraqi security forces. He wrote:

> With the spread of the [Iraqi] Army and the police, our future is becoming frightening. The problem is you end up having an army and police connected by lineage, blood and appearance to the people of the region. How can we kill their cousins and sons . . . This is the democracy . . . we will have no pretext.

The endeavor to create these forces has not been without setbacks and disappointments. Most significantly, barbaric acts of intimidation have targeted Iraqi soldiers and police—and their families—thinning the ranks of some units and rendering others ineffective. Since June 2003, nearly 1,400 Iraqi soldiers and policemen have killed in the line of duty as they sought to defend their newfound freedom.

Through it all, however, the coalition and the Iraqis have continued to press forward, modifying training programs, adapting operational constructs; and increasing equipment authorizations. Over time, we have achieved substantial progress in the effort to equip Iraqi forces, to reconstruct their infrastructure, and, most importantly, to develop Iraqi units—police, as well as Army—that will fight aggressively for their country. None of this has been easy, and I want to publicly recognize the Iraqis and coalition members who have been engaged in this critically important endeavor, particularly the advisors who helped train and then fought alongside Iraqi soldiers and police and who have, in some cases, shed blood with them as well in Najaf, Fallujah, Baghdad, Samarra, Mosul, and numerous other locations. Of course, the support of the United States Congress and this committee has been especially critical in helping to make this progress possible.

This progress does not always translate into quantifiable measures such as number of personnel and equipment. There is understandable confusion when the total strength of the Iraqi security forces fluctuates dramatically due to the refinement of definitions or the reclassification of various categories of forces. An important example of this confusion occurred when the roughly 70,000 members of what had been called the Facilities Protection Service were devolved into their respective ministries, and out of the control the coalition command or the Ministries of Defense or Interior, resulting in what appeared to be a sudden drop in the total strength we were reporting for Iraqi security forces, from roughly 200,000 to roughly 130,000. However, that was really nothing more than an accounting change and the Facilities Protection Service continue to perform their functions, although as we have always emphasized their capability is largely limited to simple guard duty and they are not part of Multi-National Force Iraq's (MNF–I) training and equipping effort.

More generally, we have repeatedly tried to caution against making too much of raw numbers, when there are large qualitative difference which are generally more important. The term "trained and equipped" when applied to Iraqi forces is not intended to be analogous to how we measure readiness in American military units. There are currently 136,000 personnel listed as "trained and equipped." These indi-

viduals have met the training and equipping criteria for their element of the police or military, and the growth in this number is a reflection of progress. But other intangible factors such as leadership, cohesion, and morale are even more important determinants of the capability of Iraqi units, and these factors are difficult to measure numerically.

A better indicator of the progress of the Iraqi security forces than raw numbers of troops is how well these forces did on January 30. One impressive metric is the number of suicide bombers stopped at the outer security perimeter of the polling sites, which was 100 percent of a total of eight attempted attacks.

Measurement is also complicated by the fact that there has been a consistent development of new kinds of units with different capabilities, such as the development of special Police Commando Battalions. These are among a number of different kinds of units that have the important capability to be deployable anywhere in the country, not just in their home area. Since Prime Minister Allawi took office last June, 44 deployable military and police battalions—and more than 85 battalions overall—have been established. (The additional units include regionally-oriented Iraqi National Guard battalions that were recently incorporated into the Iraqi Army.)

Deployable battalions can be moved anywhere in the country—and, in many cases, currently are deployed in the most challenging areas. On election day, for example, there were seven such battalions helping maintain security in Mosul, nine in Fallujah, three in Samarra, and at least seven in Baghdad. Smaller numbers were deployed at numerous other locations. Few of these battalions are fully manned, most will profit from the additional training they will receive as they go through the "train, fight, train" cycle MNF–I is establishing, and none are yet capable of replacing coalition units on a one-for-one basis. However, they are contributing enormously already. Iraqi security forces lack many of the capabilities that our forces demonstrate so superbly. However, Iraqi forces bring to the fight skills that our soldiers will never possess, particularly their understandings of the languages and cultures of Iraq. They will contribute even more as we and Iraqi leaders continue their development, replace their losses, and help develop the higher headquarters, the combat support elements, and the logistical units and systems needed to support these units. All of that is planned.

Much work clearly remains to be done. To help Iraq achieve full responsibility for its own security, we must intensify our efforts to assist Iraq in the organization, training, equipping, and mentoring of Iraqi security forces. We must continue to help rebuild Iraqi security force bases, training academies, border forts, and other facilities. We must assist in establishing robust institutions—institutions that can provide appropriate support, oversight, and direction to Iraq's military elements and police forces, and institutions that can gather and analyze the intelligence that is so important in counter-insurgency operations.

A major component in this effort will be the substantially increased emphasis that General Casey, the MNF-I Commander, has directed be given to Iraqi security force development this year. Increasingly, Iraqis have the "hardware" force component of personnel, equipment, and infrastructure. Their. most important gaps are in the intangible components required of all successful military units: leadership, command and control, experience and unit cohesion. These intangibles will take time to develop and some of the most important development will take place on the job—in active military operations.

The President and Secretary Rumsfeld are committed to providing the resources needed for this endeavor and the administration request for supplemental funding will include a substantial funding request for expansion of the Iraqi security force effort. We are counting on your support.

In sum, we believe that considerable momentum has been achieved recently in the development of Iraqi security forces. However, much remains to be done as we help Iraq rebuild not only battalions, brigades, and divisions, but the institutions that support them and the ministries that direct them.

This is an enormous endeavor, one that is historically unprecedented. It has encountered countless challenges and suffered numerous setbacks. In recent months, however, we have seen the results of the coalition's investment, most importantly in the performance of Iraqi units deployed to the hot spots in that country. We should be particularly heartened by the performance of Iraqi soldiers and police on January 30, when they courageously thwarted the enemy's concerted effort to deny the Iraqi people the tremendous opportunity that U.S. and other coalition forces have provided to them—the opportunity to vote for own representatives. Democracy is on the march in Iraq. This past Sunday, Iraq's own Army and police force helped to safeguard that march.

Their performance was captured in an anecdote related by another Iraqi blogger named Ali on his Web site "Iraqilibe":

> As I left [the polling place] one of the guards said to me as he handed me back my cellular phone, "God bless you and your beloved ones. We don't know how to thank you. Please excuse any inconvenience on our part. We wish we didn't have to search you or limit your freedom. You are heroes." I was struck with surprise and felt ashamed. This man was risking his life all these hours in what has become the utmost target for all terrorists in Iraq and yet he's apologizing and calling us heroes. I thanked him back and told him that he and his comrads are the true heroes and that we can never be grateful enough for their services. [misspellings in the original]

Today, we all share his gratitude for the courage of the Iraqi forces, and for what our American service men and women have done to help Iraqis achieve this moment, and hopefully soon, many more like it.

Thank you, I look forward to your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Again, I thank you for your long participation in this endeavor personally, professionally.

General Myers.

STATEMENT OF GEN. RICHARD B. MYERS, USAF, CHIEF, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

General MYERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Levin and members of the committee, for your continuing support of our men and women in uniform and for this opportunity to report on our progress in Iraq. After visiting our troops in Iraq many times, I can only imagine their great pride as our troops and their coalition partners witnessed the Iraqi people lining up at the polls, bravely and emphatically taking responsibility for their own future.

Some Iraqis compared election day to a wedding or a birthday and, as you saw on the TV news footage, some carried their children with them to the polls. By voting these Iraqis were helping to chart their own future and the Iraqi that their children would inherit.

The election was not without violence, as Secretary Wolfowitz said. One U.S. marine and a number of Iraqis gave their lives protecting this fledgling democracy on election day.

Not every Iraqi chose to vote. Yet we have hope that many of them will see this election as a call to abandon the insurgency and join the political process, just as we saw with the Taliban in Afghanistan. In the days before the election, as Secretary Wolfowitz said, terrorist leader Zarqawi declared war against democracy. To Zarqawi, the Iraq people have said: We will not let you win.

A senior U.S. Army officer serving in Baghdad commented on what he had witnessed on Sunday. His quote is: "Voters paraded down the street, holding up their fingers, marked with the blue ink from the polls, in overwhelming pride. Every Iraqi I talked to said thank you for this opportunity, for this freedom. Today they earned their freedom." This lieutenant colonel went on to say: "We should all be joyful for that."

Of course, we are, because the election was a very important milestone on a very long road. The Iraqi Government and the coalition, as Secretary Wolfowitz also said, still have much work to do. The coalition must focus our efforts on reaching the point where we can shift our mission from fighting the counterinsurgency ourselves to developing Iraqi capacity to conduct those operations and create

an environment that encourages sustained political and economic progress.

Since this last July, the coalition has accomplished a great deal in improving the quality of the Iraqi security forces on duty. Many of these forces are now much better trained and equipped, and if you look at their performance in Fallujah this past October and during the election you can see that.

I believe we have also gained a better understanding of their capabilities. For them to be able to operate independently, they are going to need our continued help to build their leadership, command and control, and intelligence capabilities at all levels.

I would also like to reemphasize that security means more than just physical security. Iraqis need help building the Iraqi economy and industrial base to create jobs and incomes sufficient to support local and State government services for individuals and families. They must be able to provide for their social welfare, ensuring educational opportunities, adequate wages, health care, and other safety net programs are available to ensure the population has basic human services. All Iraqis must be able to participate in government without fear of intimidation. They need a mature judicial system and confidence in the government's ability to maintain the rule of law.

Since the transition to Iraqi sovereignty last June, the Iraqi Government has 26 ministries working to provide services to the country along with governments at the regional and local level. But these organizations have a very tough task because Saddam Hussein's regime sapped the Iraqi people of their spirit and tried to render them totally dependent. Saddam's government left behind a decayed infrastructure and no tradition of caring for the needs of the population. The Iraqi Government needs our continued support and mentorship as well.

So we must stay focused and we must not waver in our resolve. The Iraqi people and the Iraqi security forces showed their resolve on Sunday, as did the coalition. We are grateful for the support of the American people and that support must continue.

Now is the time for the entire international community to show its resolve in the war on terrorism. As I have said before, this war is ultimately a test of wills, and the Iraqis certainly passed that test on Sunday. So right now there is an enormous upsurge of hope and enthusiasm, but the situation in Iraq certainly remains dynamic.

I firmly believe we have the right strategy for capitalizing on this recent success and helping build a new Iraq, democratic, at peace with its neighbors, and representative of all its people. I am extremely proud of how well our military has performed, especially their flexibility and their adaptability in dealing with a difficult enemy. I am proud of their ability to cooperate with the Iraqi Government and its citizens. I am proud of their courage and am equally proud of their compassion under some very challenging conditions.

So on behalf of all the Joint Chiefs, I express my condolences for all the American, coalition, and Iraqi men and women and their loved ones who have either been killed or wounded in this very

noble endeavor. Because of their sacrifices, 25 million Iraqis have the chance to build a new democracy.

I thank you for your continued support and look forward to your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General. All of us here on the committee share the sentiment you have expressed. These elections would not have taken place had it not been for the steadfast commitment of the Coalition Forces and the sacrifices that they took, and then in the final round they fought really side by side with their Iraqi military partners and it is a partnership which we have henceforth that will make this successful.

Mr. Schlicher, do you have an opening statement?

STATEMENT OF RONALD L. SCHLICHER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, COORDINATOR FOR IRAQ

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, I do have some brief opening remarks.

Chairman WARNER. All right, let us have your brief opening remarks.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee: I thank all of you for the opportunity to come and appear before you today to discuss the progress that we have seen in Iraq as the Iraqis lay the foundations of the democratic government that they have so clearly shown us that they are determined to achieve.

With your permission, I will make a few brief remarks and submit my complete statement for the record. Please let me remind, as the chairman noted at the beginning, that, though my remarks are about Iraq, we also have with us today Ambassador Maureen Quinn, the Afghan Coordinator in the Department of State, who is available to answer any questions about Afghanistan that the committee might have.

Please let me amplify and echo some of the themes that Secretary Wolfowitz so eloquently laid out earlier. Earlier this week, we saw enormously brave Iraqi men and women defy threats and bombs, lining up in their streets, walking to cast their votes in Iraq's first genuine election in a generation. Even as we speak, independent Iraqi election officials are counting those votes and Iraqi political leaders, anticipating the results, are debating the shapes of possible alliances to best represent their constituencies and the interests of their entire nation. Iraqi voters meanwhile are celebrating the opportunity to shape their own future.

As Secretary Wolfowitz noted, the bravery of the millions of Iraqi voters has really been remarkable. Terrorists threatened, kidnapped, and killed candidates, killed election officials, killed security forces, killed potential voters, and intimidated many thousands, perhaps millions, of other voters. Some Iraqis unfortunately as a result of this intimidation chose to stay home, some out of fear, but there are also those who chose to stay home out of alienation and perceived disenfranchisement.

We hope and expect that the new government, when it is formed, will reach out to all Iraqis to ensure that the voice of all elements in Iraq are heard in the continuing development of the democratic process. This subject principally alludes, of course, to the question of Sunni inclusion. We, like Secretary Wolfowitz, have noted the

many public statements and we have also heard private statements in which all elements of the political class in Iraq right now are determined that the approach to the upcoming political processes that they have be inclusive and include all members of society. We certainly do applaud that intention on their part.

But in the face of violence, of threats, millions of Iraqis did go to the polls. They cast their secret ballots in accordance with their personal convictions. You may have seen on TV this very illustrative scene of an Iraqi official holding up the ballot for this election on Sunday with 111 choices and a ballot from the last so-called election of the Saddam era where there was one choice. I think that kind of said it all, especially if you are an Iraqi.

It is also really important to note the enormous numbers of Iraqi women who came forward to vote for their freedom. After the election, people celebrated, not for the victory of any particular party because the results are not yet known; instead, they celebrated democracy.

Mr. Chairman, if you would allow me a personal comment at this point, as someone who spent the last quarter century working in this part of the world and I think understands the yearnings of average people there pretty well, I have to say this was a deeply, profoundly moving moment, and I feel very proud to have been a small part of it.

While nothing should dim the glory of the election day, we should recognize that the election process was still new to Iraqis, so there are certain aspects in which it was not perfect. There have been a few reports of logistical problems, of voting irregularities, of some communities, villages, that did not have the opportunity to vote. The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI), which is the same body that has done so well in managing the logistics of Sunday's election, they are charged with administering and addressing all of these complaints, and we think that they will do so. We will be watching and encouraging them to do so, and we think it is really important that they do so in a transparent process, especially a process that is transparent to all Iraqis, and if there are glitches that were the result of logistical problems, to explain those glitches to the people. If there is some case where an election official did not do what he or she should have done, the commission should point that out to the people as well.

At the same time, in the wake of the election all Iraqis can be pleased with the report of the International Mission for Iraqi Elections. That is the international mission that was established to observe the elections. They found that the IECI prepared and put in place a framework for an election that generally meets recognized standards in terms of the election law, of planning, and of preparations.

We think that the Iraqi people likewise can be pleased by the courage and professionalism displayed by the Iraqi security forces and police, which Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers have also mentioned. This played an essential role in safeguarding the elections and preventing their disruption by the practitioners of terror.

Now, without question and again as my colleagues have pointed out very clearly today, the Iraqi people still have a long struggle ahead. But we are determined to stand resolutely beside them. The

sacrifices of Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNF–I) to assure security and assist with logistics and the tireless work of the American civilian and military personnel have helped make this great day possible for the Iraqis. In this regard, Mr. Chairman, please allow me to salute the incredible job that Ambassador John Negroponte and his team at the embassy in Baghdad and at the embassy offices throughout Iraq have also done in this regard.

We also salute the United Nations (U.N.) Election Assistance Division, which did really an heroic job of working with the IECI to actually make the elections possible in the face of all of the problems of security, of logistics, of organization that they have faced. We look forward to continued U.N. involvement in Iraq in support of the subject matter and in the manners that the Iraqi Government may request of them.

Sir, the elections as I judge it will have a longer-term effect on security as well. The elections can help to convince those who have been sitting on the fence that an elected legitimate government of Iraq is empowered and is here to stay, that it is receiving support from Iraqis of all ethnicities, all religions, and from all provinces. In the end, I hope it will convince them that the solution to their problems lies within the political process and not with the ranks of those who practice terror and seek to disenfranchise their fellow citizens via that terror.

By voting, millions of Iraqis have told the insurgents that they are not wanted, that their agenda is not accepted, that their way is not legitimate, that their way is not representative of the people of Iraq. The Iraqis have decided that security and the freedom to choose are what are important to them.

Our continued commitment will be necessary to help the Iraqi people rebuild their country. They need and deserve to see the quality of their daily lives improve. Hand in hand with increased security, Iraqis want dependable electricity and water and medical care, all of which the practitioners of terror have also been trying to deprive them of over the last months.

Closely coordinated with the Iraqi Government, our reconstruction efforts have made progress in restoring central services, in expanding the availability of quality medical assistance, in rehabilitating public buildings and roads, in advising the government on economic and financial reforms, and in introducing Iraqis at all levels to the basics of democratic practice and the rule of law.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schlicher follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY RONALD L. SCHLICHER

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss developments in Iraq and the progress of the Iraqi people as they rebuild their country and lay the foundations of a democratic government. Earlier this week, we saw brave Iraqi men and women defying threats and bombs, lining up in the streets to cast their votes in Iraq's first genuine election in generations. Even as we speak, independent Iraqi elections officials are counting those votes, and Iraqi political leaders are debating the shape of possible alliances to best represent their constituencies and the interests of their nation. Iraqi voters are celebrating the opportunity to shape their own future.

But some Iraqis did not survive the election. Terrorists threatened, kidnapped, and killed candidates, elections officials, security forces, and voters. Some Iraqis, unfortunately, chose to stay home—some out of fear, and others out of alienation and disenchantment. We firmly hope that the new government will reach out to all

Iraqis to ensure that the voice of all is heard in the continuing development of the democratic process.

But in the face of violence, threats, and intimidation, millions of Iraqis did go to the polls. They cast their secret ballots in accordance with their personal convictions. Women came forward to vote for their freedom. Afterward, many people celebrated—not the victory of any particular party, because indeed the results of the election are still unknown. They celebrated democracy. In some parts of the country, people danced and sang in the streets, while in other areas there was a quiet pride and determination to defy those who would deny Iraqis a democratic future; to go out and vote and move Iraq one giant step forward from its authoritarian past. Some Iraqis brought their children to the polls to teach them the value of freedom, and afterward many of those children went out to play in streets that during Saddam's rule were filled with fear and despair.

The election process was not perfect. We have heard reports of logistical problems, voting irregularities, and communities that did not have an opportunity to vote. In a process of this magnitude, carried out in this short timeframe, under such challenging security conditions, these kinds of problems were expected. The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI), charged with administering the elections from top to bottom, is also charged with hearing and resolving all challenges and complaints to the electoral process.

Meanwhile all Iraqis should be pleased with the preliminary report of the International Mission for Iraqi Elections—the international mission established to observe the elections—which found that "Iraq's Electoral Commission has prepared and put in place a framework for an election that generally meets recognized standards in terms of election law, planning, and preparations." They can be pleased by the courage and professionalism demonstrated by Iraqi security forces and police which played an essential role in safeguarding the elections and preventing their disruption by the insurgents and terrorists.

Without question, the Iraqi people still have a long struggle ahead. But we will stand resolutely beside them. The sacrifices of the Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNF–I) to ensure security and assist with logistics, the tireless work of American civilian and military personnel—including, if I may be excused some pride, the tremendous job done by Ambassador Negroponte and his dedicated staff at the Embassy in Baghdad and Embassy offices throughout Iraq—and the contributions of the international community helped make their great day possible. As called for in United Nations (U.N.) Security Council resolution 1546, the U.N. provided critical assistance to the IECI. We look forward to continued U.N. involvement in Iraq's political transition.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to describe our understanding of the next steps of the political process, according to the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) and the regulations of the IECI. In most areas, voters participated in two elections simultaneously—the National election and their respective provincial election. In addition, voters in the Kurdish areas in northeastern Iraq participated in an election for the Kurdistan Regional Government. Immediately after the close of polls, election workers at each poll began to count the ballots. When they were tallied, those results were secured and physically transported to the IECI national headquarters in Baghdad for tabulation.

Once the IECI has received and tabulated all of the results from the more than 5,000 polling stations around Iraq, it will begin to calculate the allocation of seats to the respective assemblies—the 275-seat Transitional National Assembly (TNA), the 18 provincial assemblies, and the Kurdistan Regional Government. The IECI has stated that it expects to announce the progress of the tally periodically; its target for final results is February 15. Meanwhile, we understand that political parties have already begun negotiating the shape of the coming government, on a speculative basis, as they await the election results.

Once the allocations of seats are announced, we expect that the TNA will convene. The Assembly's first responsibility is to elect its own leadership and adopt internal rules. It will then select, by a two-thirds majority vote, the three-member Transitional Government Presidency Council, consisting of the President of the State and two Deputy Presidents, on a single slate.

Under the TAL, the three members of the Presidency Council are required to unanimously name a Prime Minister within 2 weeks. If the Presidency Council fails to name a Prime Minister within 2 weeks, the responsibility moves to the TNA, which in this instance must confirm a nomination by a two-thirds majority.

The Prime Minister then has up to 1 month in which to name a Council of Ministers. If the Prime Minister is unable to nominate a Council of Ministers within 1 month, the Presidency Council shall name another Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister and Council of Ministers must then be approved by a simple majority vote of the TNA before commencing their work as a government. The current Iraqi Interim Government Prime Minister and Council of Ministers will remain in place until their replacements are confirmed. Upon confirmation by the TNA, the new Prime Minister and Council of Ministers will assume power.

The new transitional government will govern for only a limited period of time. Its primary task will be drafting a new constitution, which, according to the TAL timeline, is to be completed by August 15 and put before Iraqi voters in a referendum not later than October 15. If Iraqi voters approve the constitution, they will vote again according to its precepts for a permanent government by the end of this year.

We believe that the development of the political process will encourage all Iraqis to put faith in their elected officials as they continue to work with MNF-I forces to improve security. The key to U.S. force reduction in Iraqi is improving the readiness and training of the Iraqi security forces; our goal remains doing all we can to facilitate Iraqis becoming responsible for their own security in all its aspects. An essential part of this effort, in addition to training, will be the dedication, patriotism, and courage of the Iraqi security forces and their leadership, whose members step forward—as they did on election day—in defense of their country to overcome the terrorism, threats, and intimidation directed against them and their families.

We have seen a steady increase in capability as measured by success in fighting on the ground. Iraqi forces had limited success in the fighting last April. But since then, they have done steadily better in the disarming of the Sadr militia in August and the fighting in Fallujah in November. Most recently, security forces displayed vigilance and preparedness in providing security for the elections.

My colleagues from the Department of Defense are here today to address how we are training the soldiers, and how we are inculcating leadership skills, including through promising experiments with advisory teams. I would like to make two points to add to their remarks:

First, this is an area in which international engagement is necessary and has been forthcoming. On the military side, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has begun its training mission, which will be specializing in officer and staff training. NATO training will expand rapidly as its instructors arrive on the ground in Iraq. Jordan has offered to host some NATO training, and Norway has already hosted a course for senior officers. Other countries are also pitching in, including Egypt, which has trained several hundred soldiers.

On the police side, we have police liaison officers from a number of countries helping with on-the-ground mentoring in Iraq. Again, we should recognize the contribution of Jordan, which has helped us set up the International Police Training Center near Amman. Germany has trained 400 police in the United Arab Emirates, and France has offered out-of-country training to up to 1,500.

Second, security can only move forward in tandem with the political process. Soldiers will fight only if they have something to fight for. In this regard, I would like to highlight the successful cooperation between the Iraqi security forces and the IECI, a partnership that further demonstrated that Iraqi forces will fight for responsible Iraqi political leadership and defend the Iraqi public against aggression.

Mr. Chairman, the security situation in Iraq is still difficult. There are still thousands of insurgents, loose weapons, and explosives are still easily obtained, and terrorists are still able to assassinate and kill. We have seen no diminution in the number of incidents.

But the elections will, I believe, have a longer-term effect on security. They can help to convince those who are sitting on the fence that an elected, legitimate government of Iraq is empowered and here to stay, that it is receiving support from Iraqis of all ethnicities, religions, and provinces; and that, in the end, the solution to their problems lies within the political process, and not with the ranks of the insurgents. By voting, millions of Iraqis have told the insurgents they are not wanted. The Iraqis have decided that security and the freedom to choose are what is important to them. We hope that those Iraqis who have heretofore been undecided will take heart from the courage and democratic yearnings of their fellow citizens, and make the environment much tougher for insurgents to operate in.

Engaging the population in the political process—especially in the process of drafting the new Iraqi constitution—is a key to changing the security environment for the better. As the Iraqi Transitional Government gains the trust of Iraqis, Iraqis will make the country less hospitable to the insurgents. This will take time, patience—and commitment.

It will also require our continued commitment to help the Iraqi people rebuild their country. Iraqis need and deserve to see the quality of their daily lives improved. Hand in hand with increased security, Iraqis want dependable electricity

and water and medical care. Closely coordinated with the Iraqi Government, our reconstruction efforts have made progress in restoring essential services, expanding the availability of quality medical assistance, rehabilitating public buildings and roads, advising the government on economic and financial reforms, and introducing Iraqis at all levels to the basics of democratic practice and rule of law.

Most of this work occurs out of the media spotlight. It is easy to overlook the progress when compared to the monumental challenges that remain in a country so devastated by decades of conflict and Saddam's neglect. But despite the continuing hardships of their daily lives, Iraqis know and appreciate what donors are doing to help accelerate reconstruction and promote economic and political reform. The election demonstrates the importance of programs to promote democracy and re-forge the links of civil society.

Despite the formidable security challenges, we have now obligated $13 billion (or 62 percent) of the $20.9 billion in Iraq Relief and Reconstruction I and II funds. We have disbursed over $4.7 billion, or 22 percent of the total. We continue to adapt our programs to circumstances on the ground in order to ensure that funding is available for the most urgent needs. We appreciate the support from Congress we have in all these efforts, including recent efforts to reallocate Iraq reconstruction resources.

As we enter this post-election period, our reconstruction efforts will be focused on assisting the Iraqi Transitional Government to improve security, create jobs, develop economic policy and regulatory frameworks, and expand private enterprise. Establishing momentum toward longer-term stability will help improve the climate for other donors and private investors to join the reconstruction and economic development effort, stimulate economic growth, and enable the Iraqis to progressively assume a greater role internationally.

Let me be clear: I think Iraqis are anxious to take on that role. In fact, they have already begun to speak loudly and proudly on the international stage. As President Bush said on the day of the elections, "The people of Iraq have spoken to the world, and the world is hearing the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East."

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify about our progress in Iraq. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Chairman WARNER. Mr. Schlicher, we are going to have to get to the questioning now.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir.

Chairman WARNER. I am going to put your full statement in, and I am glad that you acknowledge, as we do, the very valuable work done by our diplomatic corps under Ambassador Negroponte and the many who serve with him in civilian capacities.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Thank you, sir. I will pass that on.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

We are going to move quickly into a first round, gentlemen, and we hope to have a second round. General, I would like to start with you. The President last night made these remarks which bear directly on the future of the employment of our military forces. I paraphrase him: Our strategy is adapting to circumstances. So my first question would be, what visible changes have there been in strategy and the manner in which we coordinate our responsibilities with the growing, presumably, professional capabilities of the Iraqi security forces?

The President continued: We will not set an artificial timetable. I thoroughly agree with him on that and I would like to have your views on that.

Lastly, the President said: We are in Iraq to achieve a result—a country that is democratic, representative of all of its people, at peace with its neighbors, and able to defend itself. When that result is achieved, our men and women serving in Iraq will return home with the honor they have earned.

Can you expound on those very wise remarks by our President last night in the State of the Union Address?

General MYERS. Mr. Chairman, I will. I think one of the things that most Americans ought to be proudest of is how U.S. and coalition forces have adapted in Iraq, starting with major combat. But as major combat ended, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was stood up, and that gave way to the current Iraqi Government, which will give way now to a new government.

Over that time frame also we had a change in the opposition and the insurgency built up slowly over the first year and became very intense over the last 6 months for sure. So we have adapted all the way along. Secretary Wolfowitz talked about part of that adaptation as we tried to categorize the sort of Iraqi security forces that were there to help provide for their own security. Initially we tracked those that were on the payroll and realized very quickly that was not sufficient. Then we tracked those that were trained and decided later on that, no, it is not just training; it is training and equipping, and we have to move—one of the adaptations you will see is we are going to have to move—and I think Senator Levin mentioned this in his opening remarks—we are going to have to move to a way where we can start tracking the capability.

This is not easy. We have spent a lot of decades trying to perfect a way to track our true U.S. military capability, and you have to realize in that country without a robust Ministry of Defense, without a robust Ministry of Interior, without the sort of reporting and communications abilities that we have, this will be difficult. But I talked to General Petraeus today and that is certainly one of the adaptations where we have to go.

The other thing, I think yesterday in your briefing with General Sharp and others we talked about, and in my opening statement while we focused on fighting the insurgency, we need to now focus on helping the Iraqis become self-reliant in their own security capability. So you will see some changes in how we do that in some of our emphasis, some of our focus.

That is going to have to occur over time. That is why I think setting time lines—this ought to be conditions-based, not timelines-based, and that is what we have said all along. I hope that we will have support to do that. Certainly that is the President's intention and that is the order we are marching to.

If you will put up that first slide on the mission.

[The information referred to follows:]

US Mission Statement

The United States will help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq, at peace with its neighbors, with a constitutional, representative government that respects human rights and has security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and deny Iraq as a safe haven for terrorists.

This is the mission that we have been using and it is in our national strategy, not just military strategy. This is the U.S. mission statement. I think it goes right along with what we heard last night in the State of the Union message and what we have been marching to. But that is our mission. That is in the first few pages of our national strategy.

Chairman WARNER. Can you give us a few specifics? For example, we have received, obviously, through some of our sources the recommendations of General Luck, and I fully understand that Generals Abizaid and Casey are working through that and through the Secretary of Defense and his staff and yourself you will give us more specifics. But generally, we are looking at the option of including relatively small numbers of our forces into the Iraqi units. You might call it embedding. That is a term the American people understand now because of the courage of the journalists actually working with them. This is on a daily basis. They are actually 24 hours a day, 7 days a week right with that unit, doing some training, coordinating, and the like.

Can you expound on that. To me, that is a very important change in our basic tactics.

General MYERS. We have already instituted some assistance, training support, where we essentially do what you just said, Mr. Chairman, and that is to embed trainers with Iraqi units. Of course, our forces, while fighting the insurgency, have also trained the National Guard Forces, who in many cases work right along side our forces.

So this is just an extension of that, realizing that when you talk about capability with the Iraqi security forces it is a function of several things. It is certainly a function of leadership. It is a function of motivation. It is a function of training, experience, and the infrastructure they have to operate. It is a function of the equipment they have.

One of the things, of course, we do well is we can help them in many of these areas in terms of mentorship. We can also bring them real capability. We often throw around the term, which is an-

other acronym, but "C^4I," which is command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence. If you think about it in terms of Iraqi forces, command and control, we can help with that because we bring the next "C", which is communications. We can help with moving——

Chairman WARNER. Let me just finish up. In summary then, in every way we are recognizing the growing competence of the Iraqi forces and enabling them to go into positions and missions which formerly were performed by our forces; am I correct in that?

General MYERS. Well, obviously the goal is that, to get them to take over.

Chairman WARNER. They certainly exhibited that on election day. That gave them a tremendous sense of confidence. I would hope that momentum—as a matter of fact, am I mistaken, some 2,000 or 3,000 Iraqis have volunteered in the last 72 hours to join their military forces? That is a clear manifestation.

General MYERS. Yes, sir. General Petraeus said in the last 2 days that there have been 2,500 people on each day trying to sign up——

Chairman WARNER. On each day?

General MYERS. On each day, trying to sign up.

Chairman WARNER. Well, that is a strong sign. Thank you.

General MYERS. Yes, they have been empowered.

Chairman WARNER. Mr. Secretary, the coming government as it begins to take charge, what changes in terms of their relationship with the direction and the operation of our troops do you anticipate, and will there be a new status of forces agreement to give adequate protection to our troops and its missions?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. If I could preface that, Mr. Chairman, by responding to your question about the changes in strategy the President referred to. I think it is important to help people understand that we have adapted to circumstances as we find them on the ground. I think the most significant change was what we saw in the elections on Sunday, because, as you recall, Ambassador Bremer's original plan was to keep the CPA in operation as an occupation authority until the end of this year. When it became clear in the summer of 2003 that that was not a satisfactory way to go forward, first we talked about a transfer of sovereignty to an appointed government. When the Iraqi reaction was, well, wait a minute, particularly from Sistani in particular, but I think more broadly, we would like an elected government, we came up with the plan that the President announced in I believe it was in the fall of 2003, which has produced first the interim government on June 28 and now this election.

We need to be prepared to adapt further. As you correctly point out, we are going to have what is called a transitional government, which will be elected, which now has authority under the U.N. resolution that the previous government did not have, to negotiate a status of forces agreement, a security agreement. You can call it different things, but it is the arrangement under which coalition forces will continue to operate in Iraq.

Also, as we have said over and over again, if they want us to leave they have the authority to ask us to leave.

Chairman WARNER. Yes. Very clearly both the President and the Prime Minister said unequivocally that for the time being it is essential that these coalition forces remain in place.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I think that is clear.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We have been given a sheet of paper I guess that comes from the Department of State, but which carries the estimate that we had as of January 19, 125,373 trained on-hand Iraqi security forces. General, I would like to ask you the first question. Approximately how many of these Iraqi security forces are would you say fully-trained and equipped and capable and ready to neutralize insurgents? Give us an estimate. Is it half? Is it two-thirds? Is it one-third?

General MYERS. Let me put up that other chart, on the train and equip. We will just put the chart up. I think it uses the same numbers, Senator Levin, that you have, so everybody can see them.

[The information referred to follows:]

Current Status of Trained and Equipped Iraqi Security Forces

Ministry of Interior Forces

COMPONENT	TRAINED & EQUIPPED
POLICE	57,290
HIGHWAY PATROL	
OTHER MOI FORCES	21,826
TOTAL	79,116*

Ministry of Defense Forces

COMPONENT	OPERATIONAL
ARMY	56,284
AIR FORCE	139
NAVY	526
TOTAL	56, 949**

Total Trained & Equipped ISF:

136,065

* Ministry of Interior Forces: Unauthorized absences personnel are included in these numbers

** Ministry of Defense Forces: Unauthorized absences personnel are not included in these numbers

Data as of 31 Jan 05

A couple of things about the numbers. These are, as you correctly said, these are trained and equipped. So in some cases those numbers are folks that have been trained and equipped a while back and have great capabilities. In other cases they are just fresh out of training. I might add, though, the training has very high standards and it is also tailored to the specific units, because, as you have seen before, there are several different types of police units, there are several different types of Iraqi Army units and Navy and Air Force units buried in those numbers. So it is complex.

You will also notice that for the Ministry of Defense we think we are counting the actual numbers that are on duty. In the Ministry of Interior we have a lot less confidence that our numbers include those that may be absent from their duty station. The reporting there, the Ministry of Interior just put out a new policy where they are going to issue new ID cards and do a complete accounting of their forces.

Of those numbers, Senator, you cannot give one number. Of those numbers that are deployable around the nation to meet the most pressing needs, General Petraeus says 48 battalions, which is about—and that is police and Ministry of Defense battalions, and that is about 40,000 that can go anywhere in the country and take on almost any threat.

It does not mean the rest of them are not useful, because in many parts of the country all you need are police on duty, and police on duty in the southern part of the country are very useful doing police duties down there. So that is what I mentioned earlier when I was trying to answer Chairman Warner's question, is that we have to devise better ways to track their overall capacity, and that is one of the things we are going to do.

Senator LEVIN. Would you be able to give us an estimate as to what percentage, just an estimate, of the 136,000 are in my description fully-trained and equipped, capable and ready to neutralize the insurgents? Would you give us a percentage, a rough estimate? Half, two-thirds, one-third?

General MYERS. I think what I just said was that there are 48 deployable units around the country, which equals about 40,000 men, which is the number that can go anywhere and do anything. No, I cannot give you an estimate because that capacity and capability is building every day and it varies widely, as I just tried to describe. So it is difficult to do that.

It is, by the way, as we try to describe our own forces, you may remember there have been times when a U.S. Army division will come back from combat and they will go from reporting C–1, which is our highest level of readiness, to reporting C–3, and people ask the question: Well, wait a minute; they just came out of combat; are they not exquisitely trained and prepared and motivated? The answer is, yes, but then they come back and they take leave and they do other things.

So we even have a harder time describing in these numbers because we do not have the exquisite system yet to do that. It is not just our system. It is a system the Iraqis have to devise with their Ministry of Defense and their Ministry of Interior.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator Levin——

Senator LEVIN. I am going to run out of time here.

If I could just ask you about that specific number. Yesterday we were given a chart which says "Department of State," which had a total of 130,000, but did not break down the components by number. We were told that that was classified. But now today you are giving us apparently unclassified numbers for police. I am very glad. I was going to raise havoc here this morning with the Department of State for giving us just a total without a breakdown of the components and I was going to ask them whether or not this rep-

resents a new approach of not giving us the breakdown component by component.

But I gather from the fact that you have given us a January 31, 2005, listing of components with numbers, General, that that is going to continue to be an unclassified approach. Is that fair to say?

General MYERS. Yes, sir. Yes, Senator.

Senator LEVIN. Now, General, could you give us an estimate as to how many insurgents there are? Here is the reason I ask you that question: General Casey, who is the MNF–I Commander, said just last week that Coalition Forces had killed or captured about 15,000 suspected insurgents last year. He went on to say that this means that the previous U.S. estimates of an insurgent force of 6 to 9,000 fighters were clearly inaccurate.

In response to a question, he stated that he thought that a recent estimate by Iraq's intelligence chief that the insurgency numbered as many as 40,000 hardcore fighters or—excuse me—or 200,000 when part-time combatants and sympathizers were included, was too high an estimate. That is what General Casey said last week.

Could you give us an estimate of the number of insurgents that we are facing, both hardcore fighters and then that second figure that was used by the Iraq intelligence chief of part-time combatants and sympathizers, just a rough estimate?

General MYERS. Sir, I will have to do that for the record, if we can get that from the Intelligence Community. We do not have the insight into those numbers in most cases to provide a good estimate that would be a fair thing to throw in front of the committee right now.

What I can say is that there is a good intelligence report out just recently by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) that details an individual and what motivated this individual to participate in the insurgency. As General Luck stated when he came back—and we have described the threat I think very accurately several times in front of the committee in closed session. So we know the elements of the threat very well. But to put numbers, accurate numbers, against them, because there are so many fence-sitters—and fence-sitters can be very dangerous. They can have an occupation by day and then plant an improvised explosive device (IED) at night, and they can attack the coalition, they can attack Iraqi security forces, they can attack Iraqi citizens.

I think one of the things that we know from the elections, there will be a lot less fence-sitters because they saw their fellow citizens go out and vote. I think that will help.

But to come up with accurate estimates is just very difficult in this type of insurgency.

[The information referred to follows:]

The Defense Intelligence Agency/J–2 assess current insurgent strength is between 10,000–20,000. It is further estimated that an additional 1,100–1,200 foreign fighters are active in the insurgency; however, the National Intelligence Council recently determined that current methods for determining insurgent manpower trends in Iraq are too uncertain and ill-suited to be used in gauging the evolving strategic strength of the insurgency. Insurgents drift in and out of active participation as the political environment and their personal situation evolves. Moreover, robust criminal networks act as insurgent and extremist force multipliers.

Many Sunni Arabs, motivated by fear, financial incentive, perceptions of marginalization and exclusion from Iraqi government and security institutions act

as insurgent sympathizers or "fence-sitters," capable of supporting the insurgency. The estimated 2.5 million Sunni Arab males in Iraq will remain an insurgent recruiting pool and support network as long as the social, economic, and historical grievances persist.

Individual coalition insurgent capture and kills have modest impact on the overall strength of the insurgency due to insurgent regeneration. In addition to active sympathizers, the former regime's military and security apparatus provides a pool of well-trained personnel. Pre-Operation Iraqi Freedom uniformed military and security personnel are contributing skill sets, organization and leadership to insurgent cells.

Senator LEVIN. Is it fair to say it is more than a few or a handful?

General MYERS. Certainly, yes.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. I want to thank the witnesses and we share their exuberance as we take this victory lap over the elections. We are indeed encouraged and optimistic about the future. I also think that we should view it with some concern because we know that it is going to be a rather long and difficult experience.

General Myers, I am disappointed that you do not have even a rough estimate of the number of insurgents. I do not know how you defeat an insurgency unless you have some handle on the number of people that you are facing.

General MYERS. We do have estimates. I said I would provide them. Most of them are classified——

Senator MCCAIN. I am surprised you do not have them readily at hand.

General MYERS. The ones I have seen——

Senator MCCAIN. Since it is a fundamental aspect of the conflict that we are facing.

General MYERS. Right.

Senator MCCAIN. I do not have much time. Secretary Wolfowitz——

General MYERS. They are classified, Senator. I will get them to you. I will get the classified numbers to you.

Senator MCCAIN. I think the American people should know the nature of the enemy that we are facing. I am not sure that classified numbers are appropriate here.

Secretary Wolfowitz, what level of U.S. forces would you expect us to maintain for the next 6 months or the next year?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I think we will be able to come down to the level that was projected before this election. Senator, we overlapped our deployments and extended the, I guess it was, Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 (OIF–3) so that we get a bump-up of about 15,000 to cover the elections, which I think was, in hindsight, a prudent thing to do.

We believe that we can come down by that 15,000, which I think would bring us—General Myers knows the numbers better than I—I think to about 17 brigades, about 135,000 troops. That is what we are looking at——

Senator MCCAIN. I would just like a number.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Pardon?

Senator MCCAIN. I would just like a number.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. 135,000.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you.

In the case of this continuing question about fully trained and equipped Iraqis, one of the reasons why there are continuous questions is because of the various setbacks we have had in the training and equipping of the Iraqis, and we know how important it is for them to assume those responsibilities.

I think it would be—and I made the suggestion yesterday that we go to a grading system, such as we use for U.S. forces—we do not know how many individual American soldiers are fully-trained and equipped, but we do grade their units. Perhaps we could at some point get a better handle as to unit readiness, and that would help us in assessing their ability to take on the tasks.

By the way, how many of the—it says "Unauthorized absences personnel not included in the numbers" of the Ministry of Defense forces. How many unauthorized absences are there?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. There is a considerable number, in part, Senator, because the whole notion of absence in their system is different from ours and in part because of, frankly, the mechanics involved in paying. There is no way for a soldier to send a check to his family in southern Iraq, so he has to take the cash and travel with it.

I think the level—it is hard to say whether it is authorized or unauthorized, but I would say—and General Myers, please correct me—that on average for the fill-in units, it is about 60 percent. One of the things that General Luck is looking at is what can be done to get that up.

What you say, sir, I think is absolutely correct. It is units that really are most important. One of the reasons these numbers seem to change constantly is because a lot of experimentation is going on with units. We had I believe on June 28, when the interim government took over, only one battalion that was considered deployable and there are now 45 such units. My sense is that is one of the most important measures. It is still maybe 20 percent of the total force, but it is the most important part of the force.

Senator MCCAIN. I agree. Again, I think that combat readiness of units is probably a far more accurate indicator of our ability to carry out the mission.

I want to talk just for a minute about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). We continue to hear about NATO involvement. At one time there was going to be a NATO training battalion and other involvement. What is the current level of NATO involvement in training and what are the plans for increasing it?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. General Myers?

General MYERS. NATO has agreed to take on training at staff college level, officer and noncommissioned officer (NCO) development, and NATO nations have done some of that outside Iraq. For instance, Germany is training truck drivers on specific equipment they are donating to the Iraqi forces in the United Arab Emirates. But the status inside Iraq is they are in the process of standing that capability up inside Iraq to provide the higher level education of the officer and the Iraqi NCO corps.

Senator MCCAIN. That is the extent of NATO involvement?

General MYERS. To this point, I think that is where they are focused. They are looking at things that they can do in the future and, of course, we are always hopeful they will want to provide more.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, Mr. Secretary, I would, since we have such an enormous strain on our Active, Guard, and Reserve Forces, place a high priority on a common interest that we and our NATO allies have, and that is to see democracy established in Iraq. It seems to me it is now in our NATO allies' interest as well as ours to see that happen. I would give a very high priority to consultations with our NATO allies to see if there are ways they can help us.

I do not think we are going to get a lot more troops there, but there certainly is a myriad of ways that our NATO allies could assist us in training and equipping, relieving us of some of our noncombat responsibilities and others, because I think there are many of us who are aware that this burden that has been placed on our present-sized Active-Duty, Guard, and Reserve Forces is a very heavy one. It seems to me that after this election has proven to our NATO allies that we can win this thing, they should take a fresh look at assisting us.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator, I think you are absolutely right. The numbers are not where we would like them in terms of NATO contribution. I think you are right, there is an opportunity now to boost those numbers. I think also that we need to look at whether some of our coalition partners might better participate in training than in some of the sort of fixed site protection they are doing now, which is much less needed. I think it is something we should be taking up.

I think you will be going to Vercunda. I am sure you will take it up and I think it is important.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. By the way, on that point, if I just might add one other thing. The number of trainers is in some ways—the total number may not sound demanding, but since you need capable field grade officers for training, you are taking those numbers out of a much more limited pool. I think NATO has a lot of very capable field grade officers and it would be a wonderful thing for them to contribute more.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. I wish to associate myself with Senator McCain's observation about NATO participation. I just checked with staff. My own recollection is that NATO made the announcement in July that they were going to go in there and start that training program. Would you supply the committee with the number of boots on the ground and what they have achieved in this period of time? Because that is a fairly significant lapse of period of time and I just wanted to know how far along they are on this program. But I do not want to interfere with other members going.

General Myers, on the important question asked by Senator McCain, the threat from these insurgents and the quantum, I asked that question in closed briefings yesterday and they said, "We are building up the Iraqi forces in proportion to what we perceive that threat would be." So I am confident there are some fig-

ures out there, and I think it is important that we release these figures publicly, with regard to the magnitude and the quality of the insurgency that is being mounted in the past and we hope will begin to attenuate in the future, given the extraordinary performance by so many over the weekend.

Did you have an opportunity to——

General MYERS. Mr. Chairman, let me just talk a little bit more about it. Part of the reticence is that the numbers I see are normally classified, so in an open hearing I am a little reluctant to release that. If that is the wish, then we will look at that, of course.

I think we have a pretty good handle on the number of foreign fighters that are in Iraq. We generally say around a thousand or so. But there are for instance, criminals. General Luck comes back and tells us that he thinks a lot of the activity we are seeing is just basic criminal activity. How many criminals there are in Iraq is pretty difficult to tell in any country. So that is why I am hesitant just to throw out a number of what the enemy is, because the character of the enemy is so different. Zarqawi, who is absolutely amoral, will do anything, will kill anybody to achieve his view of the world, is different from the fence-sitter that I described, of which there are probably thousands, but who on any given day or depending on how the situation is going might be willing to join the political process in Iraq.

So it is a very difficult thing to get our hands around and throwing out one number probably does not do the complexity of the threat justice. We will provide it to the committee and as we can we will work with those who classify it to declassify it. There are parts of it that are classified.

[The information referred to follows:]

At the time of the testimony, DOD was still working on the possible declassification of the size and nature of the insurgent threat. As stated later by Secretary Rumsfeld in the annual Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2006 hearing on February 17, 2005:

> "On the insurgency question, one can't help but agree with you. In a perfect world you would like very much to have a good grip on the numbers.
>
> You, obviously, have access to the classified different views that exist within the government and they're all qualified by saying it's a moving target and it's difficult to pin down.
>
> Since I didn't do these, I can't declassify them myself. But I can certainly ask the Intelligence Community to what extent they're willing to declassify the estimates as to the insurgency.
>
> I think the important thing, as you hinted at, is that the insurgents are, first of all, a moving target. They're not static. The numbers change.
>
> Second, they're made up of different elements, criminals, Baathists, the former regime elements, the Zarqawi network and jihadists. Even though the jihadists are the smallest portion of them, they appear to us to be the most lethal; they're the ones that are doing the most damage.
>
> The recruiting base is fairly large if you think of criminals in that country and people who are available to be recruited. So how successful we are in reducing the money is a big part of how big the insurgency is.
>
> So it's a dilemma. It would be nice to have a hard number, but my fear is that the number would change from week to week."

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Chairman, could I just mention why this is important?

Chairman WARNER. Yes.

Senator MCCAIN. We went from a few dead-enders to killing or capturing 15,000 in the period of a year, and that is why there is

a certain credibility problem here as to the size and nature of the enemy we face. It is our responsibility to provide the wherewithal to conduct the conflict and if we go from a few dead-enders to 15,000 killed or injured, and without any good handle on the threat that we are facing, I think it is hard for us to do our job and it is hard for the American people to realize how difficult is the task that lies ahead of us.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Kennedy.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Mr. Chairman, do you want the NATO numbers? Because I did find them.

Chairman WARNER. Quickly.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Very quickly, the total mission size is 459 personnel and 30 percent of that is U.S. Of the other 70 percent, there are still some 50 spots that are not filled, and the initial operating capability is scheduled for February 20. It is in my view a first step, and I encourage all of you to urge more steps. It is the right direction, but it needs to go faster.

Chairman WARNER. There has been sufficient time.

Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I think all of us take extraordinary pride in the incredible achievement of the Iraqis and their willingness to vote in these past elections. I think all of us take recognition of that.

Of course, the United States for some 200 years has been a beacon of hope to peoples all over the world. I can remember when democracy was restored in Chile, turning out Pinochet. I remember when it was restored with Alfonsin in Argentina. I remember the people that waited 72 hours—because one gentleman was 72 years old—to get a vote in South Africa. So we have seen over the period of history that America has had a very important impact in terms of seeing the march towards democratic regimes.

But now we have in Iraq, in listening to what is going to be determined as success as defined by Mr. Wolfowitz, the governmental agencies are going to be up and they are going to be functioning. There are going to be compromises. Iraqis are going to need help. We are going to be helpful to them in reaching compromises. Iraqi security forces are going to be up and trained. They are going to be related to the number of terrorists, and yet we are unsure—one thing we are sure is the total number is increasing. They are going to have a legal and judicial system that is going to protect all rights of people. It is going to give equal justice under law. We are also going to protect justices and develop the capability of bombing experts. Then we are going to put pressure on Syria and other countries.

You talk about mission creep. Where is Osama bin Laden? This whole process started as the war on terror. This started with weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). This started with the alleged fact that Iraq was involved, as later disproved, with the terrorists. Now we hear the spokesman for the administration talking about the maintenance of American personnel and troops, where we have already lost over the 1,400, and they are going to be there until some governmental agencies are functioning effectively. Many people do not think governmental agencies are functioning effectively here in

this country. They will be there until the Iraqi security forces are up and trained, as well as the legal-judicial system.

America, listen to that. How long are we going to be there? That is why we went to Iraq? That is why we went to Iraq? We have our forces over there.

Now, given the extraordinary achievements and accomplishments of this last week, where the Iraqi people indicated that they want to control their own political destiny, people ask me, how long is it going to take to train Iraqis to fight for their own country, to shed their own blood, as Americans are doing it?

My wife has a nephew. Let us just call him Charles William. I will spare his last name. He is from Shreveport, Louisiana. A little over 8 months ago he joined the United States Army. He went for 12 weeks to Fort Benning and got infantry training. He had 10 days off, then he went to Fort Lewis, where he got his equipment. He was supposed to go to Kuwait for additional training. He went directly to Mosul. He is a tail gunner on a Stryker. Nine personnel in that. He is the oldest one. They call him "Pops." He is just back here now after 8 months over there and he is rotating back.

This soldier wants to stay in the military. But he had that amount of training and he is over there representing the best of the best.

You are getting 2,500 people that want to join that Iraqi military. You have the 127,000 or 140,000 you think are equipped. When are the Iraqis going to fight for their own country? When are they going to start shedding that kind of blood?

We are all proud of those individuals, Mr. Secretary, that exhibited this extraordinary heroism on election day. No one is begrudging that. We are all proud of that. We have other times in American history. We are proud of our service men and women. We want to know when the Iraqis are going to go out there and shed their blood, as American service men with this amount of training are willing to shed theirs.

Is that going to take 4 months? Is it going to take 12 months? Is that asking too much? Is it asking too much that after the new administration takes over we are going to say, look, okay, in 12 months we will start drawing down some of our troops? Are we prepared to say that after 18 months we should be able to get a good many of our troops out, with the goal of getting the rest of ours out of Iraq, as I have stated?

When in the world are we going to have the Iraqis being able, and why in the world cannot we expect them to take on these responsibilities when American service men are doing it and they are losing their lives, and American taxpayers are paying out? How long are we going to do this? Mr. Secretary?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator Kennedy, first of all I recall vividly that same process you described, the advance of democracy in the 1980s. I was at the State Department playing some role in supporting the transition to democracy in the Philippines when Ferdinand Marcos was removed peacefully, the following year when Korea established its first democracy in history, one which has proven to be vital and viable. I witnessed that process in Indonesia, where I was ambassador. It took longer than I would have liked, but that country is on a march toward democracy.

It is an impressive movement. People want freedom, they want to pick their own representatives. There is something importantly different in Iraq. In all the cases that you mentioned and that I just mentioned, these people were not fighting the remnants of a regime that was as brutal and as evil as Stalin or Hitler. That is what the Iraqi people are facing.

The level of intimidation is extraordinary, and they are facing it bravely. They are shedding their blood. As I mentioned in my opening comments, nearly 1,400 by our count. As I said, I think we underestimate. We count our people by name. We are not so good at counting Iraqis. 1,342 Iraqi soldiers and policemen have died in the line of duty fighting for a new Iraq, and those numbers are going up faster, not that we want to see any numbers go up, those numbers are going up faster than ours.

They are assuming more and more responsibility. One of our principal objectives here—we are not going to wait until they have functioning governmental institutions before we hand over security to Iraqi forces. But what I said in my comments is they will be able to handle the job sooner the more effective their government is at functioning. This is not just a military task.

But our goal is to get them up and capable as fast as possible. That is one of the principal considerations that I know General Casey and General Abizaid will have in mind when they make recommendations on things like force levels. The goal is not just to get our people home if that leaves the people who are still there in greater danger. The real thing is to get Iraqis on the front lines and Americans in a supporting role.

Senator Levin referred earlier to Korea. We have had for over 50 years a strategy for winning in Korea, a strategy for preserving peace on the peninsula and creating conditions under which the Koreans have been able to create one of the most impressive democracies in the world. We have not left. We have not exited yet. But with some tragic exceptions over the course of that 50 years, we have been able to avoid a war and keep Americans from dying.

I think that is what we have to keep our eye on here. I think you will see that process proceed. I have talked to some of our commanders in the area. They believe that over the course of the next 6 months you will see whole areas of Iraq successfully handed over to the Iraqi Army and Iraqi police. But what we do not want to do is prematurely hand over an area and then create a place where the enemy can organize and operate. I think you can see over the last couple years there have been a couple such mistakes. We do not want to repeat them.

Senator KENNEDY. My time is up.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know that we are all very aware that the cut-and-runners are out there and they are sincere. I think the argument out there that should not be there any longer is that there is reason for the insurgency that is out there, to protest the American occupation there, American troops there, as opposed to the fact that it was a long-calculated risk.

I would like to read from three publications that are certainly not Republican publications. In October 2003 Newsweek reported: "The terrorist campaign was planned by Saddam Hussein and his lieutenants, and Iraqi agents bought vast quantities of detonators, timers, and wiring supplies, as well as a coordinated guerilla and war strategy hatched before the invasion of Iraq."

Last April, The New York Times reported that: "The Iraqi officers of the special operations and antiterrorism branch were responsible for the planted IEDs and some of the larger car bombs in Iraq," and "they had prepared explosive-laden vests for suicide bombers before the war."

In December U.S. News and World Report disclosed that "Saddam sent more than 1,000 security and intelligence officers to military facilities near Baghdad in the fall of 2002 for 2 months of guerrilla training."

I would just like to ask for a short answer, Mr. Secretary and Mr. Schlicher. The continuation of violence in Iraq, is it a popular uprising stemming from the U.S. presence there or part of a calculated campaign by Saddam Hussein's security apparatus? Just a short answer.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator Inhofe, I think there is a growing body of evidence that we are dealing with Saddam Hussein's security apparatus, that some degree of what we are confronting—and maybe a large amount—was prepared before the war. If you read the Duelfer report carefully, which almost no one has, you will see it in there. I reference in my testimony his religious adviser who was recruiting foreign fighters before the war.

In testimony before this committee, I have shown passports of foreign fighters that came in from Syria in March 2003 during the major combat phase. One of them crossed the border with an entry in his visa permit, and the stated purpose of visit was to perform jihad. Syrian intelligence knew what this guy was doing. Iraqi intelligence knew what this guy was doing. It was Iraqi intelligence that moved this guy down south where our marines killed him.

One of the problems with answering the question that we heard earlier about numbers of enemy is that, I would say, one of the few strengths this enemy has beyond its brutality is the ability to keep secrets. In fact, the brutality is part of how it does keep secrets. So we are trying to figure out how much of what appears to be a growth in enemy is simply a growth in our estimates of the enemy, because we are learning more about them and how much is in their ability to recruit more.

I have to say, I was personally somewhat pleasantly surprised by what appeared to be a relatively ineffective attack on January 30. I thought they were capable of much more than they showed and I do not think anyone would say they were holding back.

But as to your question, I think to some very large degree we are fighting the old regime. There are, by the way, within Zarqawi's network former members of the Special Security Organization, former members of the Special Republican Guards. This is not a simple independent operation.

Senator INHOFE. This bothers me. It always bothers me to have people continuously say that there is not a relationship between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein, Zarqawi, the training that was taking

place there. We knew that before the invasion took place. I think you probably agree with that statement, do you not?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I do. As Secretary Powell pointed out to the U.N., a man like Zarqawi does not hang around in a police state like Iraq without somebody noticing he is there.

Senator INHOFE. I do not want to run out of time here, so I am going to, with your indulgence—tonight, Senator Thune and I are going to Iraq and we have a number of things we want to do there. First of all, we want to see what it looks like after the election. But I have another mission. I was very proud of a very courageous Lieutenant Colonel, Tim Ryan, the Commander of Task Force 2, 12th Cavalry, in the First Cavalry Division in Iraq. He led the troops into battle in Fallujah late last year and recently was involved in security operations.

He is not afraid to come out and talk about it, and I am going to actually quote from an article that he has written. I plan to meet with him. I plan to talk to other soldiers over there. To me, the most effective voice we can have to getting the truth out about our victories in Iraq is from our soldiers themselves.

He said: "All right, I have had enough. I am tired of reading distorted and grossly exaggerated stories from major news organizations about the failures of the war in Iraq. The inaccurate picture they paint has distorted the world view of the daily realities in Iraq. The result is a further erosion of international support for United States efforts there and a strengthening of the insurgents' resolve and recruiting efforts, while weakening our own. Through their incomplete, uninformed, and unbalanced reporting, many members of the media covering the war in Iraq are aiding and abetting the enemy." That is pretty strong. "From where I sit in Iraq"—and he is sitting where he knows things we do not know—"things are going quite well. We are not under attack by the enemy. On the contrary, we are taking the fight to him daily and have him on the ropes. Fallujah, the area around the former insurgent stronghold, is more peaceful than it has been for more than a year. The total number of attacks in the greater al-Anbar Province is down by at least 70 to 80 percent since late last October."

Still quoting now: "Why do not the papers lead with 'Coalition crushes remaining pockets of insurgents' or 'Enemy forces resort to suicide bombings of civilians'? Instead, headlines focus almost exclusively on our hardship. The key to the enemy's success is use of his limited assets to gain the greatest influence over the masses. The media serves as that glass through which a relatively small event can be magnified to international proportions, and many of the enemy is exploiting this with incredible ease. This is not good for the news, to counteract this. So the enemy scores a victory almost every day as a result of the media."

Every time I come back from over there I feel like I am coming back as a truth squad to tell the American people what these kids come up and tell me, the ones who are in the lines, risking their lives, and recognizing that they have a mission that is the most significant mission perhaps that any soldier has ever had on the battlefield before.

So I would only say that if we are going to encourage them to do this, I would hope that, General Myers, as you talk to people

you will encourage them to come out and tell the truth about what is going on, the great job that we are doing over there. It does not require an answer.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General MYERS. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman WARNER. I think we should give the witnesses the opportunity if they wish to respond. It is an important observation that you made.

General Myers, you looked as if you wanted to add.

General MYERS. Well, I am just very sympathetic to what Senator Inhofe said. I have a chance to speak at many different forums around this country and I always tell them that you would be better off if you could just beam in one soldier, sailor, airman, or marine that is over there in Iraq or Afghanistan. If you could just beam them in, pick a social security number at random and ask them to come up here and tell you what they think, you will get it straight and you will be proud of their understanding of the problem and their devotion to the mission. So I just identify myself with those remarks and I think that is absolutely right.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you, General.

Senator Reed.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. You can beam them in. You can go to I think it is worldtribune.com for that particular account. I found a lot of valuable information that is not in our main news media, both from Americans in Iraq and from Iraqis in Iraq, that appears on these Web sites. It is a fascinating phenomenon. I quote it, too, in my testimony.

Chairman WARNER. In the next round I intend to invite Mr. Schlicher to give his views as to how the Arab press has covered the elections. But I will wait for that time.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen. Mr. Secretary, you indicated to Senator McCain that you anticipate 135,000 troops to be in Iraq next year. By rough calculation that is about $50 billion. Will those funds be in the President's budget that is submitted in the next few days?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. They will be in the supplemental request which will come up shortly after the budget.

Senator REED. So we are already looking at a supplemental budget for operations this year, I believe?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Correct.

Senator REED. These troops next year will be paid out of the supplemental budget that is going to be considered in the next few months?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Well, you will have a supplemental budget request that will be up here for fiscal year 2005, along with a fiscal year 2006 authorization request. The fiscal year 2006 authorization request will not make a prediction about what we think our force levels will be in 2006. Those will be covered in the second supplemental. We plan to fund the 2006 expenditures for Iraq and Afghanistan with another supplemental request in fiscal year 2006.

Senator REED. So we can assume that we will consider an $80 billion supplemental this year for 2005 and we will have already

anticipated a $50 billion or more supplemental in 2006, is that accurate?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I would not predict 2006. I was asked what force levels we are planning on, I thought, over the next 6 months or through the end of this calendar year, and I said we are planning on 135,000, and that is not a prediction. That is a planning factor. If we can bring those numbers down intelligently, we will always work to bring them down.

But let me make an important point here. At roughly $4 billion a month for our forces, if we can bring Iraqi forces up more quickly by keeping Americans in Iraq a little bit longer, just in cost alone it is a worthwhile tradeoff, and in terms of American lives at risk it is an even more worthwhile tradeoff.

As I said earlier in comment to Senator Kennedy, we want to do whatever we need to do to increase Iraqi capability as fast as possible. That may mean a little more investment at the front end in our capabilities so that we bring them on line faster.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, I do not argue with your logic, but I think that logic suggests rather strongly that it is more than a planning estimate, that it is probably the best estimate right now of roughly 130,000 troops, 17 brigades, in Iraq through the end of 2006. I think officials of the Army have indicated that. In fact, I think I would not be surprised if even the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) commander would support that estimate.

So to sit here and suggest that we are going to consider an $80 billion supplemental for this year, but we should not even think about a significant $50 billion supplemental next year, I think is a little disingenuous.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator, I did not say there will not be a significant supplemental in 2006. I said I cannot tell you what the size of it will be. General Myers may comment. I do not think CENTCOM makes a prediction about what we will need in 2006.

I think we have a reasonably good fix on what we will need through the end of this calendar year and certainly through the end of this fiscal year, and the Army general you referred to I think is making a prudent assumption about what he may be asked to provide forces for. But what we will actually need in calendar year 2006, unless General Myers has a different estimate, I think it would be a wild guess at this point.

General MYERS. That is correct, Senator Reed. The process that both the Army uses and that we use on the Joint Staff, trying to source what General Abizaid in CENTCOM and General Casey needs, we do a lot of worst case planning because of the stress on the force, so we can make sure we can fulfil what we think would be the worst case needs.

But those are not the predictions. That will be up to General Abizaid and General Casey, and they continually think through those. So to say that our worst case planning is going to reflect reality, that is not correct.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. But there will be, I would predict, a substantial request for supplemental funding in fiscal year 2006.

General MYERS. Right, that is right.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I think we all can agree upon that.

Let me get one other metric. If the figure is 136,000 troops, it would roughly equate to about $50 billion?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I would want to check that for the record, but I think for Iraq alone that is right.

[The information referred to follows:]

Your metric is roughly correct. The Fiscal Year 2005 Supplemental Appropriations request includes about $56 billion for Operation Iraqi Freedom based on an assumption that deployment levels for U.S. military personnel deployed to Iraq will return to about 138,000 troops by the summer of 2005—after reaching about 160,000 in January 2005 because of the Iraqi national elections.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Remember, the $80 billion includes Afghanistan as well as Iraq and some other things as well.

Senator REED. Thank you.

General Myers, you indicated when you had your chart up, that chart in fact, that these are very high standards these troops are being exposed to in terms of their training. How long is the training for a Ministry of Defense soldier, either National Guard or military?

General MYERS. I will have to make sure I get this to you for the record. It varies by the type of unit.

Senator REED. Let us just say, what is the average?

General MYERS. The average, I will get back to you exactly. I will get you all the units and I will break out the averages.

Senator REED. You do not have sort of just a rough notion of how long these troops are being trained?

General MYERS. Sir, several months. But there are so many different types of units buried in those numbers that I would like to give you specifically by unit. There are some units there that are—the regular Army, for a regular Army individual, 12 weeks. There is some basic training that goes on for 8 weeks and there is 4 weeks of cadre training.

For the National Guard it is 3 weeks of basic training and then 4 weeks of collective training. For the intervention force, which is a little bit higher level force and some of those forces that we talked about earlier that are deployable around the country and that can handle the bigger threats, it is 8 weeks of basic training, 4 weeks of cadre training, and then some urban operation training that goes on for 5 weeks. Then you get up into the special forces type units and they have 13 weeks on top of all that. I can provide that for the record if you wish.

[The information referred to follows:]

Iraqi Regular Army (RA): Officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) in the Iraqi RA begin their training with a 4-week cadre preparation course. This course is designed to make the officers and NCOs effective instructors so they can eventually teach and train their own troops. The cadre course covers leadership, training, techniques, weapons training, and tactics. Following this cadre training of the officers and NCOs, basic trainees are introduced into their units to be taught by these new instructors, under the supervision of Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I).

Basic Training is 5 weeks long although the entire 1st week is considered the selection and in-processing week. After 4 weeks every soldier is sent to skills training, which runs from a minimum of 5 weeks (Iraqi Medic Course) to as long as 7 weeks (Infantry Course). The cadre teaches their own soldiers physical training, soldier discipline, basic infantry skills, weapons training, land navigation, and squad-level tactics. This method of having the officers and NCOs train their own troops is used

so that unit cohesion can be quickly established between the officers, NCOs, and soldiers.

Following graduation, soldiers are sent to their units for collective training following a training program outlined by MNC–I. This program consists of a series of collective training gates each squad, platoon, company, etc., must pass through to be considered initially operationally qualified and eventually fully operationally qualified.

Selectees from each unit are sent to attend the four levels of NCO training, Squad Leader Course, Platoon Sergeant Course, Company Warrant Officer Course, or Battalion Command Sergeants Major School. Currently, only the first two courses are being offered and the latter two begin in August as a pilot program. Only infrastructure limits the number of attendees, not the course itself. By the end of August, we anticipate a throughput of over 1,000 soldiers per month in the Noncommissioned Officers' Educational System.

Selectees from each unit are also sent to branch school training for enhanced skills education. This includes front line NCOs, supervising NCOs, and both the Company and Battalion-level officers. Currently we are training all logistics specialties, including transportation, medical, supply, maintenance management, and personnel management. The engineer and military police schools conduct leader training concurrent with a collective training formal program. Combat unit training includes a combat platoon leader course and company commander pilot course.

Iraqi National Guard: Officers, NCOs, and soldiers receive a 3-week block of instruction taught by cadre from the Major Subordinate Commands (MSC) in the Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC–I). The training course includes many of the same topics taught to the RA recruits including physical training, weapons training, land navigation and basic infantry skills. The new officers, NCOs, and recruits are partnered with an MSC unit in the. area in which they will operate and transition into a 4-week collective training phase where they practice newly acquired skills.

Iraqi Intervention Force: Officers, NCOs, and soldiers initially follow the same process as the RA, beginning with the 4-week cadre course followed by the 8-week basic training course. After the cadre and basic training, Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers receive an additional 5 weeks of specialty training that focuses on military operations in urban terrain in order to conduct anti-insurgent operations in cities and towns.

Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF): These forces consist of two components: the Counterterrorist Task Force and the Commando Battalion. The soldiers who go through the standard 8-week basic training course are identified and recommended by the U.S. Special Forces cadre for recruitment into the ISOF. Many of the recruits recommended to join the ISOF have Special Operations training from prior service. Once accepted, the recruits identified for the Counterterrorist Task Force are cycled through a 13-week special operators course in Jordan. Those recruits identified for the Commando Battalion undergo a 3-week commando course taught by U.S. Special Forces that focuses on small unit tactics and U.S. Army Ranger-type specialty skills.

Iraqi Police Service (IPS): Iraqi Police recruits undergo an 8-week academy training course taught at the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTC) or in one of the seven police academies in Iraq. Training highlights include basic police skills, basic criminal investigation, kidnapping investigation and marksmanship. The instruction has been modified to reflect the security environment focusing more on survival skills and combat skills. Police recruits who were former police officers under the previous regime are trained under the 3-week Transition and Integration Program (TIP). This program, taught by Iraqis, reinforces police professionalism, standards, and accountability. Additionally, there are several advanced and specialized training courses for the IPS to combat the insurgency. Examples of these include post-blast investigations taught by Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) officials, counterterrorism investigations taught by the FBI and Explosive Hazardous Awareness Training taught by the U.S. military.

Iraqi Civil Intervention Forces (CIFs): CIFs operate in two components: public order battalions and a mechanized police brigade. Recruits brought into the service for public order battalions undergo a 5-week training course taught by the U.S. Investigative Services. Training focuses on riot control, civil disorder management and explosives awareness. Recruits joining the mechanized police brigade undergo a 5-week course designed to familiarize them with operating and maintaining their armed personnel carriers. In addition, they are taught perimeter security techniques, light armor movement skills, marksmanship and civil disorder management.

Emergency Response Unit (ERU): The ERU is an elite team trained to respond to national-level law enforcement emergencies. Recruits undergo a robust 8-week specialized training course focusing on high-risk search, arrest, hostage-rescue and crisis-response operations. Recruits for the force must first complete the standard

8-week police academy or TIP training before entering specialized training modeled after the U.S. DOD antiterrorism and ATF training programs.

Special Police Commando (SPC) Battalion: SPC recruits are Iraqi officers and soldiers made up of prior-service special forces professionals and other skilled service members with specialty unit experience. Recruits complete a 3-week training program focused on marksmanship, weapons training, and small unit paramilitary training focusing on offensive counterterrorism tactics.

Department of Border Enforcement (DBE): The formal training program for DBE officers and guards is a 4-week course taught at the JIPTC. Training topics include customs and immigration, cargo search and marksmanship. Current and new border policemen attend training at JIPTC, the first centralized training program established for DBE personnel since the coalition began training Iraqis. Prior to this training program, the major subordinate commands conducted training of border police. Regional DBE training academies in Iraq are being established with an operational date of mid-spring. Border assistance teams will help train current border guards in the coming months.

Iraqi Highway Patrol (IHP): Until recently, IHP officers first completed the standard 8-week police academy or TIP training. Following graduation, they were assigned to one of the six highway patrol barracks throughout Iraq for further specialized training on IHP equipment and patrol techniques. MNSTC–I has recently established a 3-week training program specifically for the IHP and future patrolmen.

Bureau of Dignitary Protection: Officers identified for dignitary protection duties undergo an initial 3-week course taught at the Baghdad Police Academy by the U.S. Investigative Service. They receive an additional 3 weeks of specialized training taught by U.S. contractors.

Senator REED. Thank you, General.

Let me just follow up on an issue related to General Luck's report. It is the suggestion in at least the press that 5,000 soldiers and marines would be assigned as mentors embedded in Iraq units. Do we have 5,000 trained, not just professionally trained as military officers and NCOs, but with language skills and cultural skills, to work in a unit maybe with one or two other Americans? Mr. Secretary, General Myers?

General MYERS. The numbers that I have seen, the estimates that were in the—I did not see any numbers in the Luck report. I saw some assessments by——

Senator REED. You have an advantage on us, General. We have not seen the Luck report or General Luck, which I think would be very helpful to us. Do you have any objections, by the way, if General Luck would come up here and testify before the committee or informally brief us?

General MYERS. I will leave that to the Secretary.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, do you have any objections?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I think, Senator, General Luck is providing his advice to General Casey and General Abizaid, and the Secretary is waiting to hear what they recommend based on that report. We would certainly want to make information available that might be—in a closed session I think you discussed that the other day with the Secretary. We certainly want to make the information available, but we would like to have a chance to see what our commanders conclude from it first.

Senator REED. That is entirely fair. But getting back to your point——

General MYERS. The answer is we do not know the numbers yet. General Casey and General Abizaid are looking at that, and General Metz, who is the MNC–I Commander over there. They are going to have to look at this and see what the numbers would be.

But you are absolutely right. The types of individuals you would place with these units would be officers and NCOs. You would need

translators. You would need people that would hopefully be culturally aware. So they are people of some talent. But how many and how we are going to put those in the units, that is up to General Casey to figure out, the total number, the final number. In fact, for that matter the exact concept has not been determined by General Casey. We are going to wait for him. He has been asked to provide that detail and he will.

Senator REED. My time has expired, but just a final point if I may, General Myers. Are you concerned there is a capacity limitation, though, in terms of whatever numbers that are agreed to, that will limit our ability to fully staff all of these brigades or slow down our ability to integrate American mentors into these units?

General MYERS. We are going to have to wait and see what General Casey finally comes up with. But as you pointed out, these would be some very highly qualified individuals if we go that route, and depending on how extensively we go down that road.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. But I might say, Senator Reed, I think there are different levels of that capability. You referred to language capability, for example, which is an extraordinarily high requirement. I think for the most part we would probably look at having people working through translators. It is not perfect, but right now I think Major General Chiarelli has some 500 of his people essentially doing that with the 7 Iraqi battalions that are in Baghdad and they I am assuming, most of them, are not Arabic speakers, so they must be working through translators.

I think it is important to recognize that one of the principal functions of that is to provide not so much advice and mentoring, although there is a large piece of that, but also just the connection with the capabilities that we have that are way above the level of what Iraqis might have in terms of intelligence and communications and air support and so forth.

Senator REED. Again I am presuming on my colleagues, but I would suspect that you are looking back to our experiences in other places, particularly Vietnam, about both the effectiveness and limitations of advising cultures that are much different than ours.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. There are some lessons from the past. Frankly, I think there are more lessons from the last couple years in Iraq, because each culture is different and each condition is different.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Reed. I appreciate your bringing up the issue of General Luck. The Senate was informed in great detail about his mission and it was highly publicized when he went over and we can understand that there is a time in which he has to consult with his military commanders and prepare Secretary Rumsfeld. But it seems to me that time has run pretty full length now. I think it is appropriate that the Department as early as possible begin to share that report with the Congress of the United States. Thank you.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

General Myers, you mentioned that you wished that you could beam service members here so we could talk to them directly and

hear what they say. I would suggest that, although we cannot do that, we can communicate with them by e-mail. I hear from marines and soldiers in Iraq all the time.

They are very patriotic. They are very proud of the work that they are doing. But they are also frustrated by continuing shortages of safety equipment and basic supplies. Over the past year I have repeatedly brought to the attention of the Pentagon specific instances that I have heard from my soldiers about. Yet the problems persist.

Today I want to read you parts of three different e-mails from three different soldiers serving us in Iraq. I would note that each of them is involved in training Iraqi security forces. Here is what the first soldier wrote:

> "We have tried to get ammo from other sources and through our proper chain of command. In this case we have been told to get Iraqi weapons and ammo as backup weapons. We have done this, but nobody is very confident with this plan. We have very little training in their weapons. We are not qualified with the AK–47. We have not sighted these weapons in and they are not as reliable as our American weapons.
>
> "I am proud to serve my country and I am willing to give my life for it. I hope that if one thing is accomplished here it is that I will not have to send my son here 10 years from now. I need ammunition to make this happen and to be able to return home to my family in a year or so."

Here is the second one:

> "The holidays are very tough on the guys. I am planning a Christmas Eve service because we cannot get a chaplain to come out here. We cannot keep oil or water delivery truck drivers, nor interpreters, nor other civilian help, because they all think it is too dangerous. We are on the road where insurgents travel from Syria to Mosul. We have had problems with water, fuel, shortage of ammunition, et cetera."

Here is the third one:

> "Right now we do not have radios to communicate with our units. We depend heavily on e-mail. Yup, e-mail, Yahoo, is our communications line."

I cannot tell you how troubled I am about this. I have written to the Pentagon. I brought it up at previous hearings last year. I keep getting these reports. There are a sufficient number of them that I have to believe there is some sort of logistics problem.

This is not a question of money. We in Congress will give you all that you need to make sure that our troops who are serving so bravely have everything they need to accomplish their dangerous mission as safely as possible. Why are we still having these problems with such basic supplies, not to mention safety equipment like the up-armored High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) and body armor?

General MYERS. Senator, you raise a very good question and I obviously would be deeply troubled by that as well. I appreciate when you do send us specific instances so we can run them to ground and

find out if we do have a problem. The only one of those issues you have just mentioned that I am aware of would be the radio issue, because I know in the type of combat that our Army and Marine Corps finds itself in today, the ground combat, they want radios at levels that they have never had to have radios before.

I do not know that we are short. I have never heard that. But I know that they have had to aggressively pursue additional radios so that all echelons, echelons that were never planned to have radios, would have them so they could communicate, as indicated in that e-mail.

So all I can say is we will go back and look at this. None of this has come to the attention of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I can guarantee you that. We will continue to try to chase this down.

Senator COLLINS. With one of these units, in December I did contact the Pentagon and they did act to get this unit resupplied. But you can imagine how troubling it is to me that these soldiers are having to come to a United States Senator to get the ammunition, water, food, and basic supplies that they need.

General MYERS. You bet.

Senator COLLINS. In each case, these soldiers are telling me that they went up the chain of command and just could not get what they needed. Now, as I said, in one of these cases it has been solved, but solved through my intervention, which it just should not be.

General MYERS. It should not take that, no. But the point you raise about logistics is very important. That is critical to our capability over there. We will go back and talk to our commanders to make sure that they have what they want. But we do not see any of those shortages. I do not see those. I get briefed on this every day and we do not see that. So I do not know where the disconnect is, but it will be my obligation to go find it.

Senator COLLINS. I think there is one. While I appreciate the help we have had from the Pentagon in solving some of these specific issues, in my mind they just should not be happening. We have to solve this problem once and for all.

General MYERS. Agreed.

Senator COLLINS. General Myers, I also want to just very quickly touch on the training of the Iraqi troops. I too find the election so inspiring and I am so proud of the courage shown by the Iraqi security forces. But again, I think the numbers indicate that we have a long ways to go to have fully equipped, trained, reliable, and willing Iraqi forces who can substitute for American forces.

Again, I have an e-mail from someone who is deeply involved in the training. This major tells me: "It is scary to think just how out of touch the chain of command is from what we are doing. The Iraqis are starting to quit now that we have been here 2 weeks. When they quit the Iraqi commander says that they are on leave so that we do not drop them from the rolls. They have been lying about their numbers in order to get more money. They say they have 150 when there are only 100. The senior officers take a cut from the top.

"We have caught soldiers in houses stealing property and the commander will not react to it. They have no interest in learning the job because right now the marines are doing all of it. We have

to let them take a week's leave every 3 weeks and they usually return late, if at all. We had 134 go on leave a week ago and only 37 returned."

I thought that Secretary Wolfowitz made a very important distinction between the hardware versus the software and the training of unit cohesion, leadership. I guess I would ask you whether you think this case that I just read to you is an isolated incident or is there a pattern that is very challenging for us?

General MYERS. I think the case you read is—first of all, I think you said that this individual does not think the chain of command is aware of the situation over there. I would take exception to that. When I talk to General Casey, I know who he talks to and I have been with his division commanders when I visit there. They know very well what is happening and they know that we are in a system—let me go back to General Luck's comments, some of which I had in my opening statement.

A system that was devastated under many decades under Saddam—he broke their spirit. Corruption was rampant. There was a sense of helplessness. Anybody that showed initiative would be whacked on the head or their family members hurt or injured, killed, tortured. So that is what has to change.

I think on January 30 a lot of that did change. I think we saw a lot of Iraqis stand up and take responsibility. So hopefully that will have an impact on the culture that was devastated by Saddam Hussein. So I do not know if that is typical. Certainly it happens, but that was the kind of society that has bred over all these decades.

I think one of the things that whoever sent you that e-mail ought to take a lot of pride in is that our men and women in the Armed Forces, a lot of what they do besides train people how to shoot an AK–47 or platoon tactics—they learned well in their civics classes and they are role models about what democracy means, what tolerance means.

So is it going to take time? Yes. Are those incidents going to continue? Probably. I do not think they are necessarily the rule. I think those are issues.

The leave issue is interesting. Under Saddam Hussein, since they had a conscript army, they would allow them to go on leave, but there was no penalty for not returning on time. The only penalty was you had to add that time on to your conscription time. Say they were going for a week. They would come back in 2 weeks and they had to add 7 days on to their year, so now it is a year and 7 days.

So it is a different culture and it is hard to get used to. It is hard for us to probably understand it. It is part of what has to develop. So I do not know if that is typical. I know that that happens certainly, and I think our commanders are well aware of that.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator Collins, I just might say I do not think it is typical, but I also would hasten to say that the hero I mentioned earlier and whose picture I put up is not typical either. The typical is somewhere in between and we are trying to raise the level of typical. I think the events of last Sunday not only give us some confidence that things are working better, but I think it cre-

ates two important facts. Number one, enormous pride in what Iraqis as a whole have done and what the Iraqi Army has done, and pride is a critical part of countering the kind of phenomenon you describe. Second, more and more they will be feeling that they are fighting for their country, for their government, and this impression that it is all us pulling the strings and it is an occupation force hopefully will change some of that pattern.

But as General Myers said, we are dealing with a number of pretty deep-seated habits that will take some time to work out.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, and thank you all for your hard work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Collins. I commend the witnesses for their clear responses to those good questions, and I would hope that maybe in this hearing you can address that culture, because it is perplexing, Mr. Schlicher. It is such a stark contrast to our strong discipline: You are absent, you are in trouble. But it is not true in that culture. They go back home for extended periods. As was pointed out, they have no banking system, they have no way to convey the money they receive for their services to their wives and children and needy persons, so they have to journey all the way home with a pocket full of cash and then come back again.

At this time I must go to the floor to deliver remarks on behalf of Judge Gonzales for Attorney General. Senator Sessions will continue as the chair. Thank you very much.

We will now have Senator Bayh.

Senator BAYH. Gentlemen, thank you for your presence here today and thank you for your service to our country. I agree with all the sentiments that have been expressed both by you and members of this committee about the election being a proud moment for freedom and a proud moment for our country, and I hope you will let those who are serving under your command know how grateful we are to them for having brought this about.

I have a couple of questions. Let me start by praising the administration and what I understand may be the decision to increase the death benefit for those who have lost their lives in the line of duty. I think that is exactly the right thing to do.

What I would like to ask is whether you would be willing to consider going a bit beyond that, and let me tell you about a conversation I had just last week with a bankruptcy official in Indiana, who was recounting to me an alarming increase in the number of bankruptcies by military families, particularly reservists and guardsmen and women who have been called up for extended periods of time and have found themselves with an inability to meet their mortgage payments, health care bills, that sort of thing. So many of these families are being forced into bankruptcy.

I have referred to the pay cut that many of them take as the patriot penalty that they are now paying. Some of our businesses are willing to step forward and make this up, but many cannot afford to do that. I proposed some legislation to deal with this, but there is no pride of authorship. I would like to know whether you would be willing to take a look at this issue, because many of these families are under great financial distress and it is, frankly, heart-

breaking to think that they are being forced into bankruptcy while they are putting their lives on the line for our country and the cause of freedom.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I would be happy to take a look at it, and I guess I would also—first of all, I would like to thank all of you and Senator Sessions, who I know particularly took a lead on this question of death benefits. One thing you can help us with is, if you agree with me that we have some special obligations to those people who are risking their lives in combat zones and we need to extend special benefits to them—but if we then say, well, it is such a nice thing to have we should extend it elsewhere, because after all military service is dangerous even here in the United States, if we cannot put some boundaries around benefits in combat zones we will quickly find that they are not affordable for anybody. I think some special care and attention is necessary for service members and their families who are living with that kind of risk and danger for a year at a time, and that is what we need to look after.

Senator BAYH. I hope we can work together on this in a way that is sustainable financially, but in a way that does right by these families, because I do not think any of us want to see the kind of situation that is beginning to increase as the periods of being called up are longer and longer, beyond what they could have reasonably expected or planned for in their financial situation.

So I hope we can work together to try and address this in a way that is responsible.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I am happy to take a look at that.

Senator BAYH. On to my second question, Mr. Secretary. I want to agree with something that you said in your testimony about the role of Syria and Iran. The Syrians seem to me to be playing a game which I have called a strategy of passive aggression, where they may not be actively assisting those who are coming into Iraq to do us harm, but certainly they are not doing enough to prevent that.

The Iranians, if you believe published reports, have infiltrated into the Shia community and are awaiting that day when it might be in their interest to more actively participate in the insurgency, clearly building up a capacity, maybe not as actively involved right now, but clearly with the potential to do that at some future point in time.

I agree with your sentiment that we need to send them a clear signal that it is not in their best interest, either of them, to facilitate the insurgency in Iraq. With the position that we are in right now, being stretched fairly significantly, what kind of credibility do our warnings have? In other words, what could we look at to do in either Syria or Iran that would in a tangible way discourage them from inappropriate behavior in Iraq, other than just our verbal warnings?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Well, let us be clear. I do not think it has anything to do with our capacity being limited. We are not looking to end this behavior with another war. But I think there are many things that—I mean, Syria is not a strong country. Part of what they do, as I indicate in my testimony, is out of fear of how a successful Iraq may further weaken their own people's support for them.

But I think what we need to stress is there is going to be a successful Iraq, and it is in your interests to be on friendly terms with that successful Iraq. We notice what you are doing. I think it is very important to call attention to what they are doing. Frankly, I think it may be important to call attention to who is responsible. There is some argument as to whether President Assad is fully in control in Syria or not. But we do know this is a police state and somebody is in control, and we have a list of who the top 12 leaders are. They all have some accountability here.

But we also need to make clear that we are not in a position of hostility. It is not our policy to destabilize Syria. It should not be their policy to destabilize Iraq, or Lebanon for that matter.

I think another thing to do is to point to a potentially important opportunity. Things are moving forward on the Israeli-Palestinian front. I guess we should caution here too about the danger of euphoria, but I think a lot of us are hopeful that some real breakthroughs are possible there. I think the Syrians should think about whether they want to be left behind in that process or whether they want to participate, and if they want to participate then they had better stop interfering with their neighbor.

Senator BAYH. Just briefly, Mr. Secretary—and thank you for that—my final question would be with regard to—we all want the new government to be successful. I am concerned that if time passes without some tangible improvement in the economic activity at the local level, perhaps some disillusionment will set in, which could undermine all of the euphoria that rightfully has existed after the election and could itself feed the insurgency.

So my final question would be, what can we do to try and demonstrate some tangible results at the local level? We have focused heretofore on larger projects, infrastructure projects. That is understandable. But those take time and I am concerned that we have a window of opportunity here to try and show that democracy has some tangible benefits in addition to the obvious political freedom. What can we do to step up our economic development efforts in a way that will be felt at the street level and encourage people that, yes, this is the right thing to do?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Well, first of all, let me agree strongly with the concern you expressed. In fact, the euphoria has a risk built into it, that people's expectations may now be too high and can be disappointed, although I think most of the euphoria is just the pride they take in having stood up and taken risks and sent a message to the terrorists.

But I am sure there is also a sense that somehow this is going to make their lives better. So I think it is important to try to make sure that happens. One of the challenges—and this is why I talked about effective government ministries—is the Iraqis have very substantial revenues. Mr. Schlicher can correct me, but I think it is on the order now of $20 billion a year. We need to get them to put more of that money into places like Fallujah, for example, where people are coming to our marines and asking, where are the payments that we were supposed to get for rebuilding our houses?

So we need to keep the pressure on the Iraqi Government. But I think also we need to look at how our own resources are being allocated. I agree with what was implied in your question, that it

is important to focus on things that produce immediately visible results, even if that means giving up some of the desirable longer term infrastructure projects. In that respect, I guess I am going to appeal to what you just said. Sometimes I encounter people downrange, as we say, meaning people in Iraq, who say, well, there is this complicated process for notifying Congress and all this stuff has been notified and it is in certain lines and we cannot move the lines. I say my impression is if you come back with any reasonable justification for reallocating you will get it. You may have to notify and consult, but it does not take forever. So tell us what you need to have. Do not feel you are in some kind of straightjacket because of what you said 12 months ago.

Then finally, let me also say I hope that this demonstration by the Iraqi people of what they are capable of will generate more support from other countries, so if we have to shift our funds from long-term infrastructure into more immediate projects, that there is money coming from other countries to backfill what we have to do. This should not be just the United States and Iraq paying for this.

I think it's time in particular—I'm going to say this: It's time in particular for those countries that are enjoying huge revenue windfalls from the high oil prices to stop and think what their interest is. I am not asking them out of altruism. I think those countries have a stake in success in Iraq and that that success should come sooner rather than later. One thing they can do is help provide financial support.

Senator BAYH. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Senator SESSIONS [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Bayh. You raise some important comments.

I thank you, Secretary Wolfowitz, for mentioning Fallujah. I was there just 2 weeks ago with General Sadler and he was concerned that some of the commitments the Iraqi Government had made with regard to refurbishing that town had not been met.

Mr. Schlicher, just briefly, who is responsible, who has the authority or responsibility for ensuring that the water, electricity, and other, sewage, in the country is being improved from our side? Is it State or Defense?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Sir, all of the programs that help bolster the programs of the Iraqi ministries are centered in the embassy under an organization called the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO). That is a State organization. It is headed by Ambassador Bill Taylor, who prior to this mission was our Afghan Coordinator. He works very closely in turn with the Projects and Contracting Office (PCO), which answers to the DOD.

Senator SESSIONS. That is a State Department entity?

Mr. SCHLICHER. IRMO is State, PCO is DOD, Department of the Army I believe.

General MYERS. Yes.

Mr. SCHLICHER. If I could, sir, they partner both with the Iraqi ministries and, in the case of certain post-conflict zones like Fallujah, the Iraqi Government has identified ministerial action officers, if you will, who are—it is minister Hajamal Husni in the case of Fallujah. Prime Minister Allawi wants those points of contacts to get together the different line ministries who can help in

those places to coordinate their efforts together and in turn to partner with the mission's efforts.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator, it is a somewhat complicated division of responsibilities and, rather than try to add any detail to what Mr. Schlicher already said, I would like to second what he said earlier about Ambassador Negroponte and, for that matter, his number two, Ambassador Jim Jeffrey. There is a great State Department team. There is real cooperation between State and DOD.

A wonderful example of it I believe is how they went through the difficult reallocation, I guess it was in August, to move $1.8 billion of project money from infrastructure into security forces to meet General Petraeus's needs. So I do not know any way to do this in a simple way. We have two U.S. Government departments and then we have multiple Iraqi ministries, as Mr. Schlicher just said, and we just have to do the best to work closely together.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, I have worked in the Federal Government with a lot of different agencies and I know how difficult it can be. But I suppose the answer to the question is if we in Congress have questions about how well the infrastructure improvements are going we call you.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir; I am your man.

Senator SESSIONS. Then you can blame it on the DOD if they did not do their part. We used to blame Secretary Wolfowitz for it all, I guess. Now we have a relationship with General Casey and Ambassador Negroponte that I hear is working real well. I guess that is at the bottom line, the personal relationships. Meeting every day, as I understand they do, is a key to that cooperational level we need.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir. Our impression is that that cooperation is excellent. In addition to the great personal relationship and working relationship, the mission has built in different sorts of institutions into the scheme to make sure that the political and military sides of the house are knit up.

Senator SESSIONS. I think we would like to see if we can improve that. I think there is a consensus here in Congress that we would love to see the electricity and water and all do better, for the reasons you have previously stated.

Secretary Wolfowitz, I am just going to take a moment to say this. I have been so proud of our men and women in uniform and we have repeatedly talked about that. But I also want to say, I have been proud of President Bush for his steadfastness and his insight and courage to stay the course. I think the same goes for Secretary Rumsfeld. He is a man of extraordinary experience and good judgment, who has seen this big picture correctly.

I know many have blamed you. They have said you are the ones that really thought it all up and conjured these things up, so any difficulty is your fault. But I think you have been a brilliant Deputy Secretary of Defense and you have served our country extraordinarily well. The election that we had just a few days ago, those pictures, if you looked at them, that you passed out would bring tears to anyone's eyes who has sensitivity to the historic moment.

I would also say that this has not been the only accomplishment. I have visited with President Karzai in Afghanistan on two different occasions. He is a wonderful, decent, good person. They are

establishing a decent good government. A war of 20 years' decimation of that country has ended.

You have worked with Pakistan and they have turned against terrorism and they are a good ally with us in fighting the terrorists. We have seen now the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein collapse and a new election occur, a historic thing. Qadafi in Libya has renounced terrorism. We have had an election for the Palestinian leader. Sure, we are not there yet, but that is an historic event. The Ukraine has had a free and democratic election, tense and tough, and you were on the right side of pushing for a reelection count that allowed forces for progress to succeed.

This Abdul Khan and his proliferation of nuclear weapons ended because the United States was willing to use force when we had to to confront the bad problems that are around our world.

So I will just say that, no, we do not need to get overly optimistic. There are a lot of difficulties ahead. But I am telling you, that election just a few days ago in Iraq I believe was historic. It was achieved by the excellent performance of our men and women in uniform and the courage and the professionalism, General Myers, they have shown. But it also is—I think those of you who have been in the hot seat, who have had to make the tough calls day after day, have performed well.

Nobody is perfect, but I think we have made real progress, and I for one want to say thank you.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator Sessions, thank you for that and thank you for the personal comment. I must say I find it almost laughable when people suggest that Secretary Rumsfeld needs me to tell him what to think or Secretary Powell somehow needs me to tell him what to think and, most of all, that the President of the United States needs other people to tell him what to think. He has made some very tough decisions, as you point out, which have had some very big successes.

Let me just say, the one in that list—it is an impressive list, but one that you did not mention and people are very afraid to mention it because if we talk too much about our success in preventing attacks on the United States, we know we could be attacked tomorrow. We know the enemy is out there plotting every day.

I cannot tell you that we are safe. But I can tell you that we know that many attempted plots have been broken up because we have killed or captured thousands of terrorists, because we have worked with some 90 countries around the world to get information about those plots. It has required, by the way, difficult decisions, which I know have caused controversy about how you deal with detainees, how you get information from detainees. But that information is life-saving information. The President has taken a lot of criticism for it and I think he deserves a lot of credit for the fact that we have done as well as we have.

But people should not be lulled into a false sense of complacency that, because we have not been attacked here since September 11, things are safe. The enemy is out there. Osama bin Laden is still out there, although there are a lot of indications that he is in increasingly difficult circumstances. Let us not forget: He declared war on Sunday's election. It was a big defeat for him and for his friend Mr. Zarqawi.

We are really in a fight to not just protect the lives of Americans, but to protect the open society that we live for and that the whole world depends on. It is not going to be over any time soon, but I think we have made a lot of progress in the, what is it, 3 years since September 11.

Senator SESSIONS. I have to agree. I think any objective observer would agree.

Senator Byrd, I believe you are next.

Senator BYRD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for your testimony. I know that millions of Americans are pleased at the results of the recent election in Iraq. Iraq by all indications, then, if we base it on the election results—and we are not sure that we know exactly the results yet—is beginning to take care of itself. To me this indicates that we should start bringing our troops home soon.

I think our troops have performed magnificently, under the most stressful conditions. The wounds that they bring home are the most terrible wounds of the most terrible war that our service men have ever fought. I wonder about the mental strains and stress that these men undergo 24 hours a day, how they must watch to their left and watch to the right and watch to the rear and watch to the front, because they know not from where that single bullet or that explosive may leave a resounding hole in their own flesh, and that concern and prayerful waiting by those who love them and who await their return.

I do not think, Mr. Chairman, that we realize to the fullest extent how much these men deserve, how much they have suffered. They did not ask to go there, most of them, and they were made promises that have not been kept. I think they have been imposed on in many respects. Yes, they are patriotic. They are doing what they were told to do. But they are not there for what they were told was the cause and the reason or reasons why we should invade Iraq.

I think this is a major imposition upon them and their loved ones. So I shall do everything I can insofar as the Appropriations Committee is concerned to support every penny that is asked for for those men and women, the soldiers and the marines and the people who have served so well in this most dreadful of wars that will leave the most dreadful of wounds upon our body politic.

We are fighting two wars, Mr. Secretary. We are fighting a war in Afghanistan in which we were attacked, in which the United States was attacked by 19 hijackers on September 11, 2001. Not one of these hijackers was an Iraqi, not one. That war is different from the war that we are fighting in Iraq.

I was fully supportive and am still supportive of the war in Afghanistan. Our country was invaded by these 19 hijackers. I was supportive and am still supportive of our Commander in Chief, our President—I prefer to call Mr. Bush our President rather than the overdrawn term "Commander in Chief." I was supportive of everything he did, his quick reaction, his going after the attackers. I am still supportive of that war.

But that is not the same war that we are fighting in Iraq. They are different wars. In Iraq we were not attacked. No, we did the attacking. That war is the result of the Bush administration's per-

nicious preemptive strike doctrine and nothing we can say will erase the blot upon the escutcheon of the Senate when it voted 77 to 23 to turn over lock, stock, and barrel the power to send our military forces wherever the President wished, whenever he wished, and for whatever he wished in respect to Iraq. That was a terrible blotch upon the escutcheon of the Senate and that is why today the President can say, we will do this, or we will not do this, and Mr. Rumsfeld can say, we will do this and we will stay there until this happens or that happens. It is because we turned over the Senate's, Congress', prerogative to declare war under the Constitution to one man. Whether he be Democrat or Republican, that turnover of power will remain there until kingdom come unless Congress at some point votes to retrieve that power.

This preemptive strike doctrine, on which I suppose you had a considerable amount of input, is unconstitutional on its face because it takes away from the collective bodies, not just one but bodies, of the Legislative Branch under the Constitution, it takes away from those collective bodies the power to declare war and shifts it to one man, which the framers would never have intended happen. I am not one of the 77. I am one of the 23.

But all that aside now—we can talk about that for a long time. All that aside, the war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan, not being the same but two separate wars, the war in Afghanistan having been a war which resulted from the invasion of our country by 19 hijackers, causing the deaths of 3,000 Americans and causing many other terrible results, that war is one war.

But the war in Iraq is the result of, as I say, that pernicious doctrine under this administration of preemptive strikes. I am against that war. I was against it. I will remain against it. But I shall never fail to support the American troops. It was not their fault that they were lulled in or brought into a war to which the American people were lied about and misled time and time again about.

Having said that, these two wars have already cost the American taxpayers almost $150 billion. We are told that the President will be requesting another $80 billion for the war effort in the next few days. Yet the President stubbornly refuses to share with the American people any notion of a timetable—you see, that would not have been the case if the Senate had done its duty. That would not have been the case—any notion of a timetable for withdrawing our troops from Iraq or Afghanistan.

It has been almost 2 years since the invasion of Iraq and the U.S.-led coalition, which was never robust to begin with, is shrinking, not growing. I read that the President made a round of telephone calls to world leaders about the Iraqi elections. That is all well and good, but telephone calls do not pay the bills.

What, if anything, is the administration doing to relieve the burden on American taxpayers and attract more monetary support and more military support from Iraq's neighbors and from the international community? How much longer does the President expect the American people to shoulder almost 100 percent of the cost in Iraq and 90 percent of the casualties, 90 percent of the blood that has been shed there of the occupation forces?

Could you give us some insight as to when the burden on the American taxpayers can be expected to be at least one in which

there is attracted more monetary and military support from the world community and from Iraq's neighbors?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator Byrd, if I could just make I guess four points. First of all, with enormous respect for your views and your real scholarship about the Constitution, I do not believe that these are separate wars. Mr. Zarqawi was alive with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan and running training camps in Afghanistan. He was organizing worldwide terrorist operations in France and England and Turkey and Georgia before we went into Iraq. He is now focused on Iraq. He is a major enemy.

Osama bin Laden is focused on Iraq. He has attached his prestige to this war. Winning this war in fact will be a big blow against Osama bin Laden.

Second, you spoke eloquently and I cannot improve on it about the tragic price of war. I think any war is terrible, and with an enemy that resorts to the kinds of vicious weapons that this one does it has a particular ugliness. But I think it is also a lesson that we can take from history that it is important not to leave a weakened enemy out on the battlefield.

In fact, I think it is fair to say that we rested on our laurels when the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan and concluded we had dealt with the problem and we could ignore it, and that is part of what created a sanctuary from which Osama bin Laden could organize the attacks of September 11. I think it is very important that we not only defeat them, but that we not give them that opportunity in Iraq.

Third, I think it is very important to say, while every American casualty is painful, we are not 90 percent of the casualties. As I mentioned previously, the Iraqis police and army have lost almost as many now as we have and in a shorter period of time. Since June 1 they have taken a larger share of the combat. Our goal is to have them take an increasing share of the combat.

Finally, on this question of who pays, I agree with you that I think it is in the interest of the entire world to see the Iraqi people succeed and I think Sunday was a powerful statement to the whole world of what the Iraqi people want, and I hope it will inspire those countries that love freedom and democracy—our closest allies around the world—to look at this issue in a different light after the Iraqi people made that statement on Sunday.

Second, I agree with you that the countries in the region, especially the ones that enjoy substantial oil wealth, have an interest in stability and that interest in stability will be promoted by helping to bring this war to an end as quickly as possible, and I think that is what our goal should be.

So while we may disagree on certain points, I think we agree on the way ahead.

Senator SESSIONS. Senator Thune.

Senator BYRD. Mr. Chairman, may I not pursue that just a moment?

Senator SESSIONS. Briefly, yes, sir. I give extra time to the Senator from West Virginia.

Senator BYRD. Mr. Chairman, a little extra time here I do not think is going to make any of us suffer. I have waited a long time. I have listened to the rosy scenarios that have been spread before

this committee time and time and time again. I am about filled up with these scenarios, these wonderful scenarios. I have heard of them time and time and time again.

So the credibility as far as I am concerned, Mr. Secretary—and I say it with all respect to you—your credibility has suffered and so has the administration's by the time and time again rosy scenarios and by the failure to find those WMDs which would lead to mushroom clouds. Thank God there were none, but that is why we went into Iraq.

So credibility is an important thing here, too. But I still have not heard the Secretary answer my question. How much longer does the President expect the American people to shoulder almost 100 percent of the cost of the war in Iraq and 90 percent of the casualties, 90 percent of the casualties?

Would I give my son, if I had a son, would I give a grandson? Mr. Secretary, would you give a son? Would you give a grandson? Perhaps you have given some. I know not. But would you give them and then answer the questions as you have?

Let me ask you once more: What, if anything, is the administration doing to relieve the burden on American taxpayers and attract more monetary and military support from Iraq's neighbors and the international community? Can you answer that question?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. We have made several efforts, Senator Byrd, over the last 2 years—and Mr. Schlicher might elaborate on them—in various fora to elicit contributions from international financial institutions and from our allies, and those have met with some success, though not as much as we would have liked, I think.

We have a new opportunity in the wake of these elections to look at going further and, while it is a little early to say how we will do it, I think we should.

Ron, do you want to add anything?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, if I could add on the military burden side with just a few observations on recent coalition developments. The MNF–I includes 28 non-U.S. contributors right now. They total 25,000 troops. There are four other non-MNF–I nations which contribute to U.N. protection and to the NATO training mission.

The number of coalition nations has dropped at the end of 2004 as countries completed their scheduled deployments. But in the most recent period the number of troops as I understand it has actually grown, in part due to the new arrival of 3,000 Korean troops. Additionally, the U.S. is helping Bosnia prepare an explosive ordnance disposal unit for their first deployment this summer, and there are also going to be additional troops from Romania and Georgia, 550 and 100 respectively, who are going to be coming in the next few weeks to do U.N. protection duty. Those are recent additions, so that that helps answer the part on the military burden, sir.

On the economic burden, we have been working closely with the Iraqis and the bilateral joint economic commission on a full range of economic issues. One of those issues is how the Iraqis can get out in front in organizing according to their desires how the international donor community can help them meet their needs. There is another donor meeting scheduled—please do not hold me to it—I think it is in April. So that is going to be a very pivotal point.

We are certainly going to be in touch with a very wide variety of countries to urge them to seize the opportunity presented by these elections to show their support for that new government. Some may choose to do it in military terms. Some may choose to do it in economic terms. But the time is certainly ripe for it.

Senator BYRD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time is up.

General MYERS. Senator Sessions, could I make a comment on the comment that Senator Byrd made?

Senator SESSIONS. General Myers.

General MYERS. Senator, you eloquently talked about the sacrifice that our military makes and it is absolutely right. But I think we need to realize that, of all the people that are involved in this, whether it is the American public or whether it is Congress or whether it is those of us in the Pentagon, the ones who probably understand what is at stake here more than anybody else are the men and women that are out there on the front line, whether it is in Iraq or Afghanistan. They understand that.

I have to tell you that I think they are very proud of their service, that they understand why they are there, and they are proud of their sacrifice. The reason I say that is that as you visit those that are, as you put it eloquently again, so badly injured, because there are some terrible weapons out there these days, the IED being one of them, mangling human bodies, but the people that I meet, the men and women that I meet in Bethesda, Walter Reed, and other places around this country, are proud of what they are doing.

It is more than Iraq. It is more than Afghanistan. I think they understand what this threat is all about. These are people, Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri, Zarqawi, and others who join with them in jihad, not just in Iraq, not just in Afghanistan, but essentially around the world. Their stated intent, often stated, recently stated, is to do away with our way of life.

Our military personnel are proud of their contributions to stopping this threat. General Abizaid has said you can fight them there or you can fight them here. I have not said that, but General Abizaid has said that. There is a great deal of truth in it.

Thank you.

Senator SESSIONS. Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for your testimony this morning in response to these questions. This is a global war on terror and Iraq is a breeding ground for that war. It has been for some time. I have believed for some time that it was only a matter of time until we were going to go in and have to deal with the situation there.

But I think what we have seen in this last week is a remarkable display of courage on behalf of the Iraqi people. It also occurred to me that the Iraqi election may also be part of the much larger trend, and that is the democratization of the Muslim Arab world. You had mentioned the hatred that they have for our way of life, but if you look at just in this last year, in April the world's most populous Muslim country, Indonesia, held parliamentary elections in which they rejected Islamist extremist parties.

Of course, you mentioned Afghanistan, which had elections in October of last year, and more recently there have been elections

in the Palestinian territories, and now Iraq. You look at what these people, when they have a taste of freedom, what they are doing. They display incredible courage, with turnout numbers that are comparable to what we experience here in this country, under threats to their very lives and the attacks that they are exposed to consistently. Still they turned out in huge numbers to express their support for freedom and democracy.

I really believe that, Mr. Chairman, 2005 could be a decisive year in the cause of freedom in the Middle East and democracy in that area of the world. I think it is so important because I do see that, in this broader global war on terror that we are fighting, as the epicenter for where that threat will come from in the future.

Just one question perhaps, Mr. Chairman, as sort of a follow-up to that. That is, do you believe the success of the Iraqi election offers any lessons regarding the President's stated goal of expanding democratic opportunities in the Middle East? In other words, based on what we have seen and experienced there, is this a trend that we can see continue? The policies that have employed there—again realizing full well that there is a lot of turbulence ahead, there will be a lot of adversity and a lot of heavy lifting ahead for the Iraqi people and for their neighbors in the region. But is this something that we could see expand and grow and really transform that area of the world, the democratization of the Middle East, what traditionally has been an area very hostile to the United States?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator, it does and it does not. It does in the sense that what we saw was this passion for freedom and for self-government that we have seen in Ukraine, in Chile, in South Africa, in South Korea. In the Philippines I experienced that very closely in 1986. Even in Iraq, under conditions of unbelievable intimidation, people want to be free. They want to choose their leaders. That I think is what the President was talking about as something universal.

It does not, however, in the following very important sense. I hope Iraq will be an exception, but this was a case where we used American force because we believed, based on I think very strong intelligence, that this country, that regime, was a threat to us, and that changed the calculations. But I think if you look at the trend over the last 20 years—and it is an impressive trend—Senator Kennedy talked earlier about the spread of freedom and democracy in Latin America in the 1980s and in South Africa. I do not know if you were here. I commented on my own experience when I was Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia with the Philippines and with Korea and with Taiwan and then, much later, unfortunately, 10 years later, Indonesia came along. Thailand has come along.

We have seen an incredible expanse of freedom in central and eastern Europe and most recently in Georgia and Ukraine. It is stunning, and every one of those cases happened without American combat forces. I would hope that that is the kind of change we can see in the Middle East going forward. I hope the governments that feel, correctly, that they are being called upon to reform will understand that it is not meant to destabilize them, it is not to bring about revolutions, but that in fact I think reform is the best way for them to preserve stability.

In fact, when I was Ambassador to Indonesia, I had my farewell call on President Suharto, who was the dictator of that country at the time, a mild dictator compared to Saddam Hussein, I would note, but a dictator nonetheless. I talked in sort of oblique ways about the need to have political change in Indonesia and he talked less obliquely about the need to preserve stability. I said: "Well, Mr. President, you talk about dynamic stability; I do not actually preserve stability by standing still. You have to move forward."

I would submit that what happened to him 10 years later is because he did not move forward, is because he tried to stop progress, because he tried to suppress civil society in Indonesia, because he drew more and more power around him.

There are examples elsewhere. Taiwan is a stunning one. Actually South Korea is a stunning one, where authoritarian leaders—Spain is another one actually if you go back 30 years—where authoritarian leaders have seen the need to prepare the way for something that is less authoritarian after them. It is possible. It happens. The whole world is better off for it. I think that is what the President is talking about.

I hope Iraq will be an exception, that we will not need to use American troops to protect ourselves, and there are ways through many peaceful means to support free and democratic forces throughout the Muslim world.

Senator THUNE. I would just say that I share that view and I hope that the power of example, which can be a powerful tool as other nations in that region and around the world see and begin to taste what freedom and democracy are about, that it is the power of that example and the power of freedom and not the power of the military that can bring that result about.

But clearly we have made tremendous strides and progress in Iraq and I hope we continue on that path. I would say to the general, please convey to the troops as well our appreciation for the extraordinary work that they are doing. I share what you echoed earlier today, that there is not hardly anywhere I go where I talk to people who have been in the theater or their families, for that matter, who do not believe profoundly in the mission and in what they are trying to accomplish there. They really are very committed to it and they think that what they are doing is making a difference. I happen to share that view. So thank you.

General MYERS. Thank you, Senator.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator, if I could just say I agree with you very strongly about the power of example. You mentioned those four cases—Indonesia, the Palestinian Authority, Iraq, and Afghanistan. I think there is a message there that is having an effect.

Senator SESSIONS. Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for not being able to be here in person for the testimony of the witnesses and I thank them for appearing before the committee.

I too want to express my profound admiration for the Iraqi people and their desire to have their voices heard through the ballot box. I think no one could see the pictures coming out of Sunday's election without being very moved by the notion of ordinary Iraqis braving threats, risking lives, even losing their lives, in order to

vote. There is no doubt it could not have happened without our men and women in uniform being there to guarantee that vote going forward. They deserve our equal support, respect, and gratitude.

I do not think that there is any argument about the extraordinary display of freedom and the move toward democracy being in the short-, medium-, and long-term interests of humanity and the United States. But as is clear from the questioning, there are lots of concerns about the direction that we have headed and some of the decisions that have been made. There has been relatively little oversight. This committee I think is notable in Congress for performing more oversight than anyone else, in a bipartisan way, thanks to our chairman and ranking member.

But I think vigorous oversight and hard questions are part of democracy. So I hope that we can keep focused on what are the real issues that we need to address going forward.

Mr. Secretary, we are going to be receiving a supplemental. Many of us have argued that we need a larger Army, and indeed the Army is currently using temporary measures paid for through supplementals to pay for a larger force in order to meet our needs in Iraq. We obviously have a strain on our active duty as well as our Reserve components. That is an issue that is not going away. Every day we wait to deal with it means it is going to take longer and be more expensive if a decision is made to permanently expand the size of the standing Army.

Is the DOD considering making the larger Army a permanent part of the defense budget and will the DOD be looking at the size of the overall force during its Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) this year?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. The answer to both questions is yes. In fact, in the 2006 budget and the 5-year defense plan that will come with the 2006 budget you will see that we will bring the cost of this larger Army into what we call the top line in our regular budget starting in fiscal year 2007 and that we have had to make some very considerable adjustments in the rest of the defense program in order to pay for that.

We need to fund it through supplementals in this fiscal year and next fiscal year because that is not the kind of change you can—it is like trying to turn a tanker on a dime. But we are not trying to hide the cost, either. One of the reasons we are very pleased that we have put out the fiscal year 2005 supplemental number along with the 2006 budget request is so that Congress can see what those costs will be going forward.

But yes, we think the only prudent thing at this point is to plan for that as a permanent change. Permanent changes, of course, mean permanent bills and that is how we have to adjust the defense program.

Definitely, I think in the QDR the question of whether this increase is the right one is one of the questions that we will be addressing.

General Myers, do you want to add to that at all?

General MYERS. I would only say—and I think Senator Clinton knows this well—it is more than just the people. There are equipment needs as well and that is why, as you will see in the budget

submission, the Army needs additional resources to do what they need to do in the future, and that is all wrapped in there.

Senator CLINTON. I think it is a very difficult decision, I grant that. But it is also a very important one for this Congress and the American public to grasp. The budget implications, given the extraordinary deficit situation we are facing, are ones that have in my view very serious consequences for our long-term ability to sustain any kind of aggressive defense posture. So we need to start this conversation now and not do it in a piecemeal way.

Let me ask you too, Mr. Secretary. Can you clarify once and for all: Is there any consideration being given to extending Reserve component deployments?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I think you are referring to this issue of whether or not—this question of I think a narrow interpretation of the law. This is the question of the 2 years.

Senator CLINTON. Right.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I think our very strong view is there is enough burden on reservists as it is with the prospect of 24 cumulative months and nobody should start saying, well, it is consecutive in the law. I think our policy is very clear.

Chairman WARNER. I can take that as a clear policy statement?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Yes. If I could add, too, on your point about the Army, it is important. As I think both you and General Myers noted, it is not just more people, but a major reorganization of how those people operate. We have a typically opaque bureaucratic term called "modularity," and what it really means is restructuring the Army so it is deployable in more small units. One of the things that does is it spreads the burden of these difficult deployments over a much larger portion of the force and makes it considerably less stressful on everyone.

General MYERS. The discussion includes the Reserve component as well. It is one total piece.

Senator CLINTON. I appreciate that. My time is up, but perhaps this is something for the chairman and the ranking member to consider, running parallel with these decisions, moving from supplemental to top line budgeting, looking at the QDR, it may be time to consider perhaps that Congress take a look in a sort of Goldwater-Nichols, but it would be perhaps Warner-Levin, approach toward acquisition and purchasing rules in the Pentagon.

I think that we have so many tough decisions ahead of us and I for one am not convinced that we have really done all we need to do legally to set forth a road map and working with the DOD to have a new approach, some new thinking, some 21st century, on-time inventory kinds of thinking that we have done from the back end, but in a more forward-looking way.

Because we are going to face a lot of very tough decisions on this budget with respect to some of the reports we hear about decisions that have been made with respect to certain weapons systems. Taken out of context, they will be great fodder for political battles. Put into a broader context of what we are trying to achieve, that might or might not be the case. But I think we need a new look at that.

Chairman WARNER. Senator, we thank you for that observation. It is a matter that the distinguished ranking member and I are fre-

quently discussing and I can assure you and other members of the committee that we will in this Congress address those critical questions, and do it not just in a simple hearing but in a more extensive way.

I thank the Senator.

Senator Akaka.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to apologize for not being here to hear the testimony of Secretary Wolfowitz, General Myers, and Mr. Schlicher. The reason is that I have been at the Veterans Affairs Committee's hearing on survivor benefits and we just concluded that hearing.

Chairman WARNER. Well, as ranking member of that committee, that was very important and essential that you be there. I am delighted, and it is the intention of Senator Levin and myself, Senator Sessions and Senator Lieberman, to be in consultation with you and Senator Craig as to how quickly we can move that piece of legislation.

Senator AKAKA. Mr. Chairman, Senator Craig and I heard the witnesses who are survivors and widows of some of our service people.

But I am here to ask a question or two of our panel. Secretary Wolfowitz, it is reported that Army leaders are considering seeking a change in Pentagon policy that would allow for longer and more frequent callups of some reservists to meet the demands of conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. My question is very close to what has been asked by Senator Clinton on this matter. Here is the question. As the Army considers making last year's temporary increase to 30,000 Army troops permanent, what is the DOD doing to ensure that as our troops are being stretched out throughout and around the world, to ensure that we continue to have the quality force that we need?

Second, what is the DOD doing to ensure that the tempo of operations (OPTEMPO) does not diminish the quality of life to the point of impacting retention for Active-Duty, Reserve, as well as National Guard troops?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I think the heart of the answer is that we are looking not only to increase the size of the Army but also to do two other things. One is what we call modularity, as I said, which is to create a larger number of deployable units, kind of along the way the Marine Corps is already organized, so that the burden of these deployments if they have to be sustained is across a larger effective force. Second, a lot is being done to redistribute roughly 100,000 positions between the Reserve and the Active-Duty Force so that we are not in the position where for certain critical specialties that we are short on we have to keep calling up the same reservists over and over again. That has been a problem going back to Bosnia and Kosovo, and I think the Army is doing a lot to shift the Active-Reserve balance in these critical specialties so that that stress is relieved.

Senator AKAKA. Members of this committee are interested in readiness and keeping the quality of the force.

General MYERS. You bet, we all are. I spend a great deal of my time trying to look around corners to make sure that as we ask a lot of our forces, Active-Duty and Reserve components, that we are

taking those steps to make sure that recruiting and retention stay healthy.

I think today actually we are in pretty good shape, thanks to Congress and the help that they have given in providing incentives and bonuses for people to stay in, and also the increase of our recruiting force almost across the board. We are staying up with recruiting in most cases.

The one area you need to watch very carefully is in the Army Reserve. The Army Guard is in pretty good shape. The Army Reserve is going to take some attention and we are putting the attention to it.

But the most important thing we can do and we have tried to do is provide, particularly for our Reserve component forces, predictability in their lives. So the Secretary of Defense has instituted policies about how often they can be called up and the timelines that we are going to follow. We started off not doing that very well several years ago. We are doing that much better today. I think we are providing better predictability, in fact pretty good predictability. Every once in a while we will be caught by a condition. For instance, in Iraq we have had to make some change and had to extend, no Reserve units, but active duty units, for 15, 30, 45 days longer than we anticipated having them in there.

So we focus very hard on predictability and where the situations permit, which is in most cases, we try to live up to the promises we make. We feel like if we do not do that we are actually breaking our promise. So we take that very seriously, and the Secretary in particular takes that very seriously.

On top of that, there are a myriad of things that are going on. Some of this will be reflected in the budget in terms of balancing between the Active and Reserve components, making sure we have the right forces in both components, and that they are well trained. I think you will see a lot of that as we look at what the Army is going to do over the next many years as they try to fashion an Army for this 21st century.

Senator AKAKA. This committee has been trying to maintain and improve the quality of life of our military. This plays into the retention factor. I am asking these questions just to be sure we are focusing on retention and trying to keep our forces there.

General MYERS. Absolutely, sir. It is a critical issue. I am very happy that you are focusing on it. I think a lot of people need to focus on this particular issue. We have a very important mission. We have very high OPTEMPO, personnel tempo, in trying to meet that mission, and the last thing we want to have happen is to come out of this period with a force that is not fully recruited, that we do not have the numbers we need. I am not talking again just active duty, but in the Reserve component as well.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much for your responses, Mr. Secretary and General Myers.

General MYERS. Thank you, sir.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Mr. Chairman, could I just make one note?

Chairman WARNER. Of course.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. On a statistical point earlier, I think I was asked about the personnel fill of Iraqi units and I think I used a figure of roughly 60 percent. That figure if I understand it applies to regular Army units. The fill for National Guard units is actually considerably better, according to General Petraeus, well over 90 percent. These special police battalions, of which there are now seven, average 85 to 90 percent strength.

We will try to give you a breakdown in detail, but it is one more illustration of the fact that we are dealing with a force that is made up of many diverse components and it is a bit hard to generalize.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. We will do that.

It is important that we cover Afghanistan in this hearing. That is an extraordinary success story and I would like to invite Ambassador Maureen Quinn, the Coordinator for Afghanistan, to join our witnesses. Mr. Schlicher, I desire you to remain.

You can make such opening comments as you so desire, Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers. I think we want to keep the comments to a minimum. Then we will turn to Ambassador Quinn for her overview of the Afghan situation.

Senator LEVIN. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman WARNER. Yes.

Senator LEVIN. I am wondering if you might yield to me for two questions on Iraq.

Chairman WARNER. Yes.

Senator LEVIN. I have to go to the floor I believe right now.

Chairman WARNER. All right.

Senator LEVIN. I would appreciate that.

Just one question for Mr. Schlicher. The Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) provides that two-thirds of the voters in any three Iraqi provinces can veto the constitution, which would mean that the Kurds, the Sunnis, and the Shiites could probably defeat the constitution if they were united in opposition to it.

My question is this: Will that TAL for the referendum on the constitution that is to be drafted under the new assembly, will that be controlling? That is my question: Will the TAL be controlling for the referendum on the constitution that is going to be drafted under the new Transitional National Assembly (TNA)? Or can that assembly amend the TAL?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Sir, it is my understanding——

Chairman WARNER. Let me interrupt. I think it is a very important question. I think the witness should be given the opportunity to explain the origin of that law, how it was under a previous group and is carried forward.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir. The TAL in many senses serves as the interim constitution of Iraq. It was negotiated actually during this time period last year, culminating in March last year. Again, in many senses it serves as an interim constitution. It does many important things, especially giving the Iraqis for the first time an equivalent of a bill of rights.

But it also sets out many procedures for the political processes that we are going to see during the course of this year, which is where Senator Levin's question hooks in. Senator Levin, it is my

understanding that the TAL will be controlling until the adoption of a new constitution.

Senator LEVIN. Which means that it will be controlling as to how that new constitution is adopted?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, that is my understanding.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

One last question, Secretary Wolfowitz. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, Stuart Bowen, issued an audit report this week in which he concluded that the CPA failed to establish or implement managerial, financial, and contractual controls needed to ensure that funds provided to the interim Iraqi Government ministries were properly used during the period before the transfer of sovereignty on June 30, 2004. That report indicated that the CPA was "burdened by severe inefficiencies and poor management and failed to review and compare financial, budgetary, and operational performance to planned or expected results," and that left the expenditure of about $9 billion in Iraqi funds "open to fraud, kickbacks, and misappropriation of funds."

It said in this report there was no assurance that funds were not provided for ghost employees and gave a number of examples of where that was a likely or a very real possibility because the authorization of payments to numbers of people were way above the validated number of those employees.

I am wondering whether or not you have made a response to the CPA Inspector General's report and, if not, if you have not given a written response, do you agree with it in general and will you give a detailed written response to this committee?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Ambassador Bremer gave a very detailed response to the initial report and I will submit that for the record. It is pretty powerful and quite eloquent. I think I could summarize it by saying that you have to weigh the risks. There are risks of not having adequate controls on how money is spent and there are risks of having such controls on how money is spent that important functions do not get performed, like paying police and paying school teachers and keeping the country functioning.

It is almost as though there is criticism when it comes to U.S. appropriated funds that we have not spent it fast enough, and now when it comes to Iraqi funds that we spent it too fast. I think on the whole it seems to me Ambassador Bremer made some difficult decisions and made them the right way. But this was a difficult situation. There was no perfect answer and you certainly could not have waited until you had a perfect system of controls. I think that you will see is the thrust of this letter and I will find out, Senator Levin, if he has changed his views at all in light of the report.

[The information referred to follows:]

DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

MAR 19 2005

The Honorable Carl Levin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Levin,

During the February 3, 2005, Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on "U.S. Military Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan," you asked about the January 30, 2005, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) audit report entitled "Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries through the National Budget Process." I offered to provide you with a copy of Ambassador L. Paul Bremer's response to that report.

Ambassador Bremer's September 8, 2004, letter in response to the draft SIGIR report is reprinted on pages 33 through 40 of the audit report, which I have enclosed. At the hearing, I told you that I would find out if Ambassador Bremer has changed his views in light of the final report. He has not.

You also asked about the Department of Defense response to the audit report. We provided management comments to the draft SIGIR report on October 7, 2004. Those comments are reprinted in the final report on pages 41 through 48. Our comments clearly indicate that they were to accompany Ambassador Bremer's and are consistent with his comments.

Thank you for your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Paul Wolfowitz

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable John Warner
Chairman

Audit Report

Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries through the National Budget Process

Report No. 05-004 **January 30, 2005**

Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction

SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION

January 30, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR U.S. AMBASSADOR TO IRAQ
DIRECTOR, DEFENSE SUPPORT OFFICE - IRAQ

SUBJECT: Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries through the National Budget Process (Report No. 05-004)

We are providing this report for your information and use. We performed the audit in accordance with our statutory duties contained in Public Law 108-106, which mandated that we conduct audits relating to the treatment, handling, and expenditure of funds by the Coalition Provisional Authority (and its successor entities) on Iraq reconstruction, and of the programs, operations, and contracts carried out in utilizing such funds.

We considered management comments provided in response to a draft of this report when preparing the final report. Additional comments to this report are not required.

We appreciate the courtesies extended to the staff. For additional information on this report, please contact Mr. Brian M. Flynn at (703) 343-9440 or Mr. Robert M. Murrell at (703) 428-0240. We will provide a formal briefing on the results of the audit, if desired. See Appendix H for the report distribution.

Stuart W. Bowen, Jr.
Inspector General

400 Army Navy Drive • Arlington, Virginia 22202

Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction

Report Number 05-004 **January 30, 2005**
(Project No. D2004-DCPAAC-0007)

Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries through the National Budget Process

Executive Summary

Introduction. This audit report discusses the oversight of Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) funds provided to Interim Iraq Government (IIG) ministries through the national budget process. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was the authority responsible for the temporary governance of Iraq through June 28, 2004. Thereafter, the IIG was the authority responsible for the governance of Iraq. Therefore, this report does not address the CPA management or use of U.S. appropriated funds.

Objective. The original objective of the audit was to determine whether the CPA had implemented adequate procedures for recording, reviewing, and reporting disbursements. During the audit, we limited the scope to review procedures and controls to only DFI funds provided to the interim Iraqi government through the national budget process. Specifically, we determined whether the CPA established and implemented adequate managerial, financial, and contractual controls over DFI disbursements provided to interim Iraqi ministries through the national budget process.

Results. The CPA provided less than adequate controls for approximately $8.8 billion in DFI funds provided to Iraqi ministries through the national budget process. Specifically, the CPA did not establish or implement sufficient managerial, financial, and contractual controls to ensure DFI funds were used in a transparent manner. Consequently, there was no assurance the funds were used for the purposes mandated by Resolution 1483.

- **Managerial Controls.** The CPA did not implement adequate managerial controls over DFI funds provided to Iraqi ministries through the national budget process. Specifically, authorities and responsibilities over DFI funds were not clearly assigned, and CPA regulations, orders, and memoranda did not contain clear guidance regarding the procedures and controls for disbursing funds for the national budget.

- **Financial Controls.** The CPA did not implement adequate financial controls to ensure DFI funds were properly used. Specifically, the CPA did not exercise adequate responsibility over DFI funds provided to Iraqi ministries through the national budget process. Additionally, although the CPA published approved national budgets and total disbursements to Iraqi ministries on the Internet, it was not transparent what the funds were actually used for. Lastly, the CPA did not maintain adequate documentation to support budget spending plans, budget disbursements, or cash allocations made by coalition forces.

- **Contract Controls.** The CPA did not adequately control DFI contracting actions. Specifically, the CPA contracting office did not review contracting procedures at

the Iraqi ministries. In addition, CPA senior advisors and staffs did not provide oversight of Iraqi ministry procurements or contracting operations and executed contracts through the national budget process that were not in compliance with CPA Memorandum Number 4 guidance.

Conclusion. While acknowledging the extraordinarily challenging threat environment that confronted the CPA throughout its existence and the number of actions taken by CPA to improve the IIG budgeting and financial management, we believe the CPA management of Iraq's national budget process and oversight of Iraqi funds was burdened by severe inefficiencies and poor management. Although we did not include all aspects of the threat environment or all CPA actions to improve the IIG budgeting and financial management in our audit scope and, therefore, cannot verify the validity of statements made. The management comments to this report provide the detailed opinions of the CPA Administrator and the Defense Support Office – Iraq on those issues.

Finally, although formal recommendations were not made in this report, we believe that the results of this audit dictate that lessons learned studies should be performed addressing not only the planning for specific managerial, financial, and contractual controls in future situations of this nature but also the national planning aspects necessary to overall management of these type of endeavors should they occur in the future. We are aware that other organizations have similar concerns. For example, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has initiated lessons learned studies concerning financial and logistics issues. However, we believe that those specific studies need to be brought together so that efforts can be better coordinated and be used to assist in formulating national planning initiatives. As such, rather than recommend others to perform this work, the SIGIR will take on the task of consolidating lessons learned studies that are specific in nature and also continue a broader scope lessons learned initiative previously started by this organization.

Management Comments and Audit Response. The initial comments on a draft of this report were received on July 18, 2004, from the Director, Iraq Reconstruction Management Office. The Director and the Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Finance/Office of Management and Budget concurred with the report. Subsequently, the Defense Support Office - Iraq disagreed with the report by providing informal comments on July 20, 2004, and revised informal comments on August 12, 2004. The CPA Administrator provided comments on September 8, 2004, and the Director of the Defense Support Office – Iraq provided comments on October 7, 2004. Those comments are included in the Management Comments section of the report.

The CPA Administrator and the Director, Defense Support Office – Iraq disagreed with the audit finding and stated the report did not acknowledge the difficult operational context in which the CPA was operating and did not recognize the actions taken to improve weaknesses in the Iraqi budgeting and financial management. We revised our report to address the comments from the CPA Administrator regarding the situation the CPA found in Iraq when it assumed control. However, their comments did not cause us to change our conclusion that the CPA did not establish or implement sufficient managerial, financial, and contractual controls to ensure DFI funds were used in a transparent manner or that there was no assurance the funds were used for the purposes mandated by Resolution 1483. See the Finding section of the report for a discussion of the management comments and the Management Comments section of the report for the complete text of the comments.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary i

Introduction

Background 1
Objective 4

Finding

Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries 5

Appendixes

A. Scope and Methodology 20
B. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483 23
C. United Nations Security Council International Advisory and Monitoring Board Terms of Reference 24
D. Coalition Provisional Authority Regulation Number 2 25
E. Development Fund for Iraq Disbursements by Agency 27
F. Development Fund for Iraq Financial Reporting Matrix 28
G. Acronyms 29
H. Report Distribution 30
I. Audit Team Members 32

Management Comments

Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III
Administrator, Coalition Provisional Authority 33
Director, Defense Support Office – Iraq 41

Background

This audit report discusses the oversight of Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) funds provided to Interim Iraq Government (IIG) ministries through the national budget process. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was the authority responsible for the temporary governance of Iraq through June 28, 2004. Thereafter, the IIG was the authority responsible for the governance of Iraq. Therefore, this report does not address the CPA management or use of U.S. appropriated funds.

Coalition Provisional Authority

Appointment of the Presidential Envoy to Iraq. In a letter dated May 9, 2003, the President of the United States appointed Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III as the Presidential Envoy to Iraq to report through the Secretary of Defense. Ambassador Bremer was authorized to oversee, direct, and coordinate all United States Government (USG) programs and activities in Iraq (subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense), except those under the command of the Commander, U.S. Central Command. Ambassador Bremer's authority included the responsibility to oversee the use of USG appropriations in Iraq, as well as Iraqi state- or regime-owned property that was properly under U.S. possession, and made available for use in Iraq to assist the Iraqi people and support the recovery of Iraq. The appointment letter further provided that all USG elements in Iraq, other than those under the command of the Commander, U.S. Central Command, operated under Ambassador Bremer's authority and were to keep him fully informed of their activities.

Coalition Provisional Authority Regulation Number 1. CPA Regulation Number 1, May 16, 2003, was issued by Ambassador Bremer "Pursuant to my authority as Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 1483 (2003), and the laws and usages of war. . . ."

CPA Regulation Number 1 stated "The CPA shall exercise powers of government temporarily in order to provide for the effective administration of Iraq during the period of transitional administration. . . ." CPA Regulation Number 1 also stated:

> The CPA is vested with all executive, legislative and judicial authority necessary to achieve its objectives, to be exercised under relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 1483 (2003), and the laws and usages of war. This authority shall be exercised by the CPA Administrator.

The Development Fund for Iraq

The Development Fund for Iraq. United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1483 (Resolution 1483), May 22, 2003, noted the establishment of the DFI and assigned responsibility for managing the fund to the CPA. Resolution 1483 noted that DFI funds should be disbursed at the direction of the CPA, in consultation with the Iraqi interim administration. It also required the DFI funds be used in a transparent manner to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, for the economic reconstruction and repair of Iraq's infrastructure, for the continued disarmament of Iraq, for the costs of Iraqi civilian administration, and for other purposes benefiting the people of Iraq. See Appendix B for excerpts from Resolution 1483 concerning the DFI.

International Advisory and Monitoring Board. Resolution 1483 established the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB)[1] of the DFI to perform functions similar to those of an outside audit committee. The letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council, dated October 22, 2003, established and approved the terms of reference for the IAMB. The terms of reference stated that the scope of the external audits shall encompass, among other things,

> (iv) disbursements of resources from the DFI, supporting the objective of ensuring that DFI funds are used for the purposes for which they were disbursed. For purposes of (iv), the External Auditor(s) will make (a) a determination as to whether the disbursements from the DFI are duly authorized and received by the designated recipient; and (b) an assessment as to whether the controls (including the requirement to ensure proper records) of the designated recipient are adequate to ensure that disbursements from the DFI are utilized as intended.

See Appendix C for excerpts from the IAMB terms of reference letter.

Administration of the Development Fund of Iraq

Coalition Provisional Authority Regulation Number 2. CPA Regulation Number 2, "Development Fund for Iraq," June 10, 2003, was issued by Ambassador Bremer "Pursuant to my authority as Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 1483 (2003), and the laws and usages of war. . . ."

According to CPA Regulation Number 2, the guidance was issued for the following purpose.

> This Regulation applies to the administration, use, accounting and auditing of the Development Fund for Iraq (the "Fund"). The Regulation is intended and shall be applied to ensure that the Fund is managed in a transparent manner for and on behalf of the Iraqi people, consistent with Resolution 1483, and that all disbursements from the Fund are for purposes benefiting the people of Iraq.

See Appendix D for excerpts from CPA Regulation Number 2 concerning the DFI.

Development Fund for Iraq Internal Control Review. CPA Regulation Number 2 required the CPA to obtain the services of an independent certified public accounting firm to ensure the fund was administered and used in a transparent manner for the benefit of the people of Iraq. In October 2003, the CPA awarded a $1.4 million contract to NorthStar Consultants, Inc., to evaluate the design and effectiveness of the internal control system over the DFI. The contract required the contractor to issue a written report evaluating the CPA internal controls and providing the results of its reviews of the CPA administration, use, and operation of the DFI.

Coalition Provisional Authority Regulation Number 3. CPA Regulation Number 3, "Program Review Board," June 18, 2003, was issued by Ambassador Bremer "Pursuant to my authority as Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), and consistent with relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 1483 (2003), and the laws and usages of war. . . ."

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[1] According to Resolution 1483, the IAMB members include representatives lo the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Managing Director of the IMF, the Director-General of the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development, and the President of World Bank.

CPA Regulation Number 3 addressed the establishment of the Program Review Board.

> There is hereby established as a part of the CPA an entity to be known as the Program Review Board ("Board"). The Board shall report directly to the Administrator of the CPA ("Administrator"). The Board shall carry out its responsibilities, as defined in this Regulation, in a manner consistent with the CPA's obligation to ensure that funds available to the CPA for providing relief to, and the recovery of Iraq are managed in a transparent manner and consistent with applicable law, for and on behalf of the Iraqi people. In addition, the Board shall, when and to the extent appropriate, consult the Iraqi interim administration referred to in paragraph 9 of Resolution 1483 (2003) [See Appendix B for paragraph 9 from Resolution 1483 concerning the Iraqi interim administration], and shall seek every opportunity to further the CPA's objective of gradually transferring to the Iraqi interim administration the responsibility of budgeting Iraq's financial resources. This Regulation establishes the procedures applicable to the Board's operations.

CPA Regulation Number 3 also addressed the general duties of the Program Review Board.

> The Board shall be responsible for recommending expenditures of resources from the Development Fund for Iraq and other resources identified in subsection 6 (3) of this Regulation, in a manner that meets the interests of the people of Iraq, furthers CPA's policy objectives, and comports fully with the CPA's stewardship and financial management duties under applicable laws and regulations, including United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483 (2003). The Board shall not be responsible for overseeing the manner in which approved spending requirements are executed.

Iraqi National Budget

In May 2003, a primary objective of the CPA was to establish a functioning government that would provide basic services to the Iraqi people, such as the payment of salaries and ministry operating expenses. The CPA, in coordination with the IIG ministries, formulated and approved the Iraqi national budgets. Rather than adopting a new national budget system, the CPA used the existing Iraqi national budget system. The Iraqi budget system required each ministry and government agency to submit monthly spending plans that identified the amounts required for salaries, operating expenses, and capital expenditures throughout the country. The budget system also required each ministry to submit a monthly trial balance that detailed how the previous month's allocation was spent before the release of the current month's funds.

The 2003 Iraqi national budget, developed by CPA, provided the authority for the commitment and expenditure of approximately $6.1 billion[2]. The 2004 Iraqi national budget, approved by CPA in October 2003, authorized expenditures of approximately $13.4 billion; and a revised budget, approved by CPA in March 2004, increased authorized expenditures to approximately $19.9 billion. From October 2003 through June 24, 2004, the CPA disbursed approximately $8.8 billion in DFI funds through the national budget process for salaries, operating and capital expenditures,[3] and capital projects. See Appendixes E and F for the DFI disbursements and financial reports posted on the CPA website.

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[2] Dollar figures in this report have been rounded.

[3] Capital expenditures include purchases of capital items necessary for the operation of a ministry, such as vehicles. They do not include capital projects or investments.

Contracting Procedures for the Development Fund for Iraq

CPA Memorandum 4, "Contract and Grant Procedures Applicable to Vested and Seized Iraqi Property and the Development Fund for Iraq, Implementation of Regulation Number 3, Program Review Board," August 19, 2003, established procedures for executing contracts with DFI funds.

Objective

The original objective of the audit was to determine whether the CPA had implemented adequate procedures for recording, reviewing, and reporting disbursements. During the audit, we limited the scope to review procedures and controls to only DFI funds provided to the interim Iraqi government through the national budget process. Specifically, we determined whether the CPA established and implemented adequate managerial, financial, and contractual controls over DFI disbursements provided to interim Iraqi ministries through the national budget process. The scope and methodology used to perform this audit and the prior coverage are discussed in Appendix A. The acronyms used in this report are shown in Appendix G and the audit team members are shown in Appendix I.

Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries

The CPA provided less than adequate controls for approximately $8.8 billion in DFI funds provided to Iraqi ministries through the national budget process. Specifically, the CPA did not establish or implement sufficient managerial, financial, and contractual controls to ensure DFI funds were used in a transparent manner. Consequently, there was no assurance the funds were used for the purposes mandated by Resolution 1483.

Managerial Controls

The CPA did not implement adequate managerial controls over DFI funds provided to Iraqi ministries through the national budget process. Specifically, authorities and responsibilities over DFI funds were not clearly assigned, and CPA regulations, orders, and memoranda did not contain clear guidance regarding the procedures and controls for disbursing funds for the national budget. Further, staffing shortages and personnel turnover resulted in inadequate oversight of budget execution by the Iraqi ministries.

Authorities and Responsibilities. Authorities and responsibilities over the Iraq national budget funds were not clearly delineated. The CPA Administrator signed a memorandum on July 4, 2003, delegating authority to the CPA Senior Advisor for the Iraqi Ministry of Finance to administer the affairs of the Ministry of Finance, including the management of the IIG finances and the preparation, execution, and financing of the Iraq national budget. The memorandum stated the delegation of authority may be revoked at any time by the CPA Administrator or upon appointment of an interim minister by the IIG. CPA officials stated the delegation of authority was revoked when the Interim Iraqi Minister to the Ministry of Finance was appointed. However, CPA personnel were unable to provide a memorandum delegating authority to the Interim Iraqi Minister to the Ministry of Finance.

Additionally, CPA senior advisors' responsibilities for oversight of DFI financial and contracting actions in the Iraqi ministries were not clear. During discussions with nine senior advisors and/or senior consultants, CPA personnel stated that responsibilities over DFI funds were not clearly communicated to them. Consequently, 7 of 9 CPA senior advisors and staffs provided inadequate oversight of their respective Iraqi ministries' financial operations. Further, senior advisors and staffs were not provided orientation or training on financial or contract duties and responsibilities. One senior advisor requested guidance from the CPA Office of General Counsel. In response, through an email dated February 21, 2004, the CPA Office of General Counsel stated the following:

> There are no written guidelines delineating the senior advisors' role, responsibilities and authorities. The Administrator expects the interim Iraqi Ministers to assume responsibility for and exercise authority over all recurring, day-to-day functions of their Ministries. We're increasingly empowering the interim Ministers, consistent with their capacities. The senior advisors serve as the primary liaison between the Administrator and the Ministers. They provide advice and assistance to the Ministers, but do not exercise decision making authority over routine ministry matters. The advisors are expected to keep the Administrator fully informed of activities within their Ministries, and ensure proper development, coordination, promulgation and implementation of any ministry policy initiatives that extend beyond routine ministry functions.

Coalition Provisional Authority Guidance. CPA regulations, orders, and memoranda did not contain clear guidance regarding responsibilities, procedures, and controls for disbursing DFI funds for the national budget. CPA Regulation Number 2 stated that procedures for disbursing funds from the DFI would be prescribed in the CPA Order (subsequently established by CPA Regulation Number 3) establishing the Program Review Board (PRB). However, neither the CPA Regulation Number 3 that established the PRB nor the CPA Memorandum Number 4 that implemented CPA Regulation Number 3 included procedures regarding DFI disbursements to Iraqi ministries, except to state the CPA Office of Management and Budget (OMB) would allocate the funds. Additionally, CPA Regulation Number 3 assigned responsibility to the PRB Program Review Committee to distribute procedures for submitting funding requests. However, we were not able to locate any procedures regarding requests for funds to be disbursed to the Iraqi ministries. Lastly, CPA Regulation Number 3 stated the PRB would not be responsible for overseeing the manner in which approved spending requirements were executed, and we were unable to locate any other CPA guidance that assigned responsibility for providing oversight of DFI disbursements to IIG ministries. Consequently, documentation was not available to support disbursements to Iraqi ministries or explain significant differences between budget disbursements, ministry spending plans, and cash allocations.

Staffing and Personnel Turnover. According to CPA officials, the CPA Ministry of Finance/OMB experienced critical personnel shortfalls throughout 2003 and 2004. For example, during Fall 2003, when new salary policies were being implemented and the 2004 Iraq national budget was being revised, there were only six staff members assigned to the OMB budget team and all were inexperienced in government budget procedures. In addition, key financial management positions (Chief Financial Officer, Comptroller, and Senior Advisor to Ministry of Finance/Director of OMB) turned over on an average of three times since June 2003, and the Chief Financial Officer position was vacant for over three months. Finally, 3 of 9 IIG ministries we visited did not have personnel assigned to financial and/or budget positions.

Financial Controls

The CPA did not implement adequate financial controls to ensure DFI funds were properly used. Specifically, the CPA did not exercise adequate responsibility over DFI funds provided to Iraqi ministries through the national budget process. Additionally, although the CPA published approved national budgets and total disbursements to Iraqi ministries on the Internet, it was not transparent what the funds were actually used for. Lastly, the CPA did not maintain adequate documentation to support budget spending plans, budget disbursements, or cash allocations made by coalition forces. External assessments and allegations of corruption in Iraq's ministries under the Oil-for-Food program should have raised concerns about the Iraqi government's ability to manage DFI Funds.

Responsibilities Over Funds Provided to Iraq Ministries Through the Development Funds for Iraq. The CPA did not exercise adequate responsibility over DFI funds provided to Iraqi Ministries through the national budget process. Specifically, the CPA disbursed over $8.8 billion in DFI funds to the Iraqi ministries without assurance the monies were properly used or accounted for. Neither CPA Ministry of Finance/OMB nor CPA senior advisors reviewed the internal controls in the Iraqi ministries. Further, CPA personnel did not review and compare financial, budgetary, and operational performance to planned or expected results. According to CPA Ministry of Finance/OMB officials, reviewing budget execution was not their responsibility. Rather, CPA personnel stated they relied on the Iraqi Board of Supreme Audit and had taken steps, such as appointing the inspectors general (which was not completed until May 2004) and establishing the Commission on Public Integrity, to build internal control and accountability measures at IIG ministries. However, these institutions were not yet functioning

and should not have been relied upon to monitor the Iraqi ministries use of DFI funds in 2003 and 2004. Resolution 1483 required the CPA to disburse funds from the DFI in a transparent manner to meet the needs of the Iraqi people. By not adequately reviewing the use of and accounting for the DFI funds provided to the Iraqi ministries, the CPA did not meet the mandate of Resolution 1483 with respect to this issue.

Controls at Iraqi Ministries. CPA officials did not review budget execution at Iraqi ministries even though external assessments indicated budget and financial control systems required strengthening. In June 2003, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided preliminary observations to CPA officials that noted the most urgent issue in the financial area was not budget planning but budget execution. Further, an October 2003 IMF assessment indicated the Iraqi ministries implementation of the budget would require a strengthening of payment and accounting functions, procurement procedures, and internal and external audit functions. The assessment also noted the difficulties that the Iraqi ministries were facing due to lack of staff, the security environment, disruptions in communications, damage and looting of government buildings, and lack of infrastructure and fiscal policies from before the occupation. In addition, a management consultant for the United States Agency for International Development reviewed internal controls at one Iraqi ministry in April 2004 and concluded financial management and internal controls over the ministry's approximate $435 million budget were either weak or non-existent and the financial process was open to fraud, kickbacks, and misappropriation of funds. In light of the problems noted in the Iraqi ministries, combined with the lack of the financial reports[4] for DFI spending, CPA officials should have reviewed internal controls and assisted the Iraqi ministries in preparing financial, budgetary, and operational performance reports.

In response to our draft audit, the CPA Administrator stated that, given the hostile situation the CPA found in Iraq, it was unrealistic for the coalition to achieve a standard of budgetary transparency and execution in the midst of a war. He stated there was no functioning Iraqi government, essential services were primitive or nonexistent, there was no national telephone system, and most Iraqi ministries had no computers. He further stated that Iraqi government budget and personnel records were destroyed by looting and sabotage and during Saddam's era, less than 8 percent of annual state expenditures were run through the Ministry of Finance. He further stated that the CPA could find no reliable records of these "off budget" expenditures. He also stated the CPA discovered that the Iraqi ministries had no unified civil service pay system or regular payroll systems, and these systems had been corrupted beyond repair by decades of cronyism and ad hoc measures. Lastly, the CPA Administrator stated the Iraqi economy was "dead in the water;" so the CPA's top priority was to get the economy going.

Salary Payments. CPA did not implement adequate controls to ensure DFI funds were properly used for salaries of Iraqi employees.[5] Consequently, there was no assurance funds were not provided for ghost employees. For example, CPA officials authorized payments of DFI funds for approximately 74,000 Facilities Protective Services (FPS) guards' salaries even though the FPS sites and number of guards were not validated. CPA staff identified at one ministry that, although 8,206 guards were on the payroll, only 602 guards could be validated. CPA staff at another ministry validated the payroll at one FPS site and found that although 1,471 guards were on the payroll, only 642 guards could be validated. However, when the CPA staff recommended

[4] As of June 15, 2004, the Iraqi Ministry of Finance had not developed financial reports for DFI funds spent in 2003, and told CPA officials that financial data for November and December was lost.

[5] Funds for salary payments were provided through the national budget process to the responsible Iraqi Treasury offices or the Iraqi Ministry of Finance. Coalition forces that hired the security forces (Iraqi Border Police, Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, Iraqi Armed Forces, and Facilities Protective Services) were responsible for salary payments until responsibilities were transferred to the Iraqi ministries.

the Iraqi Ministry of Finance require certified payrolls prior to salary payments, CPA Ministry of Finance personnel stated the CPA would rather overpay salaries than risk not paying employees and inciting violence. Furthermore, CPA payroll guidance to Iraqi ministries and coalition forces responsible for salary payments required only spreadsheets with summary totals[6] be provided to the Iraqi Treasury offices responsible for disbursing the funds. Additionally, the CPA Ministry of Finance did not require coalition forces to provide supporting documentation for salary payments made before transferring responsibilities for payroll management to the Iraqi ministries. For example, the CPA Ministry of Finance/OMB could not provide documentation to support approximately $17 million provided to coalition forces for FPS and Iraqi Civil Defense Corps salaries in February 2004.

Transparency. The CPA sought to comply with the Resolution 1483 mandate for transparency by publishing the Iraqi national budgets and the total amounts of disbursements made to the Iraqi ministries on the Internet. For example, as of June 28, 2004, when the DFI was turned over to the IIG, the only budget information reported on the Internet was the approximately $8.8 billion in disbursements for ministry budgets and the total amounts provided to each ministry (see Appendixes E and F). However, transparency requires more than just posting budgets and total disbursements on the Internet. The CPA should have provided detailed budgetary, financial, and operational results of the DFI disbursements. Furthermore, although the UN provided approximately $2.5 billion dollars to the DFI in Oil-for-Food funds in March and April 2004, the CPA did not update the Iraqi national budget for the monies.

Budget Documentation. Adequate documentation was not maintained to support budget disbursements. CPA Memorandum Number 4 stated that funds allocated through the national budget process would be made available to the IIG ministries in accordance with the national budget, and the CPA OMB would allocate the funds to the Iraqi Ministry of Finance for further distribution to the Iraqi ministries in a manner that would ensure transparency. A review of 10 disbursements made by the CPA Comptroller's office between October 2003 and June 2004 disclosed:

- None of the 10 disbursements - ranging between approximately $120 and $900 million - included documentation such as budget spending plans to support the amounts provided to the Iraqi ministries.
- Six disbursements were made without CPA/OMB allocation memoranda.
- Two disbursements totaling approximately $616 million were not supported by disbursement vouchers.
- An improper approximately $120 million disbursement was made in May 2004 because of miscommunication between the CPA/OMB and CPA Comptroller's office.

Between January and April 2004, CPA OMB personnel developed the spending plans for the Iraqi ministries along with the cash allocations to be made to the banks to meet the monthly budget requirements. However, CPA OMB personnel were unable to provide supporting documentation or explain significant differences between the spending plans, budget disbursements, and cash allocations. For example, approximately $1.5 billion in cash allocations were made to Iraqi banks between January and April 2004 for operating expenses, yet spending plans supported only approximately $498 million in operating expenses.

Financial Contractor Performance. In October 2003, the CPA awarded a $1.4 million contract to NorthStar Consultants, Inc. to evaluate the design and effectiveness of the internal control system over the DFI. The NorthStar Consultants, Inc., were not certified public accountants and

[6] The CPA Ministry of Finance guidance required only summary totals of funds received, funds paid, number of employees by pay grade, and the remaining balance of funds.

did not perform a review of internal controls as required by the contract. Consequently, internal controls over DFI disbursements to and from Iraqi ministries were not evaluated. This occurred because a Contracting Officers Representative was not assigned[7] to monitor contractor performance. Further, the Comptroller verbally modified the contract and employed the contractor personnel to primarily perform accounting duties in the Comptroller's office.

Contract Controls

The CPA did not adequately control DFI contracting actions. Specifically, the CPA contracting office reviewed contracting procedures at 2 of the 26 Iraqi ministries. In addition, CPA senior advisors and staffs did not provide oversight of Iraqi ministry procurements or contracting operations and executed contracts through the national budget process that were not in compliance with CPA Memorandum Number 4 guidance. This occurred because the CPA issued procurement and contracting policy but did not implement procedures to determine compliance with the policy or monitor contracting actions in the Iraqi ministries. Consequently, contracts were entered into without the benefit of adequate contract controls.

Contracting Procedures. CPA Memorandum Number 4 established procedures for executing contracts with DFI funds. CPA Memorandum Number 4 required contracting officers to compete contracts and determine whether the contract price was fair and reasonable. Iraqi ministries and governmental agencies were also required to comply with the guidance in CPA Memorandum Number 4. An Iraqi ministry could execute contracts in accordance with Iraqi laws and ministry contracting procedures, but only if the CPA had determined and certified that the contracting procedures of the ministry were adequate to ensure the transparent use and management of DFI funds. If the contracting procedures of a particular Iraqi ministry were not determined to be adequate, the ministry was required to execute contracts through the CPA contracting office. However, the CPA contracting office reviewed and approved the contracting procedures of only two Iraqi ministries, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Electricity, and those approvals did not occur until April 11, 2004, and June 26, 2004, respectively.

Oversight. CPA senior advisors and staffs did not provide oversight of Iraqi ministry procurements or contracting operations. Specifically, 5 of 7 CPA senior advisors and staffs did not provide adequate oversight of Iraqi ministry contracting operations. Further, we requested that CPA ministry senior advisors obtain data for contracts awarded with DFI funds, and, as of June 30, 2004, only 3 of 26 CPA ministry senior advisors (Communications, Housing and Construction, and Interior) were able to provide contracting actions taken by the IIG ministries. One of the Iraqi ministries that provided data indicated over 250 contracts valued at approximately $430 million were executed without CPA ministry advisors visibility over the contracts.

Unauthorized Contracting Actions. CPA senior advisors and staffs executed contracts through the national budget process without warrants or authority, and the contracts were not in compliance with CPA Memorandum Number 4 guidance. For example, a CPA senior advisor signed four Iraqi ministry contracts without competition, adequate contract specifications, or beneficial delivery terms and conditions. One of these contracts required full payment for three armored cars prior to shipment from Europe. Another CPA ministry advisor executed over

[7] The contract assigned responsibility to monitor contractor performance to the CPA Chief Financial Officer. However, the Chief Financial Officer assigned as the Contracting Officers Representative left Iraq on November 15, 2003, and when the Chief Financial Officer position was filled in March 2004 the newly assigned Chief Financial Officer was not assigned any duties over DFI funds or made aware of the NorthStar Consultants, Inc., contract.

20 contracts without contract authority; and a review of 10 contract files disclosed that 7 contracts were not competed and all 10 had missing or incomplete contract documentation.

National Assembly Building. The Governance Directorate, working with the Al Rasheed Company through the Ministry of Housing and Construction, began renovation of the National Assembly building without complying with CPA Memorandum Number 4 guidance. Before hostilities began in March 2003, the Al Rasheed Company, an Iraqi state-owned-enterprise, began remodeling the National Assembly building. During the rioting and looting at the conclusion of the war, the building and nine others in the compound were severely damaged and looted. In October 2003, the Al Rasheed Company and the Iraq State Commission of Buildings drafted an agreement to refurbish the compound buildings for $1,019,676. Subsequently, the CPA Governance Directorate established a requirement to renovate the National Assembly Building and the other buildings in the surrounding compound, and the CPA Administrator approved a budget of $5 million for the renovation in February 2004 and an additional $8.2 million to complete the project in March 2004. During the course of the project, the CPA Governance Directorate project manager issued verbal direction to the contractor that incorrectly conveyed to Iraqi officials that he had authority to enter into sole source contracts, and he advised Iraqi officials that rules requiring public bidding of subcontracts did not apply to the National Assembly project. These conditions occurred because the CPA did not implement procedures to ensure compliance with CPA Memorandum Number 4.

Conclusion

While acknowledging the extraordinarily challenging threat environment that confronted the CPA throughout its existence and the number of actions taken by CPA to improve the IIG budgeting and financial management, we believe the CPA management of Iraq's national budget process and oversight of Iraqi funds was burdened by severe inefficiencies and poor management. Although we did not include all aspects of the threat environment or all CPA actions to improve the IIG budgeting and financial management in our audit scope and, therefore, can not verify the validity of statements made. The management comments to this report provide the detailed opinions of the CPA Administrator and the Defense Support Office – Iraq on those issues.

Formal recommendations were not made in this report because responsibility for the DFI transferred from the CPA to the IIG on June 28, 2004. However, the actions listed below that were taken by the IAMB and the CPA may mitigate the internal control weaknesses noted in the report.

Assessment of Internal Controls. On April 5, 2004, the IAMB selected KPMG Audit and Risk Advisory Services, Bahrain to perform an audit of the DFI financial statements and disbursements from the DFI, and to provide an assessment of internal controls of the recipients of DFI funds to determine whether the funds were used in a transparent manner and for the purposes for which they were disbursed. On July 14 and October 12, 2004, KPMG provided reports to the IAMB covering audits of DFI operations through December 31, 2003, and June 28, 2004, respectively.

Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 87. On May 16, 2004, the CPA Administrator approved CPA Order Number 87, "Public Contracts." CPA Order Number 87 applies to all procurements of goods, services, and construction services by Iraqi ministries, federal agencies, and governmental units that can commit public funds. CPA Order Number 87 requires full, fair, and open competitive public bidding procedures, international standards of transparency, procurement process integrity and minimum ethical standards, rights to file protests and related appeals, and dispute resolution mechanisms. In addition, CPA Order

Number 87 establishes an Office of Government Public Contract Policy that is responsible for coordination of government public contract policy for all ministries and public entities.

Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 95. On June 4, 2004, the CPA Administrator approved CPA Order Number 95, "Financial Management Law and Public Debt Law." CPA Order Number 95 provides detailed guidance for the conduct of fiscal and budgetary policy in Iraq and includes reporting requirements aimed at increasing the accountability and transparency of the budgeting process. CPA Order Number 95 addresses the preparation, adoption, recording, management, execution, and reporting of the federal budget of Iraq and related issues including internal controls, accounting, and auditing.

Finally, although formal recommendations were not made in this report, we believe that the results of this audit dictate that lessons learned studies should be performed addressing not only the planning for specific managerial, financial, and contractual controls in future situations of this nature but also the national planning aspects necessary to overall management of these type of endeavors should they occur in the future. We are aware that other organizations have similar concerns. For example, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has initiated lessons learned studies concerning financial and logistics issues. However, we believe that those specific studies need to be brought together so that efforts can be better coordinated and be used to assist in formulating national planning initiatives. As such, rather than recommend others to perform this work, the SIGIR will take on the task of consolidating lessons learned studies that are specific in nature and also continue a broader scope lessons learned initiative previously started by this organization.

Management Comments and Audit Response

Coalition Provisional Authority Administrator. The management comments provided by the CPA Administrator and the audit response to those comments are discussed below. The complete text of the comments is in the Management Comments section of the report.

Management Comments. The CPA Administrator disagreed with our report and stated that it did not acknowledge the context in which the CPA was operating or recognize the actions taken to improve weaknesses in the Iraqi budgeting system. He further stated that the report contained misconceptions, inaccuracies, and numerous factual errors that were brought to our attention by the Defense Support Office - Iraq and did not meet Inspector General standards.

Audit Response. We disagree. One issue was brought to our attention by the Defense Support Office – Iraq concerning contracting procedures that were approved for the Ministry of Electricity on June 26, 2004. However, the CPA Head of Contracting Activity approved these procedures on June 26, 2004, after our fieldwork in contracting was complete and validated with contracting officials. We revised the final report to include that information. Otherwise, the CPA Administrator did not provide any documentation or evidence to substantiate any other misconceptions, inaccuracies, or factual errors. Further, as stated in the report, the audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards.

Management Comments. The CPA Administrator stated that our report ignored the security context of the CPA role in Iraq and suggested the CPA should have delayed paying Iraqi public servants until fully modern pay records were implemented. He further stated more than a million Iraqi families depended on the government for their salaries and not paying the civil servants would have been destabilizing, would have increased the security threat to Iraqis and Americans, and would have cost lives.

The CPA Administrator also stated military commanders were instructed to build up the FPS force quickly to relieve the military of tasks such as providing static security to government buildings. The CPA decided in November to give Iraqis responsibility for the FPS forces by shifting the forces' payroll from the military commanders to the Iraqi ministries. Many IIG ministries, already struggling to cope with the new budgetary demands, had difficulties making the transfer. The CPA was aware of the problem and accepted that the payroll system was still imperfect, as there was a war going on and it would have been dangerous for security to stop paying armed young men.

Audit Response. The CPA Administrator's criticisms are inappropriate. The report does not suggest the CPA should have delayed paying Iraqi public servants; instead, it addresses the lack of controls and supporting documentation for salary payments made by coalition forces to Iraqi security forces personnel. Specifically, the report addresses the CPA policy for coalition forces to support monthly salary payments with only summary information of total funds received and paid, and total number of employees by pay grade rather than certified payroll listings. The report also addresses the lack of supporting documentation maintained by the CPA. Furthermore, the six months that passed between the date the CPA decided to transfer payroll responsibilities and actually transferred those responsibilities to the Iraqi ministries was sufficient time to validate the payroll listings.

Management Comments. The CPA Administrator stated that our report ignored the political context of the CPA role in Iraq. The USG policy, mandated by UN Security Council resolutions, was to transfer as much responsibility as possible as quickly as possible to the Iraqis, including responsibility for the Iraqi budget. Clear guidance was provided to CPA Senior Advisors that Iraqi ministers, not the Senior Advisors, would run the ministries, and that the Senior Advisors were to leave the operations of the ministries, including the budgets, to the Iraqis. He further stated the report suggested that instead of giving the Iraqi ministers responsibility for their budgets, the CPA should have placed hundreds of auditors into the IIG ministries and that would have been directly contrary to USG policy and to the mandate of the UN.

Audit Response. The report does not suggest that CPA should have placed hundreds of auditors into the ministries or that CPA Senior Advisors should have run the ministries. Further, the report does not ignore the political context of the CPA role in Iraq but rather discusses the actions the CPA did not take to fulfill the responsibilities mandated by Resolution 1483 and the causes of those inactions.

The CPA had a responsibility to determine whether the Iraqi ministries had basic financial controls in place prior to transferring full authority over to the ministries. This responsibility was mandated by the UN, acknowledged by USG officials, was documented in the CPA Strategic Plan and was documented in CPA guidance.

UN Security Council Resolution 1511 required the return of responsibilities and authorities to the Iraqis as soon as practicable, but also reaffirmed Resolution 1483. The UN Security Council Secretary-General noted in an October 2003 letter[8] discussing IAMB responsibilities that the CPA was responsible for establishing financial reporting and internal control systems to ensure DFI funds were used for the purposes for which they were disbursed.

[8] The letter from the UN Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council, October 22, 2003, stated one of the responsibilities of the IAMB was to monitor the financial reporting and internal control systems established by the CPA over disbursements from the DFI, supporting the objective of ensuring that DFI funds were used for the purposes for which they were disbursed.

USG officials acknowledged these responsibilities. Specifically,

- Secretary of State Colin Powell stated during a September 2003 press conference[9] that one can't just say, "You're a government, fine, go. You have full authority." He stated there needed to be a deliberate process that builds the institutions of government and capacity to govern prior to the handover of sovereignty.

- The CPA Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Finance/Director of OMB notified all senior advisors in February 2004 that the CPA needed to determine whether there were adequate controls in the Iraqi ministries to ensure DFI disbursements were received by the designated recipient and used as intended. The Senior Advisor also requested the senior advisors provide the results of any internal reviews performed by their offices to ensure that proper controls were in place at the Iraqi ministries.

- The CPA Administrator acknowledged the CPA fiduciary responsibilities in March 2004. Specifically, the CPA Administrator stated during the transfer of sovereignty[10] to the Ministry of Health, which was the first Iraqi ministry to attain sovereignty, that the CPA gave full authority to the Iraqi ministries only after fundamental financial and budgetary controls were in place. However, the CPA did not review internal controls or the accounting and use of funds in the Ministry of Health prior to the transfer, and CPA officials stated they were unaware of the basis for the CPA Administrator's statement that controls were in place.

- The CPA Press Secretary noted during the June 21, 2004, press briefing[11] that coalition officials still had operational authority in the 11 Iraqi ministries that had not yet attained sovereignty. Since the Ministry of Finance was one of those 11 ministries, CPA officials still had operational authority and responsibility to ensure DFI funds were accounted for and properly used.

The CPA Strategic Plan documented the CPA responsibilities. For example, two key objectives in the economy section of the Strategic Plan were to develop transparent budgeting and accounting arrangements and to increase the capacity of the Ministries of Finance and Planning to manage public resources. A key task under these objectives was to conduct reviews of Iraqi budget expenditure and control systems. However, this task was not accomplished by CPA.

CPA Regulation Number 2 also documented the CPA responsibilities and required the CPA to obtain the services of an independent certified public accountant firm to ensure the fund was administered and used in a transparent manner. The CPA contract award required the contractor ensure disbursements were used for the purposes intended. Although the contractor submitted milestone reports stating they would review internal processes for controlling and documenting disbursements in the Iraqi ministries, the contractor did not perform these reviews. CPA Memorandum Number 4 further stated, as part of the CPA responsibility to ensure that funds were used for their intended purpose, the CPA Comptroller and Head of Contracting Activity could review contracting actions of interim Iraqi ministries.

Management Comments. The CPA Administrator stated that our report ignored the administrative context of the CPA role in Iraq and presumed the coalition could achieve a standard of budgetary transparency and execution which even peaceful Western nations would

[9] Transcript of press conference with Secretary of State Colin Powell and CPA Administrator L. Paul Bremer, Baghdad, Iraq, September 14, 2003.
[10] Transcript of CPA Administrator L. Paul Bremer, Transfer of Sovereignty to the Ministry of Health, March 27, 2004.
[11] Transcript of press briefing with Dan Senor and Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, Baghdad, Iraq, June 21, 2004.

have trouble meeting within a year, especially in the midst of a war. When the CPA was established, there was no functioning Iraqi government and essential services were primitive or nonexistent. The Iraqi government budget and personnel records, inadequate before the war, had been destroyed and CPA determined that less than 8 percent of the annual state expenditures were run through the Ministry of Finance. The vast majority of government expenditures were directly controlled "off budget," and the CPA could find no reliable records of these expenditures. The CPA discovered that the Iraqi ministries had no unified civil service pay system or regular payroll system and the systems had been corrupted beyond repair by decades of cronyism and ad hoc fixes. The CPA's top priority was to get the economy going, and the quickest way was to pay the country's 1.2 million civil servants who had not been paid for two months. CPA established a four-grade pay scale, started paying civil servants, and established a professional civil-service pay system that was put in place in August 2003.

Audit Response. We disagree. Instead, the report discusses the actions the CPA did not take to fulfill it's responsibilities in light of this context. The audit's presumption that the USG should have practiced sound financial management and internal control over Iraqi monies is both realistic and supported by extensive legislation, policies, and procedures.

We fully recognize that the CPA operated in a dangerous working environment under difficult conditions. However, the existing administrative conditions should have underscored the need for controls over the disbursements to the Iraqi ministries. The CPA should have established controls and provided oversight over the financial management of the DFI funds precisely because there was no functioning Iraqi government, no experience within the Ministry of Finance in managing the national budget, no budget or personnel records, and the payroll systems were corrupted by cronyism and ad hoc fixes. On an individual basis, any of these conditions should have sent strong signals to financial managers that weaknesses were widespread, posed unacceptable risks, and called for forceful action. Those weaknesses should have represented goals for corrective actions, not reasons for inaction.

Management Comments. The CPA Administrator stated that our report did not adequately credit the major reforms the CPA instituted to deal with the deficiencies found in the Iraqi budgeting system. The CPA established the PRB to provide an open transparent mechanism for determining how to spend DFI funds; ensured there was Iraqi representation on the PRB; and posted the minutes, budget, and DFI funds balances on the Internet. The CPA established an independent judiciary, an Office of Inspector General in each Iraqi Ministry, an Iraqi Commission on Public Integrity, and revitalized and strengthened the Iraqi Board of Supreme Audit to fight corruption. The CPA introduced a Financial Management Information System to begin modernizing the Iraqi government's procedures and encouraged the World Bank and IMF to set up training programs and establish a program to restructure the chart of accounts to improve Iraqi capabilities.

Audit Response. We did not evaluate or address CPA actions related to formulating the budget because the audit's focus was to review controls over disbursements. Similarly, we did not address the Financial Management Information System because it was not intended to account for DFI expenditures during the time the CPA was the governing body in Iraq. The report did address the adequacy of the information posted on the Internet and CPA reliance on the Anti-Corruption institutions even though these institutions were not yet functioning.
Moreover, the CPA Administrator is silent the fact that the budget process includes more than decision-making on public finance matters and projecting revenues and expenses. The budget process also includes the management of the revenues and expenditures. The scope of the audit focused on this phase of the budget process.

Director, Defense Support Office – Iraq. The management comments provided by the Director, Defense Support Office – Iraq and the audit response to those comments are discussed below. The complete text of the comments is in the Management Comments section of the report.

Management Comments. The Director strongly disagreed with the report and stated the findings were not a basis for concluding that the CPA did not provide adequate stewardship of $8.8 billion in DFI funds. He stated that the conclusions were sweeping and unqualified, did not accurately represent the CPA management of the DFI, and were not substantiated by the findings that related only to the CPA oversight of the execution of funds. He further stated the CPA disbursed DFI funds to the Iraqi ministries consistent with the published national budget, and the funds were allocated, disbursed, and used in a transparent manner for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

Audit Response. We disagree. The objective of this audit was to review controls and procedures over disbursements provided to Iraqi ministries through the national budget process, not to evaluate the CPA overall management of the DFI. We concluded that the CPA did not provide adequate control of the funds because CPA officials:

- Were unable to provide any documentation to support that disbursements were managed against budgeted amounts.
- Were unable to support that funds were used for the purposes mandated by Resolution 1483.
- Had no assurance that funds were accounted for properly.
- Did not review financial reporting and internal control systems over disbursements.
- Did not publish a budget for $2.5 billion in Oil-for-Food funds received in March and April 2004 even though the funds were allocated and disbursed.

The Director acknowledged that there was no USG involvement in the Iraqi ministries' accounting and use of the funds. The preceding facts call into question the Director's assertion that funds were allocated, disbursed, and used in a transparent manner for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

Management Comments. The Director stated our report failed to account for the objectives of USG policy to transfer responsibilities to Iraqis as soon as possible, which was consistent with international law and UN Security Council Resolutions. The CPA took the position that expenditures by Iraqi ministries were to be managed by the Iraqis and overseen by Iraqi auditors, and the CPA realized that the only practicable approach was to assume a supervisory role. Additionally, the Director commented that the security situation in Iraq made recruiting efforts extremely difficult and limited the assistance the CPA was able to provide to the Iraqi ministries in their budget execution.

Audit Response. We disagree. The report discusses areas where the CPA did not take actions to fulfill its responsibilities in determining whether the Iraqi ministries had established basic financial controls prior to transferring full authority to the Iraqi ministries. As previously stated in our audit response, the responsibilities were mandated by the UN and acknowledged by USG officials and were documented in the CPA Strategic Plan and in CPA guidance.

The CPA had a responsibility to determine whether the Iraqi ministries had basic financial controls in place prior to transferring full authority over to the Iraqi ministries. This responsibility was acknowledged by the CPA Administrator during the March 2004 transfer of sovereignty to the Ministry of Health, when the CPA Administrator stated that the coalition gave full authority to the Iraqi ministries only after fundamental financial and budgetary controls were in place. The CPA Press Secretary reiterated this responsibility when he noted that Iraqi

government workers still reported to coalition officials, who had operational authority, in the Ministry of Finance, as of June 21, 2004. Additionally, the CPA Strategic Plan and other official CPA guidance also documented these responsibilities.

Management Comments. The Director stated our report does not recognize the context in which the CPA was operating, to include the difficult circumstances under which the CPA operated and managed the DFI, the wartime security conditions, the CPA critical need to reestablish Iraqi ministries that had never functioned and/or had ceased to function, the ministries' lack of basic tools such as computers and telephones, and the constraints of a largely cash economy.

Audit Response. We disagree. The report discusses the difficulties the Iraqi ministries and the CPA were facing, as noted by the IMF. It was precisely those conditions which underscored the need for controls over the disbursements provided to the Iraqi ministries. The fact that the Iraqi ministries ceased to or had never functioned, lacked basic tools, and operated in a cash economy was precisely why the CPA should have provided oversight of the financial management of the funds. However, we have revised our report to better reflect the difficult situation within which CPA operated.

Management Comments. The Director commented the report did not recognize a number of actions CPA took to improve budgeting and financial management and promote transparency and good governance.

Audit Response. We evaluated the actions that were relevant to the audit objectives. Specifically, we evaluated the adequacy of, and compliance with, CPA Regulation Numbers 2 and 3, CPA Memorandum Number 4, and acknowledged the new procurement and financial management laws that were issued in May and June 2004, respectively. We also addressed the CPA reliance on Iraq's Board of Supreme Audit and Inspectors General and the adequacy of the DFI financial information published on the CPA web page.

We did not address the economic reforms that had no impact on the accounting for and use of DFI funds during the time the CPA was the governing body in Iraq. Similarly, we did not address the Financial Management Information System because it was not intended to manage DFI expenditures during the period 2003 to 2004.

Management Comments. The Director stated that our audit disregarded the fact that the CPA took a number of actions to ensure transparency (i.e., publishing PRB meeting minutes and the Iraqi national budget and including Iraqis in the PRB) and focused only on the unavailability of near real-time budget execution data. He further stated the audit failed to present an international standard for transparency against which the CPA was being evaluated and presumed the CPA could achieve a standard of budgetary transparency and execution that even Western nations would have trouble meeting within one year, especially in a combat environment.

Audit Response. We recognize that the CPA took such actions to improve transparency but we did not address these actions in the report because they were not relevant to the audit objective. The Director disregarded the fact that the government budget process includes more than decision-making on public finance matters and projecting revenues and expenditures. The budget is a fundamental management tool for monitoring performance and the budget process also includes the actual management of revenues and expenditures.

We evaluated the CPA performance based on the standards included in the IMF Manual on Fiscal Transparency and Revised Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency.[12] That document includes principles and practices that emphasize the importance of publishing comprehensive fiscal information and identifies the information that should be provided during the budget preparation, execution, and reporting processes. Since the CPA goals were to restructure the Iraqi budget and accounting systems to conform to IMF standards, and the CPA arranged IMF training and workshops for Iraqi Ministry employees, the IMF standards were appropriate. The IMF standards represent internationally accepted criteria upon which audit verification can be tested and evaluated.

Finally, we disagree with management's contention that the CPA could not provide detailed budgetary, financial, and operational results of the DFI disbursements during the time it was the governing body in Iraq. DoD policy requires that, even in contingency operations, the government establish controls, procedures, and accounting systems to properly account for funds. As stewards of the Iraqis' money, the CPA should have provided oversight of the financial management and internal controls in the Iraqi ministries to ensure the DFI funds were properly managed.

Management Comments. The Director stated that our report makes broad, un-validated statements based upon limited reviews and unclear standards of performance, since only 9 of the 26 senior advisors' offices were reviewed and the audit was conducted over a span of several weeks near the end of the CPA tenure, yet formed conclusions on the performance of CPA as a whole over the CPA entire tenure. Further, during the time the audit was conducted, all CPA senior advisors were focused on the critical requirement of transitioning governance responsibilities to the Iraqi ministries.

Audit Response. We disagree. As stated in the report, the audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards, which include the use of sampling techniques to gather evidence needed to provide a reasonable basis for audit conclusions. We evaluated evidence gathered in the Iraqi Ministry of Finance/OMB, the Comptroller's office, and 9 of 26 (35 percent) Iraqi ministries to provide a reasonable basis for the conclusions provided in the report. Additionally, fieldwork was conducted over a span of four months, not several weeks, and included a review of procedures and controls in addition to interviews with CPA officials who were in Iraq during the complete span of the CPA tenure. Furthermore, as previously stated, although one of the CPA Administrator's criterion for transitioning governance was reviewing financial and budgetary controls, discussions with CPA officials in the Ministry of Finance/OMB and seven ministries during this period disclosed personnel did not review financial and budgetary controls in the Iraqi ministries prior to the transfer of governance. If the financial and budgetary controls in the Iraqi ministries were not reviewed prior to the transfer of governance, then it was not done, and a more lengthy audit would not have reached a different conclusion.

Management Comments. The Director stated that our report cited a single instance of poor management of the FPS and generalized that all salary payments were flawed when the FPS represented 74,000 employees, approximately six-tenths of 1 percent of the approximately 1.2 million Iraqis on the national payroll. The overriding priority was for the FPS to be established as soon as possible to relieve the pressure on coalition forces for providing fixed-site security. The CPA and DoD recognized that although it was necessary to entrust Iraqi ministry officials with the responsibility for expending Iraqi funds for salary purposes, such actions could

[12] The IMF Manual on Fiscal Transparency and Revised Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency, March 23, 2001, are available at website: www.imf.org/external/np/fad/trans/manual/index.htm.

result in potential duplicate or otherwise improper payments. Prompt payment was considered to be absolutely vital to the safety and well being of the FPS guards and the Iraqi people in general.

Audit Response. We disagree. In this instance, the Director's interpretation of the disclosure of limited support for salary payment issues in our report is erroneous. The issues addressed in the report are the lack of internal controls and supporting documentation for salary payments made by coalition forces to Iraqi security forces personnel. We reviewed controls over salary payments not only for FPS, but also for Iraqi Police Service, Border Police, National Guard, and Armed Forces. Further, the FPS payroll comprised over 6 percent (approximately 74,000 FPS employees divided by approximately 1.2 million national payroll employees) of the Iraqis on the national payroll, not six-tenths of 1 percent as stated by the Director.

The report addresses the CPA policy for coalition forces to accept as support monthly salary payments of DFI funds with only summary information of total funds received, paid out, and the total number of employees by pay grade rather than using certified payroll listings. The report also addressed the lack of supporting documentation maintained by the CPA for the DFI salary payments made by coalition forces. Furthermore, we reviewed controls over FPS salary payments made by coalition forces prior to the responsibilities being transferred to the Iraqi ministries in March and April 2004. Since coalition forces hired and paid these forces, we believe the CPA should have, at a minimum, provided validated site and payroll listings to the Iraqi ministries prior to the transfer of responsibilities.

Management Comments. The Director commented that although additional staff might have been helpful, the report did not provide any indication of how many personnel would have been sufficient to provide the level of oversight called for in the report. Further, there was no evidence that any Ministry of Finance/OMB staffing request was denied by the CPA.

Audit Response. Our report attributes the issue of staffing shortages to CPA officials. Three Senior Advisors to the Ministry of Finance/Directors of OMB stated they elevated requests for additional staff not only to the CPA Administrator but also to very senior levels of USG officials at the Departments of Defense, State, and Treasury, as well as OMB and other USG officials.

The numbers of requested staff varied among the CPA officials. For example, in September 2003, a Senior Advisor requested a total of 12 personnel with 4 projected to perform budget execution duties at the Iraqi Ministry of Finance. In December 2003, the Senior Advisor requested a minimum of 7 personnel, to include a Chief of Budget Execution with experience in international budget execution, to conduct a 2004 mid-year review. The December 2003 request stated OMB in Iraq had only 12 of 55 positions filled and the bulk of the personnel assigned were inexperienced recent college graduates.

Management Comments. The Director stated that at least one other ministry, the Ministry of Electricity, besides the Ministry of Finance had been approved for contracting.

Audit Response. The Director is correct. We agree that the Ministry of Electricity was authorized to perform contracting. However, the CPA Head of Contracting Activity approved these procedures on June 26, 2004, after our fieldwork in contracting was complete and validated with contracting officials. Nevertheless, we have revised our report to note the CPA approved contracting procedures for the Ministry of Electricity.

Management Comments. The Director commented that the statement in the report that the CPA did not update the Iraqi national budget to reflect budget plans for the approximately $2.5 billion dollars provided by the UN was not correct. He stated the CPA produced an updated working copy of the budget that was shared with the Iraqi Ministry of Finance. When asked, IIG officials indicated a preference that the CPA not officially publish the amended budget that had

been prepared. Rather, they preferred to leave final decisions regarding an amended budget to the new sovereign government. Their wishes were honored.

Audit Response. We disagree. We believe the CPA's decision not to officially publish the revised budget, regardless of the IIG officials' preferences, violated the Resolution 1483 requirement to use DFI funds in a transparent manner. An "updated working copy" fails to meet the requirements for a published annual budget.

Appendix A. Scope and Methodology

We performed this audit from May through October 2004 in accordance with generally accepted Government auditing standards. We interviewed key personnel responsible for the management of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). We interviewed the CPA Administrator, General Counsel, Chief Financial Officer, Comptroller, Head of Contracting Activity, CPA Ministry of Finance/Office of Management and Budget Director, and staffs. We also interviewed Senior Advisors and/or Senior Consultants and staffs assigned to nine Interim Iraqi Government Ministries (Communications, Defense, Education, Health, Housing and Construction, Interior, Labor and Social Affairs, Oil, and Transportation). We reviewed the following documents.

United Nations and International Monetary Fund documents:

- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483 (2003), adopted by the Security Council on May 22, 2003
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1500 (2003), adopted by the Security Council on August 14, 2003
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1511 (2003), adopted by the Security Council on October 16, 2003
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 (2004), adopted by the Security Council on June 8, 2004
- Letter from the UN Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council, establishing the IAMB and approving the IAMB terms of reference, October 22, 2003
- The IMF Manual on Fiscal Transparency and Revised Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency, March 23, 2001

CPA Regulations, Orders, Memoranda, and Public Notices:

- CPA Regulation Number 1, May 16, 2003
- CPA Regulation Number 2, "Development Fund for Iraq," June 10, 2003
- CPA Regulation Number 3, "Program Review Board," June 18, 2003
- CPA Regulation Number 11, "Amendments to Coalition Provisional Authority Regulations No. 2 (CPA/REG/10 June 2003/02) and No. 3 (CPA/REG/18 June 2003/03)," June 15, 2004
- CPA Order Number 87, "Public Contracts," May 14, 2004
- CPA Order Number 95, "Financial Management Law and Public Debt Law," June 2, 2004
- CPA Memorandum Number 4, "Contract and Grant Procedures Applicable to Vested and Seized Iraqi Property and the Development Fund For Iraq, Implementation of Regulation Number 3, Program Review Board," August 19, 2003
- CPA Public Notice, "Managing Financial Resources for Iraq," June 18, 2003

CPA budget, financial, and contracting guidance documents:

- Budget Execution – Financing the Iraqi Budget
- Budget Execution Instruction
- Budget Execution Procedures for July 2003
- Instructions for Preparing the Budget for Year 2004
- Iraq's Budget Execution Process
- Release of Operating and Capital Funds for July-August 2003, August 1, 2003
- Distributions by Department, and Distribution by Chapter, September 2, 2003
- Ministry Allocations by Governorate
- Contracting Responsibilities for the Iraqi Budget

We reviewed all available electronic and hard copy documents for the period May 2003 through July 2004 that were maintained by the CPA Ministry of Finance/OMB to include: the results of all internal control reviews and IMF assessments; Program Review Board budget approvals, allocations and minutes; and, budget spending plan, cash allocations, and salary documents. We reviewed all Program Review Board minutes to determine the turnover of key financial management personnel. We compared spending plans, cash allocations, and budget disbursements for January through April 2004. We verified vouchers and authorization memoranda for 10 high-dollar budget disbursements to Iraqi Ministries from November 2003 through June 2004.

We examined KPMG, Bahrain audit reports related to the Development Fund for Iraq. We also obtained and examined all available results of work performed by the Iraqi Inspector Generals and the Board of Supreme Audit.

We interviewed NorthStar Consultants, Inc. personnel and reviewed all contract file documentation maintained by the CPA Comptroller and Contracting Activity for work under Contract FY5866-04-C-001, "The Development Fund of Iraq Accountant Consultant," October 25, 2003, to determine whether contractor personnel performed in accordance with contract requirements.

We examined all CPA Strategic Plan objectives and tasks related to the audit objectives. We interviewed contractor personnel and reviewed Financial Management Information System implementation updates. We also requested all CPA senior advisors obtain contract data from the Iraqi Ministries, determined the oversight of contracting actions by 7 ministry advisors, and judgmentally selected 15 contracts for detailed review.

Use of Computer-Processed Data. We did not rely on computer-processed data to perform this audit.

Prior Coverage. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (formerly the Office of the Inspector General, Coalition Provisional Authority (IG CPA)) collectively issued six reports related to the Development Fund for Iraq. However, the objectives and scopes of those audits were not the same as discussed in this report. Reports issued by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction can be accessed over the Internet at http://www.cpa-ig.org. Also, the International Advisory and Monitoring Board contracted with KPMG in Bahrain for audits concerning Development Funds for Iraq Export sales, Oil Proceeds, and Disbursements. The reports are listed below.

GAO Report No. 04-651T, "United Nations: Observations on the Oil for Food Program," April 7, 2004

IG CPA Report No. 04-001, "Coalition Provisional Authority Coordination of Donated Funds," June 25, 2004

IG CPA Report No. 04-007, "Oil for Food Cash Controls for the Office of Project Coordination in Erbil, Iraq," July 26, 2004

IG CPA Report No. 04-008, "Coalition Provisional Authority Control Over Seized and Vested Assets," July 30, 2004

IG CPA Report No. 04-009, "Coalition Provisional Authority Comptroller Cash Management Controls Over the Development Fund for Iraq," July 28, 2004

IG CPA Report No. 04-013, "Coalition Provisional Authority's Contracting Processes Leading Up To and Including Contract Award," July 27, 2004

KPMG Report, "Development Funds for Iraq - Statement of Cash Receipts and Payments for the Period 22 May 2003 to 31 December 2003," June 29, 2004

KPMG Report, "Development Funds for Iraq - Matters Noted Involving Internal Controls and Other Operations during the Audit of the Fund for the Period to 31 December 2003," June 29, 2004

KPMG Report, "Development Funds for Iraq – Agreed-Upon Procedures Report for the Period 22 May 2003 to 31 December 2003 (Disbursements)," June 2004

KPMG Report, "Development Funds for Iraq - Statement of Cash Receipts and Payments for the Period 1 January 2004 to 28 June 2004," September 30, 2004

KPMG Report, "Development Funds for Iraq – Management Letter on Internal Controls for the Period 1 January 2004 to 28 June 2004," September 30, 2004

KPMG Report, "Development Funds for Iraq - Report of Factual Findings for the Period 1 January 2004 to 28 June 2004 (Disbursements)," September 30, 2004

Appendix B. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483, May 22, 2003, established the Development Fund for Iraq and assigned responsibility for managing the fund to the Coalition Provisional Authority. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483 provisions were organized under specific statements and paragraphs within the resolution and provided guidance for the management of the Development Fund for Iraq. Key statements include:

> *Noting* the letter of 8 May 2003 from the Permanent Representatives of the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the President of the Security Council (S/2003/538) and recognizing the specific authorities, responsibilities, and obligations under applicable international law of these states as occupying powers under unified command (the "Authority) [the Coalition Provisional Authority],
>
> 4. *Calls upon* the Authority, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant international law, to promote the welfare of the Iraqi people through the effective administration of the territory, including in particular working towards the restoration of conditions of security and stability and the creation of conditions in which the Iraqi people can freely determine their own political future;
>
> 9. *Supports* the formation, by the people of Iraq with the help of the Authority and working with the Special Representative, of an Iraqi interim administration as a transitional administration run by Iraqis, until an internationally recognized, representative government is established by the people of Iraq and assumes the responsibilities if the Authority;
>
> 12. *Notes* the establishment of a Development Fund for Iraq to be held by the Central Bank of Iraq and to be audited by independent public accountants approved by the International Advisory and Monitoring Board of the Development Fund for Iraq and looks forward to the early meeting of that International Advisory and Monitoring Board, whose members shall include duly qualified representatives of the Secretary-General, of the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, of the Director-General of the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development, and of the President of the World Bank;
>
> 13. *Notes further* that the funds in the Development Fund for Iraq shall be disbursed at the direction of the Authority, in consultation with the Iraqi interim administration, for the purposes set out in paragraph 14 below;
>
> 14. *Underlines* that the Development Fund for Iraq shall be used in a transparent manner to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, for the economic reconstruction and repair of Iraq's infrastructure, for the continued disarmament of Iraq, and for the costs of Iraqi civilian administration, and for other purposes benefiting the people of Iraq;

Appendix C. United Nations Security Council International Advisory and Monitoring Board Terms of Reference

The letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council, dated October 22, 2003, established and approved the terms of reference for the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB). Key statements include:

> 1. Purpose:
>
> The purpose of the International Advisory and Monitoring Board shall be to promote the objectives set forth in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483 (2003) of ensuring that Development Fund for Iraq is used in a transparent manner for the purposes set out in operative paragraph 14 of that Resolution ...
>
> 3. Powers and Responsibilities:
>
> B. *Scope of external audits.* The scope of the external audits shall be as to enable the IAMB to achieve its purpose as set out in 1 above. The scope of the external audits shall encompass: ...(iii) the DFI (including, but not limited to, all inflows, investments and other assets, disbursements, liabilities and contingencies of the DFI), supporting the objective of ensuring that the DFI is used in a transparent manner in accordance with applicable control procedures; and (iv) disbursements of resources from the DFI, supporting the objective of ensuring that DFI funds are used for the purposes for which they were disbursed. For purposes of (iv), the External Auditor(s) will make (a) a determination as to whether the disbursements from the DFI are duly authorized and received by the designated recipient; and (b) an assessment as to whether the controls (including the requirement to ensure proper records) of the designated recipient are adequate to ensure that disbursements from the DFI are utilized as intended. This assessment shall be carried out as specified in the contract with the external auditor(s).
>
> D. *Internal Controls/Financial Reporting.* The IAMB shall monitor the financial reporting and internal control systems established by the CPA for the areas subject to external audit in 3.B above and advise, as appropriate, the CPA on the adequacy of such systems.

Appendix D. Coalition Provisional Authority Regulation Number 2

On June 15, 2003, Ambassador Bremer issued Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) Regulation Number 2, entitled the "Development Fund for Iraq," which provided that:

> This Regulation applies to the administration, use, accounting and auditing of the Development Fund for Iraq (the "Fund"). The Regulation is intended and shall be applied to ensure that the Fund is managed in a transparent manner for and on behalf of the Iraqi people, consistent with Resolution 1483, and that all disbursements from the Fund are for purposes benefiting the people of Iraq.

Key provisions of Section 2, "Responsibilities," included:

> 1) Administrator of the CPA (Administrator). Oversees and controls the establishment, administration and use of the Fund for and on behalf of the Iraqi people, and directs disbursements from the Fund for those purposes he determines to be for the benefit of the people of Iraq.
>
> 3) CPA Program Review Board (PRB). Reviews all competing requirements for the relief and recovery of Iraq, assesses all available resources, and, in consultation with the Iraq interim administration, when established, develops for the approval of the Administrator spending plans, consistent with a comprehensive budgetary framework, that identify prioritized requirements for proposed disbursements from the Fund; considers in this process information provided by the CPA International Coordination Council, the International Advisory and Monitoring Board, and other entities, as appropriate.

Key provisions of Section 4, "Control of the Fund" included:

> The Fund shall be controlled by the Administrator of the CPA, for and on behalf of the Iraqi people. The Central Bank of Iraq and the Federal Reserve Bank (and/or other financial institutions(s), if the Administrator so directs), shall accept instructions, as agreed, concerning the Fund, including instructions to pay sums out of the Fund, only from the Administrator or his authorized delegee(s).

Key provisions of Section 5, "Administration of the Fund" included:

> 4) Internal Accounting. The CPA shall obtain the services of an independent, certified public accounting firm to support the objective of ensuring that the Fund is administered and used in a transparent manner for the benefit of the people of Iraq, and is operated consistent with Resolution 1483. The accountants performing this function shall be separate from those public accountants (auditors) approved by the International Advisory and Monitoring Board.

Key provisions of Section 6, "Disbursements from the Fund" included:

> 1) Authority to Approve. Only the Administrator or his delegee may approve disbursements from the Fund.
>
> 2) Directions to Disburse. Sums shall be disbursed from the Fund, in accordance with this Regulation, only upon the express direction of the Administrator, or upon the express direction of individual(s) to whom the Administrator has delegated that authority.
>
> 3) Purposes. Sums may be disbursed from the Fund to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people and for the economic reconstruction and repair of Iraq's infrastructure; for the continued disarmament of Iraq; for the costs of Iraq's civilian administration; and for other purposes the Administrator determines to be for the benefit of the people of Iraq.
>
> 4) Proposals for Disbursements. Disbursements from the Fund generally shall be proposed through procedures prescribed in, or promulgated in implementation of the CPA Order establishing the PRB. These procedures shall ensure that proposed disbursements are set forth in a spending plan reflecting the cost, purpose and priority of the requirement, and that, prior to approval by the Administrator, all spending plans are developed in consultation with the Iraqi interim administration, once established.

Key provisions of Section 7, "Auditing" included:

> The Fund and the export sales of petroleum, petroleum products, and natural gas from Iraq, shall be audited by independent public accountants nominated by the Administrator and approved by the IAMB. The expenses incurred in obtaining the services of the approved independent public accountants shall be charged against the Fund. The CPA shall cooperate fully with the IAMB and the approved independent public accountants in carrying out each party's respective responsibilities. In particular, the CPA shall provide the IAMB and such accountants with access to the Fund's financial records, with confidential materials protected in a manner agreed between the parties.

Appendix E. Development Fund for Iraq Disbursements by Agency

Disbursements by Agency since Inception: **Date: 26 June 2004**

Baghdad Central	$3,294,750.00
Central Bank of Iraq	$19,674,105.44
CJTF 7	$9,606,184.18
Coalition Military Assistance Training Team	$16,248,317.94
Commanders Emergency Response Program	$360,554,507.03
Communication Support Office	$1,659,897.06
Comptrollers Office	$3,565,200.00
CPA Front Office	$2,774,978.44
Governance	$10,000.00
Ministry of Agriculture	$31,250,385.80
Ministry of Communications	$2,080,000.00
Ministry of Culture	$20,000.00
Ministry of Defense	$562,711.50
Ministry of Education	$1,100,000.00
Ministry of Electricity	$639,205,316.51
Ministry of Finance	$7,711,940,159.57
Ministry of Health	$55,033,103.15
Ministry of Housing and Construction	$405,031.66
Ministry of Industry and Minerals	$18,950.00
Ministry of Interior	$47,852,851.64
Ministry of Justice	$1,000,219.50
Ministry of National Security & Defense	$3,130,506.39
Ministry of Oil	$2,012,397,915.48
Ministry of Planning	$5,558,698.00
Ministry of Public Works	$26,116.00
Ministry of Trade	$444,076,620.36
Ministry of Transportation	$1,706,687.00
Office of Security Cooperation	$40,419,321.46
Private Sector Development	$13,665.00
Program Management Office	$76,720,000.00
Rapid Regional Response Program	$244,216,497.75
Regional Projects - CPA South	$46,783,087.16
State Oil Marketing Organization	$76,620,172.65
Strategic Communications	$361,000.00
World Food Programme	$143,376,100.00
Grand Total	**$11,893,196,850.37**

The DFI Disbursements by Agency and Financial Reporting Matrix (at Appendix F) are available at the following website: http://www.cpa-iraq.org/budget/DFI_26jun2004.xls

Appendix F. Development Fund for Iraq Financial Reporting Matrix

Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) - Financial Reporting Matrix	
Reporting Date: June 26, 2004	
As of Date: June 24, 2004	
Inception Date: May 28, 2003	
Bank Accounts and Investments	**US Dollars**
Central Bank of Iraq - Oil Proceeds Receipt Account, FRB, NY	616,499.19
DFI Account - Federal Reserve Bank, New York	151,544.75
DFI Account - Central Bank of Iraq, Baghdad	1,050,527,283.09
DFI Account - Treasury Bills at Purchase Price	4,768,665,359.51
DFI Account - Overnight Deposits, FRB, New York	1,673,300,000.00
DFI Account - Vested Assets, Federal Reserve Bank, New York	21,716.63
DFI Account - Temporary Cash Holdings	70,971,490.00
Total - DFI Assets	**7,564,253,893.17**
Cash Inflow (Since Inception)	
Oil For Food	8,100,000,000.00
Proceeds from Oil Exports	11,111,692,362.73
UNSCR 1483 - Repatriated Funds	1,014,805,645.22
Interest Income - Treasury Bills	33,874,372.53
Interest Income - Overnight Deposits, Repurchase Agreements	7,636,464.80
Returned Letter of Credit Funding	3,686,295.39
Other Deposits	542,455.97
Donations	20,000.00
United Nations World Food Program	145,878,779.00
Vested Assets (Including Interest)	16,291,014.19
Transactional Deposits from Public Sector Entities	162,954,456.80
Total Cash Inflow	**20,597,381,846.63**
Cash Outflow (Since Inception)	
Ministry Budgets	(8,825,926,528.27)
Payments for Projects.	(3,348,865,439.20)
Transactional Withdrawals - Public Sector Entities	(886,846,675.18)
Miscellaneous Transactions	(32,105,810.00)
Total Cash Outflow	**(13,093,744,452.65)**
Net Cash Position	**7,503,637,393.98**
Outstanding Contractual Commitments	
Total PRB Approved Commitments (Since inception)	19,697,863,666.63
Commitments Returned / Cancelled	(3,185,642,810.08)
Commitments Paid	(11,892,642,550.37)
Outstanding Commitments	**4,619,578,306.18**
DFI Assets On Hand Committed to Remaining 2004 Budget	**2,884,059,087.80**

Appendix G. Acronyms

CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
DFI	Development Fund for Iraq
FPS	Facilities Protective Services
IAMB	International Advisory and Monitoring Board
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MoF	Ministry of Finance
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PRB	Program Review Board
UN	United Nations
USG	United States Government

Appendix H. Report Distribution

Office of the Secretary of Defense

Secretary of Defense
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer
  Director, Program Analysis and Evaluation
  Deputy Chief Financial Officer
  Deputy Comptroller (Program/Budget)
Inspector General, Department of Defense
Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition
Director, Defense Support Office - Iraq

Office of the Secretary of State

Secretary of State
Deputy Secretary of State
U.S. Ambassador to Iraq
Inspector General, Department of State
Director, Iraq Reconstruction Management Office

Department of the Army

Assistant Secretary of the Army, Acquisition, Logistics & Technology
  Assistant Secretary of the Army for Policy and Procurement
Auditor General, Department of the Army

Other Defense Organizations

Director, Defense Contract Audit Agency
Director, Iraq Project and Contracting Office

Other Federal Government Organizations

Office of Management and Budget
Government Accountability Office
Inspector General, Department of Commerce
Inspector General, Health and Human Services
Inspector General, U.S. Agency for International Development

Congressional Committees and Subcommittees, Chairman and Ranking Minority Member

Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senate Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
House Committee on Appropriations
House Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations
House Committee on Armed Services
House Committee on Government Reform
House Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management, Committee on Government Reform
House Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations, Committee on Government Reform
House Subcommittee on Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations, and the Census, Committee on Government Reform

Appendix I. Audit Team Members

The Financial Management Division, Office of the Assistant Inspector General for Auditing, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, prepared this report. Personnel who contributed to the report are listed below.

John Betar

Brian Flynn

Robert Murrell

Kevin Ellenberger

William Whitehead

Leona Brent

Ramon Miller

Management Comments, Coalition Provisional Authority Administrator

1

Mr. Stewart Bowen
Inspector General
Coalition Provisional Authority
Department of Defense
Washington, DC. September 8, 2004

Dear Mr. Bowen:

I am writing to you about the July 12 draft Inspector General's report entitled "Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries through the National Budget Process."

In my view, this draft report does not meet the standards Americans have come to expect of the Inspector General. The draft contains numerous factual errors, which the Department of Defense Iraq Support Group and others have brought to the attention of the IG. I assume these will be corrected in the final report.

I want to focus on two major flaws in the draft report: the authors' failure to understand and acknowledge the context in which the CPA was operating; and their failure to recognize the major steps the CPA took to address the admitted weaknesses of the Iraqi budgeting system.

A. The draft ignores the context of the CPA's role in liberated Iraq.

Security context: The draft report assumes that western-style budgeting and accounting procedures could be immediately and fully implemented in the midst of a war.

1. **For example, the draft suggests that CPA should have delayed paying Iraqi public servants until we had fully modern pay records.**

   This would have taken many months, if not years. More than a million Iraqi families depended on the Iraqi government for their salaries. When the CPA arrived in Iraq after Liberation, unemployment was over 50%. Not paying the civil servants would have been destabilizing and would have increased the security threat to Iraqis and to Americans. In brief, such a course would have cost lives.

2. **At another point the draft report criticizes the Coalition's handling of Facilities Protection Service (FPS). Here again the draft misses the context.**

   As a matter of American government policy, our military commanders were instructed to build up the FPS force quickly. The purpose of the FPS was to relieve the American military of tasks such as providing static security to government buildings.

This would free our military to deal with the terrorists.

In November, the CPA decided to give Iraqis responsibility for these security forces by shifting the forces' payroll from the military commanders to the Iraqi Ministries. Many Ministries, already struggling to cope with the new budgetary demands, had difficulties making the transfer.

The CPA was aware of this problem and accepted that the payroll system was still imperfect. There was a war going on in Iraq, and it would have been dangerous for security—ours and Iraq's— to stop paying armed young men.

<u>The Political context:</u> This is the report's most significant fault. For the CPA's entire period, American strategy was to transfer to the Iraqis as much responsibility as possible as quickly as possible, including responsibility for the Iraqi budget.

1. This was not just American Government policy. It was mandated by successive United Nations Security Council resolutions.
2. The CPA worked quickly to establish an Iraqi Governing Council. This was done within 8 weeks.
3. The CPA then pushed to get a new Iraqi Cabinet named quickly. Iraqi Ministers took over Iraq's Ministries on September 3.

Final Report Reference

4

4. Contrary to the draft report's assertion, the guidance to CPA's Senior Advisors was clear. I told the CPA Advisors that henceforth the Iraqi Ministers, not the Advisors, would run Iraq's Ministries. The Advisors were to counsel the Ministers as requested by the Ministers but to leave the operations of the Ministries, including the budgets, to the Iraqis. I restated this policy directly to the Iraqi Ministers in my first meeting with them in September.
5. The draft suggests that instead of giving the Iraqi Ministers responsibility for their budgets, the CPA should have placed hundreds of CPA auditors into the Ministries. This would have been directly contrary to US government policy and to the mandate of the UN.

Page 7

Adminstrative context: The IG auditors presume that the Coalition could achieve a standard of budgetary transparency and execution which even peaceful Western nations would have trouble meeting within a year, especially in the midst of a war. Given the situation the CPA found in Iraq at Liberation, this is an unrealistic standard.

1. When the CPA was established, there was no functioning Iraqi government.
2. Essential services in Iraq were primitive or non-existent. There was no national telephone system. Most Iraqi ministries had no computers. Use of the internet, which the previous government heavily

restricted, was limited to less than 3% of the population.

3. Iraqi government budget and personnel records, already inadequate before the war, had been destroyed by looting and by willful criminal sabotage.
4. As the GAO has reported, Saddam's dictatorship treated the national budget and economic statistics as state secrets. CPA determined that less than 8% of the annual state expenditures were even run through the Ministry of Finance. The vast majority of government expenditures were directly controlled "off budget" by the Presidency. We could find no reliable records of these expenditures.
5. The CPA discovered that the Iraqi Ministries had no regular payroll systems. Nor was there a unified civil service pay system. The system had been corrupted beyond repair by decades of cronyism and ad hoc fixes.
6. At Liberation, the Iraqi economy was dead in the water. So CPA's top priority was to get the economy going. The quickest way was to pay the country's 1.2 million civil servants who had not been paid for two months. Within a week of arrival, the CPA established a four grade pay scale and started paying civil servants. We also established an Iraqi-Coalition task force to design a modern, professional civil service pay system. This was put in place in August, 2003.

B The draft report does not adequately credit the major reforms the CPA instituted to deal with the deficiencies we found in the Iraqi budgeting system: Certainly there was still much to do after the occupation ended. But this draft fails to acknowledge the important steps the CPA took to get the process moving.

The Program Review Board(PRB)

1. The CPA established the Program Review Board to provide an open transparent mechanism for determining how to spend moneys from the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI). From the start, the CPA took the initiative to ensure that there was Iraqi representation on the PRB to give Iraqis a share of responsibility for that spending.
2. The minutes, budget and DFI funds balances were regularly posted on the internet.
3. The CPA strengthened the Iraqi role in the PRB in the run-up to sovereignty and required Iraqi Ministries to come and defend their budget requests.

Fighting corruption

1. In September, the CPA established an independent judiciary for the first time in Iraq's history.
2. The CPA established an office of Inspector General in every Iraqi Ministry, and gave the IGs significant authorities and budgets independent of their Ministries.

3. The Coalition set up an Iraqi Commission on Public Integrity with authority to investigate and prosecute allegations of corruption.
4. The CPA revitalized and strengthened the Iraqi Board of Supreme Audit, a respected organization which is the rough equivalent of the American GAO.

Improving Iraqi capabilities

1. The CPA introduced a Financial Management Information System to begin modernizing the Iraqi government's procedures.
2. The Coalition encouraged the World Bank to set up training programs on fiduciary matters in the ministries.
3. The CPA encouraged the IMF to establish a program to restructure the chart of accounts.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

It is remarkable that the Inspector General's office could have produced even a draft report with so many misconceptions and inaccuracies. And remarkable that such a draft could have been written without the authors interviewing any of the three CPA Directors of Budget, the CPA Chief of Staff, either of my Deputies, or me.

As you know, I have been a strong supporter of your office since Congress established it. On the whole, the office has done excellent work. But I do

believe my colleagues at the CPA have a right to expect a level of professional judgment and awareness which seems to be missing in the current draft report.

I hope that as you continue your important mission on behalf of the American people in support of the Iraqi people, you and your colleagues will find these comments useful.

Sincerely,

Ambassador L Paul Bremer III

Management Comments, Defense Support Office – Iraq

DEFENSE SUPPORT OFFICE IRAQ

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20310-1000

October 07, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY (CPA-IG)

FROM: Director, Defense Support Office - Iraq

SUBJECT: OSD COMMENTS TO ACCOMPANY AMBASSADOR L. PAUL BREMER'S COMMENTS ABOUT THE CPA-IG DRAFT REPORT "OVERSIGHT OF FUNDS PROVIDED TO IRAQI MINISTRIES THROUGH THE NATIONAL BUDGET PROCESS" (PROJECT NUMBER D2004-DCPAAF-0007)

This memo provides management comments on your draft report, "Oversight of Funds Provided to Iraqi Ministries through the National Budget Process," dated July 12, 2004. We appreciated meeting with your auditors on July 28, 2004, and believe these written comments to be consistent with our representations at the meeting. We also appreciate that you recently interviewed Ambassador Bremer and senior Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) staff as an important step toward ensuring completeness of the audit.

We strongly object to the draft report's conclusion that the CPA did not provide adequate and transparent stewardship of Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) funds disbursed to Iraqi ministries. We believe this sweeping and unqualified conclusion is neither an accurate representation of the CPA management of the DFI nor is it substantiated by the findings, which relate to only one aspect of the CPA's stewardship of the DFI – oversight of the Iraqi ministries' execution of these funds. The CPA's stewardship of the DFI resulted in numerous accomplishments that are not reflected in this audit of such narrow scope.

Additionally, in our view, a conclusion concerning the CPA's stewardship of the DFI needs to be preceded by essential facts that put the conclusion in context. These include:

- The fact that the DFI was comprised entirely of Iraqi funds being returned to the Iraqis through an open process with significant Iraqi participation.
- The difficult circumstances under which the CPA operated and managed the DFI, including particularly the wartime security conditions, the CPA's critical need to reestablish Iraqi ministries that had never functioned and/or had ceased to function, the ministries' lack of basic tools such as computers and telephones, and the constraints of a largely cash economy.
- The US Government (USG) and the CPA policy objectives – consistent with UN Security Council Resolutions – to transfer administrative responsibilities for the Iraqi ministries to an Iraqi administration as an essential part of the restoration of Iraqi governance authority.

1

- The reality that during the CPA-IG's preparation of the audit, the CPA was in the process of instituting financial processes and controls. In this respect, the CPA-IG was auditing a work in progress, not the final results of the CPA's efforts.

Furthermore, the audit does not take into account that the CPA exercised its stewardship of the DFI through many initiatives designed to ensure transparency in the use of Iraqi funds. Under the previous regime, Iraqi funds were used in a secretive manner to benefit Saddam and his regime. Under the CPA, Iraqi funds (principally the DFI) were allocated, disbursed, and used in a transparent manner for the benefit of the Iraqi people. In August 2003, the CPA promulgated detailed procedures applicable to the expenditure of Iraqi funds through contracts and grants. These procedures were approved by the Coalition governments, the international financial institutions, and the Interim Iraqi administration, and are consistent with internationally accepted public fund execution standards. The CPA disbursed funds to the Iraqi ministries consistent with a published National Budget (jointly developed by the CPA and the Iraqi Ministers and approved by the Iraqi Governing Council) and the recommendations of the CPA Program Review Board (PRB). The PRB's minutes, the National Budget, and the DFI fund balances were posted on the CPA's public web site. Further, there were important, observable results from disbursing funds to the Iraqi ministries – the employees were paid, the ministries resumed operations, and, importantly, the Interim Iraqi Government therefore had functioning ministries at the transition of governance on June 28, 2004.

Moreover, the CPA took a number of actions that improved the Iraqi government budgeting and financial management. These included:

- Establishing a functioning budget process; writing a budget law, and beginning to restructure the chart of accounts to conform to International Monetary Fund (IMF) budget standards.
- Promoting accountability and combating corruption, including re-establishing Iraq's Board of Supreme Audit, creating the Commission on Public Integrity, and establishing Inspectors General in each ministry.
- Contracting for a Financial Management Information System for the Ministry of Finance and other ministries that, when complete, will provide the expenditure tracking called for by the audit.

None of these initiatives appears to have been acknowledged or given weight by the auditors -- despite the "Audit Comments" noting that the CPA-IG was providing no recommendations because corrective management actions had already been taken during the audit period. Moreover, the audit's conclusion appears to have been based on two judgments that were principally about policy, rather than management.

First, the audit does not recognize that the CPA – consistent with international law and as part of its objective, consistent with UN Security Council resolutions, to transfer responsibilities to Iraqis as soon as possible – took the consistent position that expenditures by Iraqi ministries were to be managed by the Iraqis and, over time,

overseen by Iraqi auditors. The audit faults the CPA for failing to provide adequate stewardship of the DFI funds at the Iraqi ministry level without recognizing the CPA's obligations, including under UN Security Council Resolution 1511, to ensure that the administration of Iraq was progressively undertaken by structures of the interim Iraqi administration, as well as the CPA's obligation to return governance responsibilities and authorities to the people of Iraq as rapidly as practicable. Consistent with international law and applicable UN Security Council resoultions, it was USG policy to give the Iraqis as much control of the ministries as practicable – beginning with the appointment of Interim Ministers in September 2003. This included Iraqi control of expenditures in accordance with the National Budget. This policy was a necessary step toward restoration of a sovereign Iraqi government.

Second, the audit concludes that the CPA did not meet the transparency requirements of UN Security Council Resolution 1483, without articulating any appropriate standard on which this judgment is based and without any analysis showing how the CPA-IG evaluated applicable obligations under Resolution 1483. In fact, the CPA, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1483, disbursed DFI funds to the Iraqi ministries in a transparent manner for the purposes reflected in the Iraq National Budget to benefit the Iraqi people. The draft audit disregards the uncontested fact that the CPA took a number of actions to ensure transparency (publishing the minutes from PRB meetings, publishing the Iraqi National Budget, including Iraqis in the PRB, etc.), focusing only on the unavailability of near real-time budget execution data. The measures to ensure transparency were consistent with USG obligations under Resolution 1483.

We agree that the CPA faced managerial, financial, and contract challenges, given the numerous difficulties inherent in the establishment of a coalition organization exercising governance authority, the historic nature of its tasks, and the requirement to fulfill this vital mission in a combat zone. The CPA acted to address these challenges. In this light, we disagree strongly with the conclusion that, because of policy decisions regarding Iraqi management of the execution of the Iraqi funds, the CPA failed to meet objective standards for transparent stewardship of DFI funds. The attached General and Specific Comments provide additional detail.

We request that you reconsider the draft report in light of Ambassador Bremer's assessment of the audit as well as the comments I am providing herein. We have suggested language in section III (Conclusion) attached that is consistent with the limited scope and findings of the audit, and that recognizes the CPA's accomplishments under extremely difficult circumstances.

Joseph A. Benkert
Deputy

3

I. General Comments

1. The Draft Report Fails to Account for the Objectives of USG Policy

The draft report does not recognize that the CPA – for the important reasons discussed above – took the consistent position that expenditures by the Iraqi ministries were to be managed and overseen by the Iraqi interim administration. The CPA realized that the only practicable approach to executing the expenditures needed for Iraq was to assume a supervisory role and to empower the Iraqi ministries as necessary both to meet the needs of the Iraqi people and to enable the development of Iraqi governmental institutions. This approach was fully consistent with the CPA's roles and obligations under UN Security Council Resolutions 1483 and 1511 to transfer the administration of Iraq progressively to the evolving structures of the Iraqi interim administration; and to return governing responsibilities and authorities to the people of Iraq as soon as practicable. The alternative would have been to institute a new system that would have delayed vital expenditures for months and would not have involved Iraqis to the extent necessary to achieve important objectives in Iraq. Such a delay would have further exacerbated an already challenging security environment and would have hindered the fulfillment of the governance obligations noted above. Additionally, the draft report fails to acknowledge that such alternatives would have required a huge addition to the CPA staff to run the Iraqi ministries, or a system (likewise with major staff increases) by which the Coalition would directly control all the DFI expenditures until the Iraqi ministries were fully able to meet international accounting standards. Neither of these options made sense given the CPA's obligations and the important objective of moving as quickly as possible to transition to Iraqi governance authority. Finally, although the CPA-IG auditors told DoD officials that the draft report was a snapshot in time as of April 2004, there is no acknowledgement in the draft report that great efforts were being made to prepare the Iraqi Ministries to function competently upon transition to full governance authority just two months later.

2. The Draft Report Does Not Recognize the CPA's actions to establish Financial Management Controls and Its Promotion of Transparency and Good Governance

The draft report excludes multiple CPA actions to establish financial management controls over DFI resources and increase the transparency, effectiveness and accountability of Iraq's government. Specifically, the CPA:

- Promulgated CPA Regulation No. 2 in order to place responsibility with the Program Review Board (PRB) for reviewing competing requirements for the relief and recovery of Iraq, assessing available resources, and developing a comprehensive budgetary framework that identified prioritized requirements for proposed disbursements from the DFI.

- Promulgated CPA Regulation No. 3 to establish the PRB "to ensure that funds . . . available to the CPA . . . are managed in a transparent manner." Since August 2003, PRB members met on more than sixty separate occasions to review and vote on funding requests. In order to ensure transparency, these decisions were posted on the CPA's web page.

- Developed and published CPA Memorandum No. 4 regarding contracting and grant procedures in order to ensure that Iraqi funds were expended transparently and in accordance with internationally accepted procurement standards. These standards applied to the Iraqi ministries unless the CPA determined that a ministry's contracting procedures were sufficient to ensure the transparent use and management of Iraqi funds. The Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) did review contracting capabilities in three ministries, but DCAA was not able to review all the ministries and at the same time meet other high priority requirements, such as performing contract audits or projects resourced with USG appropriated funds.

- Published Iraqi National Budget data, PRB meeting minutes, and DFI fund information, including receipts, disbursements, and fund balances on the CPA's web page.

- Initiated economic reform initiatives through the US Agency for International Development's (USAID's) contract with Bearing Point.

- Worked with the Iraqi Ministry of Finance to automate the Iraqi public expenditure process through the development of a Financial Management Information System (FMIS) to be used by the Iraq Ministry of Finance and the other Iraqi ministries.

- Promulgated CPA Order No. 19 in order to ensure the independence of the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI). The CPA worked with the CBI and the Iraqi Ministry of Finance to execute a huge Iraqi currency exchange program successfully;

- Assisted the Iraqi ministers with the development and execution of their programs. Some of the key CPA staffs assigned to support the ministries had budget analysts assigned to assist the Iraqis. Although the CPA tried to recruit additional budget analysts, the security situation in Iraq made such efforts extremely difficult and limited the assistance the CPA was able to provide to the Iraqi ministries in their budget execution;

- Worked with the USG, the Coalition governments, and the international financial institutions, as well as the Iraqis, to develop and promulgate orders establishing a new financial management law for the national budget, a new procurement law, a revised law strengthening the Board of Supreme Audit, and a law providing for inspectors general for the Iraqi ministries;

• Used the DoD Financial Management Regulation (DoDFMR) as a guide in developing program controls and forms for the disbursement of DFI funds.

3. The Draft Report Reaches Overly Broad Conclusions Based on Limited Findings

The draft report includes broad, unvalidated statements based upon limited reviews and unclear standards of performance.

• The audit methodology extrapolates from a "snapshot" of the activities of fewer than half of the CPA's senior advisors, over a span of several weeks near the end of the CPA's tenure, to reach conclusions on the performance of CPA as a whole over the CPA's entire tenure. Indeed, only 9 of the 26 senior advisors' offices were reviewed. Some CPA senior advisors were new in their positions and were not on the CPA staff when the CPA worked with the Iraqi ministries to develop the Iraq National Budget. Furthermore, during the time the audit was conducted, all CPA senior advisors were focused on the critical requirement of transitioning governance responsibilities to the Iraqi ministries.

• There is little evidence in the draft report of direct contact with the Iraqi ministries themselves, particularly the Ministry of Finance. Had the CPA-IG auditors interviewed Iraqi officials responsible for the management and disbursement of the Iraq National Budget, they could have attempted to obtain information on the status of the $8.8 billion, including how much had been distributed by Iraqi ministries for their operating and capital budget requirements, how much is still on hand in Iraqi ministry bank accounts, and how much had been expended for government salaries and for other purposes.

• The salary discussion in the draft report cites a single instance of poor management of the Facilities Protection Service (FPS) and generalizes that all salary payments were flawed. The FPS represented 74 thousand employees, representing approximately six-tenths of one percent of the 1.2 million Iraqis on the national payroll. Furthermore, the FPS was a unique case in that the overriding priority was for the FPS to be established as soon as possible in order to begin relieving the pressure on Coalition Forces for providing fixed-site security. In this vein, the CPA and DoD recognized that although it was necessary to entrust Iraqi ministry officials with the responsibility for expending Iraqi funds for salary purposes, such action could result in potential duplicate or otherwise improper payments. It was also understood, however, that placing sufficient Coalition Forces and CPA personnel at the multitude of payment locations across the country to verify Iraqi government employee identification numbers versus employee listings would be impractical, would likely be more expensive than accepting some risk of improper payments, and would pose significant force protection risk.

• The CPA-IG properly identified internal control problems within the Iraqi ministries in the disbursement of their budgeted resources (which included not only funds disbursed from the DFI, but also seized and vested funds disbursed to the Ministry of Finance for budget requirements and cash existing in the Iraqi national banks that was not seized by

Final Report
Reference

coalition forces). These findings, however, are not a basis for concluding that the CPA did not provide adequate stewardship of $8.8 billion in DFI funds.

II. Specific Comments

OSD Comment 1:
Page (1)

- The section on "Managerial Controls" asserts the CPA did not staff the Ministry of Finance/OMB advisors with sufficient personnel. Although additional staff might have been helpful, the analysis on page 4 does not provide any indication of how many personnel would have been sufficient to provide the level of oversight called for in the draft report. Further, although it is generally acknowledged that there were practical and logistical constraints on the total number of CPA staff, there is no evidence that any MOF/OMB advisor staffing request was denied by the CPA. Indeed, the CPA Human Resources Office attempted to recruit additional budget analysts with some success.

OSD Comments 2& 3
Page 2

Page 9

- Contrary to the final sentence under "Contracting Procedures," at least one other ministry (the Ministry of Electricity) besides the Ministry of Finance had been approved for contracting.

- The scope of the draft report changed without explanation. Under the section titled "Objective" it is stated; "The original objective of the audit was to determine whether the Coalition Provisional Authority has implemented adequate procedures for recording, reviewing, and reporting DFI disbursements. During the audit, we limited the scope to review procedures and controls over DFI funds provided to the interim Iraqi government through the national budget process."

OSD Comment 4
Page 3

- Under the section titled "Managerial Controls," there is an indication that some senior advisors claimed that the CPA guidance pertaining to the DFI was unclear. No evidence is provided, however, to support that the alleged lack of clarity resulted in "inadequate" oversight. Furthermore, the CPA staff members responsible for DFI disbursements were clear on the policy and procedures for DFI administration. They ensured that the disbursements from the fund were properly approved and documented and were made in a transparent manner for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

OSD Comment 5
Page 5

7

• The following statement in the draft report should be put in the proper context. "According to CPA Ministry of Finance/OMB officials, reviewing budget execution was not their responsibility." Consistent with applicable UN Security Council resolutions and international law, USG policy guidance, and practical and political limitations, the Iraqis were given responsibility for their ministry budget execution. As a consequence of this appropriate role for the Iraqi ministries, there was necessarily a more limited role for CPA senior advisors in budget execution. Again, during the period in which the audit was conducted, ministry senior advisors were rightly focused on efforts to transfer complete governance authority to the Interim Iraqi Government.

OSD Comments 6, 7, & 8
Page 6

• It is necessary to comment also on the following statement: "CPA officials authorized payments of DFI funds for 74,000 Facilities Protection Services (FPS) guards' salaries even though the FPS and number of guards was not validated." The statement is made without mention of the extenuating circumstances requiring payment of the salaries on a timely basis. At the time, prompt payment was considered to be absolutely vital to the safety and well-being of the FPS guards and the Iraqi people in general. Without adequate qualification, a reader might mistakenly believe that the decision to pay salaries without more extensive validation procedures resulted from carelessness on the part of CPA, which was not the case.

• The section titled "Salary Payments" implies evidence of payroll irregularities, yet is unclear on the details of when and how these irregularities occurred, and fails to note whether the CPA-IG referred these examples to an appropriate investigatory body. Lack of documentation within the Ministry of Finance is cited, but there is no evidence of whether the CPA-IG sought this information from the disbursing entities.

• In the section titled "Transparency," there is the statement that "transparency requires more than posting budgets and total disbursements on the internet," yet fails to present an international standard for transparency against which the CPA is being evaluated. As Ambassador Bremer's letter states, the draft audit presumes the CPA could achieve within one year a standard of budgetary transparency and execution that even Western nations would have trouble meeting, especially in a combat environment.

OSD Comments 9 & 10
Page 7

• As part of the "Transparency" section, the following statement is made: "Although the UN provided $2.5 billion dollars to the DFI in March and April 2004, the CPA did not update the Iraqi National Budget to reflect budget plans for those monies." This statement is not correct. In fact, the CPA did produce an updated working copy of the budget that was validated and shared with the Iraqi Ministry of Finance. When asked, Interim Iraqi Government officials indicated a preference that the CPA not officially

Final Report
Reference

publish the amended budget that had been prepared. Rather, they preferred to leave final decisions regarding an amended budget to the new sovereign government. Their wishes were honored.

- It is necessary to comment on the following statement: "An improper $120 million disbursement was made in May 2004 because of miscommunication between the CPA/OMB and Comptroller's office." This statement is misleading. A miscommunication led to $120 million being released a month early. Without adequate description, a reader could conclude that a $120 million disbursement was made that would otherwise never have been made. In fact, the disbursement would have been made the following month. Only the timing was in error.

OSD Comment 11
Page 9

- The discussion of the post-July contract management procedures appears to be mistaken, citing a July 1 action that post-dates the audit period.

Page 10
Deleted

OSD Comment 12
Page 10

- The section titled "Audit Comment" notes that no recommendations are provided because actions had been taken that should correct the problems. These corrective management actions, however, were taken within the audit period. Therefore, they should be reflected throughout the body of the draft report, not just in the "Audit Comments" section at the end of the report.

III. Conclusion

Our suggested conclusion is as follows:

The CPA disbursed funds from the DFI based upon Program Review Board recommendations of individual relief and reconstruction projects and operating and capital expenditure requirements in the Iraqi National Budgets that were approved by the interim Iraqi administration. We note concerns regarding the oversight and documentation of DFI fund expenditures by the Iraqi ministries. However, operating within constraints inherent in the combat environment in which it carried out a historic mission, the CPA established financial management controls consistent with the applicable U.N. Security Council resolutions and international law.

9

48

Senator LEVIN. Whether that represents the views of the Department.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Okay.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator Levin.

Now, Mr. Secretary, some overview on Afghanistan, I think a success story of considerable proportions owing to the leadership of

the President, the Secretaries of State and Defense, yourself, and many others.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. In this case also we have a case where the enemy declared war on democratic elections, and the elections went ahead in spite of them. The intimidation level was not as severe as it is in Iraq, but it was real. You have these very moving stories of women dressing themselves, preparing themselves for death to go out and vote.

I had the privilege when I was in Indonesia to look at the tsunami relief operation just recently to talk to a woman who is head of one of the largest Indonesian Muslim women's organizations, who turns out to have been the only woman on the 11-member U.N. Election Commission. She was there for 6 months. She said the passion of Afghan women to vote was just something extraordinary.

I think it is producing results on the battlefield. Not that this war is over, not that the Taliban is going to give up tomorrow, but I think they are losing public support. I think we are getting better intelligence and we are even seeing some of them talking about maybe giving it up.

So it is a perfect illustration, I think, of the point that these counterinsurgency wars are not won just on the battlefield, that the political piece of it is just as important.

Chairman WARNER. It is an extraordinary contribution by President Karzai. It is a great chapter in world history.

General Myers, any comment about your force structure there? NATO is really heavily pulling on the oar in Afghanistan, am I not correct?

General MYERS. You are correct. Two quick comments. One is that our forces that are there are primarily there along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and working on our Provincial Reconstruction Teams, along the border because that is where the residual threat of al Qaeda remains. By the way, it is negligible at this point. But also in other parts of Afghanistan——

Chairman WARNER. On that point, we should put in the record: 7 days and 7 nights a week, we are concentrating on Osama bin Laden and the possibility of taking him into custody, am I not correct?

General MYERS. You bet, it is a 24/7, 365 days a year operation. I will just leave it at that, but it is a very intense operation.

I think NATO is expanding its responsibility right now. They have the northern part of Afghanistan. It is their responsibility. They also have a force in Kabul that provides security there at the airport and in the city. That will continue to expand to the west and eventually to the south and to the whole of the country, so we can see a day in the not too distant future where NATO could conceivably be in command of the whole operation.

Chairman WARNER. Well, that is a success story. I commend General Jones for his leadership on that. He has kept the members of this committee individually and collectively very well informed on that issue.

General MYERS. Thank you, sir.

Chairman WARNER. Now, Madam Ambassador, we would like to have your observations. We thank you for your work.

STATEMENT OF MAUREEN QUINN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN

Ambassador QUINN. I heard a comment at the beginning asking if we can look at the next steps on Afghanistan. So maybe I can just make a few comments on what we are focused on in 2005. Obviously, this year we are working with President Karzai, his government, and the U.N. community on the National Assembly and local elections. Probably late spring, early summer.

In addition, we are continuing the development of the security success. Our military, the DOD, have very successfully worked on the Afghan National Army. That continues at full speed. We are working as well on the development of the Afghan National Police and we are addressing the other elements of the security sector, countering narcotics, promoting justice, and hopefully, probably taking until 2006, but completing the demilitarization, demobilization, reintegration process.

This year in particular, we are giving an extra focus to counter-narcotics. I am not going to go into detail now on that here, but we are very much engaged on that issue.

Chairman WARNER. Well, some detail on that is important because proliferation of that narcotics situation could undermine to some extent the successes that the coalition has brought together to liberate that country, and now under the presidency of Karzai it has to be a problem addressed. We cannot let this continued growth and proliferation expand.

Ambassador QUINN. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I agree fully. What I would add on that point is President Karzai has committed himself to address this issue. He has mobilized his government to do that. They had a very successful mini-Loya Jirga in December where they called in the mullahs and the governors and the district leaders to give them the central government message that they needed to take back to their provinces, which they are doing. We have had some preliminary reports of voluntary actions on eradication, plowing over poppy fields.

In support of that government effort, what we are looking at is five key areas. We are again promoting the public information message, getting the message out that this is wrong, that there are no benefits in it, and that the fields will be eradicated.

We are focusing on interdiction as well, going after the drug traffickers, helping them there. Our Drug Enforcement Agency is very much involved in that.

We are also focused on the law enforcement aspect. In Afghanistan, unluckily, the judicial system is really being built from scratch. So in the narcotics area we are focused on a special judicial-prosecutorial task force, so that when people are brought in they can be prosecuted. Therefore, we are looking for secure detention facilities and building those up.

We believe in a comprehensive approach, so we are looking at and working very hard at the alternative livelihoods area, so that when the farmers who depend so much on this crop, if their fields are destroyed, they have the opportunity to develop other—it is not only crops, but it is also the community development, so that they can get other crops to market, et cetera.

Finally, it is the eradication of the key elements——

Chairman WARNER. You are of the professional opinion that the maximum attention that not only our Nation but the outside world can bring to bear on it is now being exerted?

Ambassador QUINN. I believe so, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. I accept that. Thank you very much.

Ambassador QUINN. The final point I want to mention is the reconstruction. I think the United States has done a significant job already, particularly in the roads area. But we are continuing to focus on that, the roads, the power sector, water, energy, schools, clinics, and most importantly developing the human capacity of the Afghan people. We are continuing that and committed to it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Madam Ambassador.

Now, Ambassador Schlicher, I think we should have the record today reflect your personal observations as well as the factual chronology of how this new government is going to, as we say, be stood up. You have had the elections. Are we on time for the February 15 date for certification, the best you know?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, to the best of my knowledge we are. With your permission, I will go through what I know about the coming process.

Chairman WARNER. I think it is important for those following this hearing, and particularly the American public, to understand the magnificence of these elections. Let us hope that that can be in some way replicated in each of these steps, because these are not inconsequential nor easy steps to be taken as this government is stood up.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, that is absolutely right.

Chairman WARNER. I would appreciate your best estimate of the times, even though your professional judgment may be at variance with some of the printed timetables and the like. I think we should have at least your opinion, because you have extensive experience in this area.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir. Let me go through what the process is as we understand it. Once the Election Commission has received and tabulated all of the results from the more than 5,000 polling stations around Iraq—and that is what is happening now—it will begin to calculate the allocation of the 275 seats in the TNA, and at the same time in parallel it is allocating the seats in the 18 provincial assemblies that have been elected and in the Kurdistan Regional Government election which also took place.

The commission has stated that it expects to announce the progress of the tally periodically and its target for announcing final results in all of those electoral processes is still February 15. We have received no indication that that timeline is slipping.

Meanwhile, we understand that in parallel to the tallying effort, informally the political parties have begun to talk with each other and negotiate the possible shape of the coming government as they await the final results themselves.

Now, once the allocation of seats is announced the TNA, this 275-person body will convene. Its first responsibility is to select that body's leadership and adopt that body's internal rules. It will then select by a two-thirds majority vote a three-member Transitional Government Presidency Council for the executive branch,

which will consist of a president of the state and two deputy presidents.

That three-person presidency body will be selected as a single slate and perhaps there will be competing slates. It depends on how the politicians negotiate.

Now, under the TAL the three members of the Presidency Council are required to unanimously nominate a prime minister within 2 weeks of their assumption of office. If the Presidency Council fails to name a prime minister in that 2-week period, the responsibility for naming a prime minister reverts to the TNA itself. In that instance, the TNA would have to confirm a nomination by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly.

After the naming of a prime minister, that prime minister then has up to 1 month in which to name a council of ministers. If the prime minister——

Chairman WARNER. They need not be members of the TNA?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Sir, they may be members——

Chairman WARNER. They may be or may not be.

Mr. SCHLICHER. That is right.

Chairman WARNER. That is an important fact. I want to point that out because that is the area in which presumably the strong Shiite faction—I am not going to quantify how strong it may be—can begin to show its hand as to whether or not they feel it is, as we do I am sure here in this country, important to get some Sunni participation in that ministerial level. Am I correct on that?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, that is certainly one of the opportunities.

Now, if the prime minister is unable to nominate a cabinet within that 1-month period, up to 1-month period he has, the Presidency Council would then nominate another prime minister. When the prime minister has named a council of ministers, that slate must then be approved by a simple majority vote of the TNA.

Now, in the interim, in the period we are in now, the current interim Iraqi Government will remain in place until their replacements are confirmed. Upon confirmation by the TNA, the new prime minister and council of ministers will then assume power.

So, sir, that is an overview of the process we are likely to see.

Chairman WARNER. Let us put some time on this. If there are no extensions of times, the earliest date could be what? You mentioned several 30-day periods. Then what would be the furthest date?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Sir, as I calculate it—and I have to say I am not very good at math—the earliest that we might see would be around March 1, which I understand is an informal target date for the politicians.

Chairman WARNER. That is for all the steps you enumerated to be completed?

Mr. SCHLICHER. At least some of the most important ones. Very optimistically, I think they could do it in that time period. I think what they are talking about in Iraq right now is a more generic formulation of several weeks.

Chairman WARNER. So that could now go into the month of April?

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, I think that is right. If you tag all the worst case scenarios for each of these out——

Chairman WARNER. So April. If suddenly they got tied up and they could not agree on the prime minister, you are talking about running into May and June because of those 30-day extensions.

Mr. SCHLICHER. The 30-day period, sir, is for the prime ministerial nominee to nominate a cabinet.

Chairman WARNER. But then if they cannot settle on the prime minister it goes back to the TNA and then goes back to another prime minister. I presume that starts another 30-day period.

Mr. SCHLICHER. Up to 30 days.

Chairman WARNER. Right. So you are looking at built-in time sequences that could result—and I am not faulting this system, but I think the people of this country need to understand——

Mr. SCHLICHER. Yes, sir, that is absolutely right.

Chairman WARNER. —the complexity of this process and how it could extend into April or May before a government is up, everybody has taken his oath of office, and they can begin to function.

Mr. SCHLICHER. I hope that we all understand the political delicacy of each of these steps for the Iraqi people.

Chairman WARNER. Correct.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Mr. Chairman, that is very important because part of the euphoria is the expectation there is going to be a government when they count the ballots on February 15.

Chairman WARNER. That is true. That is why I am taking this time.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Thank you for pointing that out. It is very important.

Chairman WARNER. If I may say, I have publicly said this three or four times when the Secretary of Defense—and by the way, I am delighted to have you here today, but the record should reflect that he came before this committee last week for about 2½ to 3 hours of intensive questioning in our committee room. So we have had good representation from the DOD before this committee here.

I think it is important that that is all laid out. Within that period of time, General, we can anticipate that the insurgents and those antithetical to this government could well exercise these horrific measures that they have had in the past to try and delay or somehow disrupt this process that has been laid out by Ambassador Schlicher. Am I correct?

General MYERS. Mr. Chairman, that is certainly possible.

Chairman WARNER. We had better remain on guard, and that is why all this discussion of pulling troops out at this time in the judgment of this Senator—I think the President stated it well: We have milestones to reach, and it is achievement and facts on the ground and the situation that are going to dictate our troop level policy.

Senator Byrd, would you like to ask a question?

Senator BYRD. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. You are always very considerate of the members of this committee and you give us an opportunity to speak our minds, ask our questions. You do an excellent job with respect to fairness and consideration and courtesy.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you, Senator. I have to say I learned some of that from you.

Senator BYRD. Well, thank you.

It has already been referenced that the Inspector General of the CPA reported that $8.8 billion from the Development Fund for Iraq, comprised mostly of Iraqi oil revenue, was spent with virtually no financial controls at all—$8.8 billion. Mr. Secretary, that is $8.80 for every minute that has passed since Jesus Christ was born 2,000 years ago.

The report concluded that the accounting controls over this money were weak or nonexistent, leaving the door open to fraud, kickbacks, and misappropriation of funds. In short, this Inspector General report illustrates that there is no way that the DOD could know what exactly happened to $8.8 billion in reconstruction funds for Iraq.

I am somewhat concerned by your answer to Senator Levin's question on reconstruction spending. I was concerned by your initial response as you responded to the question concerning this Inspector General's report. Perhaps I was wrong, but your response struck me, Mr. Secretary, as somewhat dismissive, nonchalant, blase.

I remember a great Roman once who was taken to task by his fellow countrymen for having put aside his wife. He was reminded of what a great Roman matron this was, how loyal she had been, what a beautiful woman she was, how careful she had been in the rearing of her family. He was taken over the coals, as it were, whereupon he took off one of his shoes and he said: You see this shoe? It has a wonderful color about it. The leather has been properly selected. The tone of the color and the pliability of the leather is certainly without equal. A beautiful pair of shoes it is. But, he said, only I know where it pinches.

Well, your response, Mr. Secretary, reminded me of that story. It was as if to say, I think: Well, so what? It was a huge sum, but keep in mind the difficulties we were up against. Keep in mind what would have happened if we had not spent it. So father knows best. Do not ask any questions.

Again, this seems to me to be an outgrowth of our unwise decision to turn everything over to one man or woman, the President of the United States. So the Pentagon has repeatedly asked for more and more flexibilities on how it spends money. Ted Stevens and I have had to wrestle with this in our appropriation of moneys over the past few years. It appears that the Pentagon had unlimited flexibility with this $8.8 billion, and now the Inspector General tells Congress that the Pentagon cannot tell us where these funds went. That does not speak well for the DOD's use of flexibilities.

So I have been after the Pentagon for years, I have talked with Secretary Rumsfeld repeatedly, about the failure of the DOD to account for the funds that it spends. But I have to say that this instance here involving $8.8 billion certainly takes the cake. How can the DOD be held accountable for wasted reconstruction money if it does not bother to regulate how it spends billions upon billions of dollars in Iraq?

So father does not always know best. Our problem is this. Our problem is that we have to go back time and again to the people and ask for money. How do we know that the expenditure of this $8.8 billion in reconstruction funds has done any good for Iraq?

This report paints a picture of Pentagon officials throwing cash around willy-nilly while Iraq was falling into chaos.

I know I asked Mr. Bremer would he come back before the Appropriations Committee if the chairman, the then-Chairman Stevens, should request that he come back. He said: I am too busy, I am too busy. Well, that was the attitude. That is the attitude that we were met with.

I can guarantee you that would not have been the attitude had we not given away our power, the power of Congress to declare war. How can you possibly assure the American people that these funds were well spent if the Pentagon cannot even tell Congress where that cash ended up? That is my question.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Senator Byrd, there is nothing nonchalant about my view of this issue. I think it is a difficult issue. I would encourage you—I will give you Ambassador Bremer's response to the draft report and see if there is an additional one. Let me just for example read from it. He says, and this is Ambassador Bremer writing:

> "The draft suggests that the CPA should have delayed paying Iraqi public servants until we had fully modern pay records. This would have taken many months, if not years. More than a million Iraqi families depended on the Iraqi Government for their salaries. When the CPA arrived in Iraqi after liberation, unemployment was over 50 percent. Not paying the civil servants would have been destabilizing and would have increased the security threat to Iraqis and to Americans. In brief, such a course would have cost lives."

There is nothing nonchalant about that concern.

Let me point out—and I do not want it to be said I do not care how the Iraqis spend their money, but let us be clear. This was not U.S. appropriated funds. This was Iraqi money. We were there under authority of the U.N., which specifically said that, under successive U.N. Security Council resolutions, "it was policy to transfer to the Iraqis as much responsibility as possible, as quickly as possible." I am quoting again from Ambassador Bremer's letter. It said that to have tried to have the sort of controls that the Inspector General is suggesting would have been directly contrary to U.S. Government policy and to the mandate of the U.N.

I think this is an important question. Senator Levin has asked for any final response Ambassador Bremer might have. I think we should look at whether things could have been done differently and we should see if there are lessons to be learned if there were a similar situation. But there was a crisis at hand. There were very large Iraqi funds available to deal with that crisis, and I think that basically Ambassador Bremer made the right decision to go to those Iraqi funds before coming back to the taxpayer and asking for appropriated funds.

Senator BYRD. Mr. Chairman, I simply close by saying that Mr. Bremer might very well have added: I didn't have time to appear before the Appropriations Committee again to make explanations, even though the people's representatives in the Senate and the House might have asked more questions as to how the money was spent.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Byrd. Senator Byrd, I want the record to reflect that Senator Levin and I wrote letters to the Secretary of Defense at the time Ambassador Bremer was completing his duties, urging that he come before this committee, and he did not come.

Senator BYRD. Yes. I thank the chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator BYRD. He has certainly not left any step along the way out of the equation. He has done everything he can and so has his counterpart, Mr. Levin. I thank them.

Chairman WARNER. I thank my senior colleague. Thank you very much.

Finally, gentlemen, just an observation by myself. That is, I look forward to this trip being undertaken by the President of the United States to Europe. I do hope in the course of that trip, and I know he will, and rightly so, that he will talk about Iraq and the successes we have had to date. I am just hopeful that our President will receive some reciprocal acknowledgments on this trip and those acknowledgments might well result in further participation by nations in the European theater and others in helping us—when I say "us," the existing coalition forces—conclude our goals.

So I wish our President well on this trip. He certainly has the support of this Senator in his efforts to try and increase participation by other countries in a variety of ways—training the Iraqi security forces, working on the infrastructure improvements that are necessary—a variety of ways to bring this chapter of world history to a conclusion successfully so the people of Iraq can manifest in so many ways the exuberance and courage that they did here of this recent weekend. I hope you share that view, Secretary Wolfowitz.

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I do, very strongly, Senator.

Chairman WARNER. I am highly optimistic about this trip coming up.

I thank our witnesses. We have had an excellent hearing. I realize it has gone a little bit longer than we planned, but we had a number of Senators, well over half the committee, participate. The hearing is now concluded.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR PAT ROBERTS

IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

1. Senator ROBERTS. Secretary Wolfowitz, we have been briefed that the original plan for the Iraqi Army has been filled. However, Prime Minister Allawi has indicated he may want a larger army than planned. How would such a decision impact the current U.S. training efforts in Iraq?

General MYERS. An Iraqi decision to increase the size of their Army would have minimal impact on our training efforts. In addition to the current training provided by the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I), the Ministry of Defense has established an Iraqi training battalion that conducts basic recruit training. This unit is expanding to a full brigade and will eventually assume the lead in training recruits. Iraq is a sovereign country dedicated to building security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and deny Iraq a safe haven to terrorists. Prime Minister Allawi's proposal to build a larger Army is one of several initiatives that are being evaluated by Embassy Baghdad, Multi-National Force-Iraq and the new Iraqi Transitional Government. MNSTC–I stands ready to adjust their training efforts and courses as required.

2. Senator ROBERTS. Secretary Wolfowitz, by most accounts, the Iraqi security forces performed well during the election, establishing perimeters and protecting thousands of polling locations around the country. Are the Iraqi security forces ready for more sophisticated counter-insurgency operations?

General MYERS. At this time, not all Iraqi security forces are capable of taking the lead in fighting the insurgency. They lack the maturity and mid-level institutional leadership necessary to independently deal with the insurgent threat. However, there are several specialty units within the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense that have gained the experience and combat skills necessary to execute sophisticated counterinsurgency operations. As conditions warrant, Multi-National Force-Iraq will progressively transition the counterinsurgency mission to capable Iraqi security forces and assign coalition forces to supporting roles with a less visible presence.

3. Senator ROBERTS. General Myers, according to the Department of Defense (DOD), there are a little over 130,000 Iraqis "on-hand and trained." However, there are questions, and I believe this was brought up during the Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Tuesday, concerning the actual number of Iraqis ready to conduct border patrol operations, policing operations, or combat operations. I would like to talk about fully-trained Iraqi soldiers, those who are reliable and ready to go into the field. At what rate is the DOD currently training these soldiers, and how will that rate increase if more U.S. soldiers are pulled away from combat operations for training purposes?

General MYERS. Currently, there are over 17,800 Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior recruits conducting institutional training. These recruits are in numerous courses ranging from 3 weeks to 13 weeks of training and graduate at different rates each week based on the length of their course. Additionally, the number of recruits in training changes each week as new volunteers are recruited, vetted and begin courses. The progressive shift by the Multi-National Force-Iraq from fighting the counterinsurgency to building the Iraqi Security Force capacity to conduct independent operations will not affect institutional training.

There are two techniques employed to ensure training requirements do not impact on combat operations. For collective training, units are employed on a cyclic basis, for instance: 9 days training, 18 days combat, 6 days vacation. In regards to individual training, units are provided the quotas for schools and can manage attendance per their own priorities. Overall priorities are established by MNC–I in order to get the critical warfighting assets trained first, and courses are shorter (3–4 weeks) in order to reduce the impact on operations. Generally, we do not pull all leaders out of a unit for training, but rather stagger attendance to reduce any impact on operations.

A positive effect of the shift of MNF–I policy is to allow for a qualitative increase in the capability of the training institutions. Some schools, such as the skills training wing of the Iraqi Training Battalion, have been affected by the absence of critical training equipment. The shift has established a priority of fill at this training facility, providing weapons and vehicles to increase the quality and quantity of training. The shift from a 4-week infantry course to a 7-week course is producing soldiers with better skills, enhanced leadership, and stronger determination.

NEW IRAQI GOVERNMENT

4. Senator ROBERTS. Ambassador Schlicher, how are other Sunni governments in the region responding to Sunday's elections? Are they giving any indication of support to Iraqi Sunnis claiming that the elections were not valid? What steps are being taken to ensure Sunni participation as those elected on Sunday prepare to form a new government and draft a new constitution?

Ambassador SCHLICHER. January 30 marked a historic day for millions of Iraqis who voted in their first democratic election in generations. Despite ongoing violence, threats, and intimidation, over half of all eligible Iraqi voters demonstrated resolve and a commitment towards democracy. The international community, including many Islamic, Arab, and regional governments, responded favorably and welcomed the elections as a positive step in Iraq's political transition. The governments of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, Indonesia, Pakistan, and others cited the January 30 elections as an important step toward Iraqi national reconciliation, development, stability, and independence.

Although the composition of the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) has not yet been determined, individuals who are cited as likely to hold influential positions in the new government have made gestures to be inclusive and welcoming of all Iraqis,

including Sunnis. Iraqi leaders have made clear that the political process should be as inclusive as possible, including the drafting of a permanent constitution and the formation of the transitional government.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS

IRAQI COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

5. Senator SESSIONS. Secretary Wolfowitz, it appears from all testimony thus far that security remains the top priority for the U.S. presence in Iraq. However, there appears to be a lack of infrastructure facilitating communication among Iraqi national, regional, local, and U.S. authorities and, perhaps most importantly, individual Iraqi citizens. It would seem that a communications network would be central to an improved security situation. Would a more robust communications infrastructure in Iraq improve the intelligence gathering process and allow for more rapid data collection and analysis of changing security threats, coordination, and deployment of security assets to address unfolding threats and more focused planning to reduce future threats to security?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. A more robust communications infrastructure in Iraq would most assuredly improve the intelligence-gathering process. Iraq currently does not have a fully deployed communications infrastructure, as measured by today's standards. Without a doubt, major gaps in network coverage and services impede the ability to rapidly collect and analyze intelligence data. In addition, such gaps reduce the sources and restrict the means by which intelligence may be gathered. Reducing future threats to security requires a multi-pronged approach, with communications at the center of the strategy. Communications are the lifeblood of modern society, and more robust networks and information technologies will increase stability by enhancing the improvement of every other economic and political sector, across the board

The current communications infrastructure in Iraq includes telephone service provided by the Iraqi Telecommunications and Postal Corporation (ITPC). ITPC's service, unfortunately, is confined to parts of Baghdad and other major cities. As of the beginning of this year, there were roughly 1 million active landline telephone subscribers in Iraq, a number that represents only a small fraction of the country's population. Cellular companies have begun to provide mobile telephone service in many areas of the country. However, relatively high-priced satellite phone service is the only communications option available for sizable parts of Iraq that have no telephone or cell phone service.

Involvement of U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq brought numerous changes to network infrastructure that were necessary to support operations. Rapidly deployable wireless systems were in heavy use in the early phases of our involvement there, including various satellite earth station and microwave systems. Additional wireless systems are planned for larger-scale deployment to provide high-capacity services to various government organizations, commercial enterprises, and other prospective users in the center of Baghdad.

Various wireline communications technologies are also in place in Iraq, including fiber optic and legacy copper loop systems. In addition, several projects are now under way to restore, reconstruct and upgrade Iraq's landline communications infrastructure. Communications infrastructure of this nature needs to be in place and operational to run essential telephone service and the Internet. Government and private enterprise sectors run more efficiently when broadband data services are available at competitive prices.

6. Senator SESSIONS. Secretary Wolfowitz, what role does the DOD envision a robust communications network playing in the overall security strategy and what steps is it taking to ensure that the communications infrastructure is funded sufficiently to make it viable to support the security environment in Iraq?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. The role of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in rebuilding Iraq cannot be overemphasized. It would be a grave mistake to minimize the communications sector as simply one of many infrastructure sectors requiring attention during stabilization and reconstruction operations. For certain, communications infrastructure requires perhaps the most immediate and thorough attention, because ICTs underwrite and facilitate every aspect of security and reconstruction. Communications infrastructure enables success in most fields of operations, such as policing, governance, border control, oil and gas production, medicine, education, shipping, and construction.

Data is the lifeblood of any modern society, and communications infrastructure is the circulatory system that brings nourishment to make that society grow and function. Moreover, the knowledge gained through access to data can help moderate and broaden political and social discourse and limit extremism, leading to development of a more stable and pluralistic society. While having modem communications and information technologies does not by itself guarantee pluralism, it is a prerequisite to the growth of a vibrant civil society that will value pluralism and allow it to unfold.

Though much remains to be done, much is being accomplished in the civilian telecommunications sector. The impact of this effort is affecting the lives of every Iraqi citizen and, if allowed to flourish, will continue to affect them for generations to come. Iraqis are being empowered through the use of information and communications technologies and are gaining confidence in their government and their future.

The DOD is well aware of the communications revolution that has swept the globe over the past decade and a half. Indeed, the rapid advances in the creation and movement of knowledge are perhaps the cornerstone of the Department's 21st century transformation. Moreover, the ongoing transformation in the DOD is a reflection of the advances in computing power, communications capacity and the resulting creation of knowledge in civil society. Therefore, the Department is committed to increasing Iraq's civilian capacity, both in terms of communications networks and information management. Iraq's future lies within a global society that recognizes the power that information technologies can bring to institutions and individuals.

Among those institutions are the national and local government and security agencies that Iraqis have established and are continuing to build. As the DOD fulfills the potential of its network-centric vision for itself, it will continue to support the power of networks and information management, enabling the Iraqi people to become full members of the international community and the global marketplace.

The DOD, in conjunction with other U.S. Government agencies, are providing information and communications technologies to enhance public safety, emergency services, as well as support to various Iraqi ministries and other organs of government. Lastly, the Department is also engaged in supporting the use of modern fiber optic technologies in various applications in Iraq. All these efforts will enhance efforts to reconstruct the country and have well along the path to modernity with a 21st century infrastructure.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

DEALINGS WITH THE NEW TRANSITIONAL IRAQ GOVERNMENT

7. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and Ambassador Schlicher, once the new ITG is assembled, it will be the first democratically-elected Iraqi Government since U.S. forces have occupied Iraqi territory. Will the United States deal differently with the ITG than it did with the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) and the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) and, if so, will that have any impact on the manner in which decisions are made with respect to the training and equipping of the Iraqi security forces?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. There will not be a significant difference in how we deal with the ITG from how we dealt with the IIG. Although the ITG stems from Iraq's first genuine election in nearly 50 years, the IIG was already internationally recognized as the sovereign authority in Iraq since June 28 of last year. The United States will continue to deal with the ITG primarily through Embassy Baghdad and offer advisors to the Iraqi ministries. But all decisions on Iraqi governance will remain the province of the Iraqis themselves. Similarly, decisions regarding the training and equipping of the Iraqi security forces will continue to be made by the Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF–I) in partnership with the Iraqi Ministry of Defense.

Ambassador SCHLICHER. Iraq has had a sovereign, independent government since the end of the occupation and dissolution of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) on June 28, 2004. The IIG, formed on that day, and the ITG, to be formed as a result of the January 30 elections, exercise full sovereign authority over Iraq.

We believe, however, that the elections on January 30 mark a dramatic milestone in the development of a secure, prosperous, democratic Iraq. Under the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) the ITG will assume greater authorities than were exercised by the IIG, which was designed to serve in a caretaker capacity until the lTG's formation. These responsibilities include, most significantly, the drafting of a new constitution for Iraq.

On June 28, 2004, the role of the Coalition in Iraq shifted from governing (through the CPA) to partnership with the sovereign Iraqi Government. We are

committed to assisting the Iraqis in this transitional period, both by assisting them in the political process set out in the TAL and in contributing to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq. Responsibility for the security of Iraq and for the training and equipping of Iraqi security forces lies with the Iraqi Government: we will continue to provide the needed security support to Iraq until it is ready to assume this burden.

In practice, the IIG has worked very closely with the United States since June 2004, particularly in respect to security matters (including the training and equipping of the Iraqi security forces). Iraq's political leaders have emphasized the importance of continued MNF–I assistance, although we expect that the ITG will take on increasing responsibility for the internal and external security of Iraq as more and more capable Iraqi security forces become available. We expect to cooperate with the forthcoming elected government under the same principles of partnership and consultation as we did with the IIG.

STATUS OF THE U.S.-LED MULTINATIONAL FORCE

8. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and Ambassador Schlicher, United Nations (U.N.) Security Council Resolution 1546 of June 8, 2004 provided that the mandate of the U.S.-led MNF–I shall be reviewed at the request of the Government of Iraq in June 2005 and that the mandate shall expire upon the completion of the political process leading to a constitutionally-elected Iraqi Government by December 31, 2005.

As I noted in my opening statement, I believe we should discuss with the new government what our exit strategy should be and determine if the new government will expressly invite the international community to maintain military forces in Iraq, thus clearly stating to the world that our presence in Iraq is at the invitation of the democratically-elected government and increases the likelihood that Muslim nations will send military forces as well. What are your thoughts about such discussions with the new Iraqi Government after it is formed in the next few months?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Iraqi leaders are taking tremendous risks as they attempt to construct a new political system and reconstruct their nation. For the United States to initiate discussions of how to exit Iraq before we have completed our mission there would undermine confidence in our commitment to defeating the terrorists in Iraq. Doubts about American resolve would only lead to increased attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq, and possibly to more attacks against Americans throughout the world. I think it is far more important, therefore, to focus on the objectives we are trying to achieve rather than on setting an arbitrary deadline by which to withdraw.

The MNF–I already operates in Iraq with the consent of the Iraqi Government as expressed in the Iraqi letter attached to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546. No additional invitation from the ITG is required, and whether the ITG will wish to issue one is a political decision it will have to make once it assumes office.

Finally, it is unclear whether a democratically-elected ITG would welcome troops from non-democratic Muslim nations inside its borders. Although we would welcome such troop contributions, Muslim nations already have an existing invitation to contribute forces under U.N. resolutions, but to date have declined to do so.

Ambassador SCHLICHER. The U.S. Government should not do anything that might lead the people of Iraq to question our commitment to the success of their fledgling democracy. Many leading Iraqis who may play roles in the new government have already asked us to stay, and we have said very clearly that American forces will stay as long as they are needed, but not 1 minute longer. Raising the discussion of an exit strategy prematurely could undercut this message.

The IIG has actively sought international military assistance, to be integrated into the MNF–I or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Training Mission in Iraq. It is likely that the ITG will continue to make such invitations, which we agree are politically helpful. However, it is not likely that the ITG will invite military forces from other nations to operate in Iraq independently of MNF–I or NATO coordination. Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546, the ITG has the authority to request a review of the MNF mandate at any time. However, we believe it would unhelpfully distract from the ITG's pressing security, reconstruction and constitutional development priorities if this authority were exercised early in the ITG's tenure. Rather, as you note, in June 2005 the ITG will have the opportunity to review MNF–I's mandate, and make explicit its desire for MNF–I's continued assistance, or to request its departure. The President has stated that U.S. forces will not remain in Iraq if the Iraqi Government no longer desires their assistance.

VETO POWER OF KURDS AND SUNNIS

9. Senator LEVIN. Ambassador Schlicher, the TAL provides that two-thirds of the voters in any three Iraqi provinces can veto the constitution. That would mean that the Kurds, the Sunnis and, of course, the Shiites, could defeat the constitution if they were united in opposition to it. Will the TAL be the controlling law for the referendum on the constitution that is to be drafted under the new Transitional National Assembly (TNA), or does the TNA have the power to amend the TAL or to establish a new legal regime for the constitutional referendum?

Ambassador SCHLICHER. The TAL is the current controlling law of Iraq on elections-related matters. You are correct that the TAL includes a provision allowing a two thirds majority of voters in three provinces to veto the draft constitution. The U.S. supports the TAL, as drafted and approved by Iraqis, in its entirety. We believe it represents a useful compromise between all Iraqi groups on the issues with which the Iraqis must grapple as they draft Iraq's permanent constitution.

As for the legal questions you raised, we rely on Iraqi legal and judicial professionals to interpret the provisions of the TAL. That said, we note that Article 3(A) of the TAL reads that no amendment may be adopted except by a three-fourths majority of the members of the TNA and the unanimous approval of the Presidency Council. That level of support would be difficult to achieve without broad-based consensus among all Iraqis.

U.S. TROOP LEVELS IN IRAQ

10. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, Marine leaders have briefed us that they are planning to reduce Marine troop levels in Iraq from 31,000 to 20,000 in March. They said they will turn over the current responsibilities of those marines who depart to the Army. Do you approve of the Marine troop reductions?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

11. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, will Army troop levels in Iraq be increased to cover the responsibilities of the departing marines?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

12. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, if not, why do you believe that reduction will be possible in March? What tasks will no longer be undertaken because of a lower overall troop level?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

13. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, what decision criteria will you consider in determining possible troop reductions in the future?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

TRAINING OF IRAQI FORCES

14. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, at various times over the last year and a half U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) has reported different numbers of Iraqi security forces as being on hand and trained. Consequently, it is extremely difficult for Members of Congress and the American people to fully understand the true capability of the Iraqi security forces, and to understand how that capability will realistically change over time in the future. Has CENTCOM developed a readiness reporting system for Iraqi forces that is at least in some respects analogous to that used by U.S. forces?

General MYERS. CENTCOM, in coordination with Multi-National Force-Iraq, is developing a process for assessing capability of the Iraqi security force. Measuring capability within the Ministry of Interior force is challenging due to the vast number of local police stations and border enforcement guard posts throughout Iraq. We expect the first iteration of readiness reporting using this new process will be completed at the end of April 2005.

15. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, how do you measure the capability of Iraqi units, as opposed to simply determining the numbers of individuals recruited and to some degree individually trained?

General MYERS. The new process for measuring Iraqi security force capability looks at six areas of readiness. They are: personnel, command and control, training, sustainment, equipping, and leadership. Using these measurements, units are assessed on their ability to execute counterinsurgency operations and are given a

readiness rating of level 1 through 4. A Level 1 unit is fully capable of planning, executing, and sustaining independent counterinsurgency operations. A Level 4 unit is forming and/or is incapable of conducting counterinsurgency operations. Iraqi commanders and Coalition forces will jointly report these assessments with parallel reporting up the chain to Multi-National Corps-Iraq and the Iraqi Joint Headquarters/Iraqi Army Headquarters. We expect the first iteration of readiness reporting using this new process will be completed at the end of April 2005.

16. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, what is your current assessment of the capability of Iraqi security forces?

General MYERS. The Iraqi Security Force (ISF) is developing well in the nine southern and three Kurdish provinces; unevenly in the six Sunni provinces ranging from ineffective in the Al Anbar Province to strong in some other Sunni areas. ISF successfully secured polling sites for democratic elections on 31 January. A number of police gave their lives while moving to stop suicide bombers. Unauthorized absences within the Ministry of Defense have significantly decreased and are no longer impacting operations. Regular police and border forces continue to struggle in high-threat areas except where strong leadership and close links to coalition forces are present. ISF is in the fight.

17. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, approximately how many of the stated total of 130,000 Iraqi security forces in all types of units (police, army, etc.) are fully trained, equipped, and ready to take on the insurgency?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

18. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, in a December 6, 2004 interview, LTG Petraeus was questioned about problems in training the Iraqi security forces and military. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), when pressed whether the problem with the security forces was low morale, infiltration, cowardice, leadership, or intimidation, Petraeus replied, "It's probably all of the above." How would you answer that question? Do you agree with LTG Petraeus?

General MYERS. I agree with Lieutenant General Petraeus that there are elements of these problems present. However, these issues will not prevent the Iraqi security force (ISF) from continuing to mature and develop the capability to defend Iraq. The ISF, as evidenced by the election, is standing up, fighting and dying for their country. The real question that we should address is how fast ISF will mature over the year and when will it be strong enough to fight the insurgency and win? Our goal is to help this happen as soon as possible.

MENTORS OR ADVISORS

19. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, the Joint Staff has briefed us that CENTCOM was directed to apply fewer troops to the operational mission and more to the training mission. I understand that you are considering assigning several thousand U.S. mentors or advisors to Iraqi security forces units. How many U.S. mentors or advisors will be assigned to this mission, and at what level will they be integrated into Iraqi units?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

20. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, how long will it take to get American mentors or advisors into all Iraqi units at that level of integration?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

21. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, will U.S. troop levels be increased for that purpose, or will you redirect those troops from current operational missions as we were briefed?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

22. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, if the latter, what effect will that have on current operations against the insurgents? What missions will no longer be undertaken?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

23. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, the Iraqi police have appeared to be more problematical than other Iraqi security forces, both dying and deserting at higher levels. Does CENTCOM have the resources to provide adequate mentors or advisors

to Iraqi police to accomplish the same objectives as those who will be assigned to Iraqi military units?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

24. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, what is being done to address the specific problems of the Iraqi police forces?

General MYERS. Iraqi police recruits undergo an 8-week academy training course taught at the Jordan International Police Training Center or in one of the seven police academies in Iraq. Training highlights include basic police skills, basic criminal investigation, kidnapping investigation and marksmanship. The instruction has been modified to reflect the security environment focusing more on survival skills and combat skills. The academies use a modular-based curriculum with 75 percent instruction covering practical exercise work and the remaining 25 percent devoted to classroom theory. Cadets spend the majority of their time conducting practical exercises and hands-on training. Greater emphasis is now placed on critical tactical operations such as checkpoint operations, building searches and counter-ambush operations. Instead of marksmanship training that focused primarily on pistols, firing of the AK–47 and other heavier weapons is being added. All of these instructional areas are reinforced with hands-on field exercises with the greatest possible realism. Police recruits who were former police officers under the previous regime are trained under the 3-week Transition and Integration Program. This program, taught by Iraqis, reinforces police professionalism, standards and accountability. In addition, there are several advanced and specialized training courses for the Iraqi Police Service to combat the insurgency. Examples of these include post-blast investigations taught by Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms officials, counterterrorism investigations taught by the FBI and explosive hazardous awareness training taught by the U.S. military.

IRAQI NATIONAL GUARD

25. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, on January 6, Iraqi Army Day, the IIG announced that the National Guard would become a part of the Iraqi Army. What does this mean in practical terms? Is there a difference in intended uses for units of the Iraqi Army which have not agreed to be deployed throughout Iraq; for what is known as the Iraqi Intervention Force, which is part of the Iraqi Army; and now the National Guard, which is also part of the Iraqi Army?

General MYERS. In practical terms, there are implications to this announcement. First, the Ministry of Defense is incorporating National Guard battalions into Iraqi Regular Army (RA) divisions and brigades. These battalions will help fill out the RA brigades and divisions. Some of the soldiers in the National Guard battalions will not agree to be deployed around the country. Those soldiers will be given opportunities to join the local police, border forces, or other security forces that maintain a regional focus. Second, Multi-National Force-Iraq will evaluate the level of maturity and combat experience of these National Guard battalions, determine if additional training is necessary and incorporate them in future RA basic training courses.

26. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, is there a distinction between Active and Reserve components in the new Iraqi Army now that the National Guard is a part?

General MYERS. No, the goal is to field a national army capable of deploying throughout Iraq. With the help of Multi-National Force-Iraq, the Iraqi government will formulate a strategy to regionally base the Iraqi Regular Army divisions throughout Iraq for counterinsurgency operations.

27. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, is the Iraqi National Guard (ING) at all analogous to our own National Guard?

General MYERS. Yes, when first developed, the mission of the ING was to provide security for the region in which members were recruited much like our own National Guard provides security in their states during emergencies. The key difference is that the ING was controlled by coalition forces and the Iraqi government, not by provincial or regional governments. As the ING becomes part of the RA the analogy to our National Guard will no longer pertain.

28. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, the Iraqi Army members were receiving 8 weeks of basic training, while National Guard members were only receiving 3 weeks. Will members of the National Guard be returned to the training base for additional training?

General MYERS. Yes, Multi-National Force-Iraq will evaluate the level of maturity and combat experience of these ING battalions, determine if additional training is necessary, and incorporate them in future Iraqi Regular Army basic training courses.

EQUIPPING IRAQI FORCES

29. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, we are spending billions of dollars to equip our troops with the latest in body armor, truck armor, reactive armor for Strykers, Bradleys, and the venerable M–113 armored personnel carrier, and other high-technology items such as night vision devices. Recently there was a news clip of a heavily armed and armored American unit accompanied by Iraqi soldiers in open pickup trucks. The convoy was attacked and four of those Iraqi soldiers were killed and several others wounded. One has to wonder what those Iraqi soldiers thought about accompanying American soldiers in their heavily protected vehicles while they were in an open pickup truck. How important is modern equipment to the effort to build reliable Iraqi forces?

General MYERS. Equipping the Iraqi security force (ISF) with the right tools to fight the insurgency is extremely important. Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, in coordination with the Iraqi government, developed the requirements to equip Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) forces. Iraqi special operations forces are fielded with modern, high-tech equipment comparable to our forces. Conventional MOD and MOI forces receive new uniforms, body armor, weapons and ammunition that sufficiently increases their survivability and enhances their capability to conduct counterinsurgency operations. In addition, as part of the NATO mission, the NATO Training and Equipment Coordination Group is receiving donations of modern equipment from several countries for the ISF.

30. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, are you satisfied with the scope and speed of efforts to equip Iraqi forces? Is there more that we could and should be doing?

General MYERS. The Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I) has taken great steps to accelerate equipment flow to the Iraqi security force (ISF) and it is moving in substantial numbers. Equipment flow continues to improve, but in theater distribution is still a challenge. Since transfer of sovereignty, ISF has received over 406,000 uniforms; 129,000 sets of body armor; 247,000 weapons; and 266,600,000 rounds of ammunition.

31. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, do you believe that Iraqi forces should have at least the same level of protective equipment as do U.S. forces in Iraq?

General MYERS. Equipping the Iraqi security force with the right tools to fight the insurgency is important. Iraqi Special Operations Forces are fielded with modern, high-tech equipment comparable to our forces. Conventional Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior forces receive new uniforms, body armor, weapons, and ammunition that increases their survivability and enhances their capability to conduct counterinsurgency operations.

32. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, are there plans to transfer American armored vehicles and other equipment to Iraqi forces once our forces begin withdrawing?

General MYERS. Yes, the Department of Defense is planning to transfer U.S. equipment to the Iraqi security force (ISF). We have already asked CENTCOM to identify specific equipment, not required by our forces, which can be utilized by the ISF. Initial lists of equipment are expected by July.

33. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, I understand that there may be several thousand armored personnel carriers here in the U.S. that are excess to the Army or National Guard's needs. Would it make sense to provide those to the Iraqi Army on an expedited basis?

General MYERS. I do not believe giving excess U.S. armored personnel carriers to the Iraqi Army is a viable option at this time. We looked at a related issue several months ago as part of an Army effort to up-armor armored personnel carriers, and found that excess vehicles—mostly 1970s vintage—were in need of extensive repair and were becoming increasingly difficult to support logistically. However, as the dual-hatted NATO Training Mission-Iraq commander, General Petraeus is identifying requirements and procuring equipment, including armored wheeled vehicles, through the NATO Training and Equipment Coordination Group. In addition, Hungary recently donated 77 T–72 tanks to NATO for use by the Iraqi Army. These

tanks are undergoing maintenance and we are working with NATO to effect the transfer late this summer.

OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

34. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, there continue to be media reports about American forces conducting counter-insurgency sweeps and raids by entering Iraqi homes, destroying Iraqi property, terrifying Iraqi families, and detaining Iraqis who later are determined to be innocent of any involvement in the insurgency. Several polls of Iraqi public opinion indicate that the vast majority of Iraqis now oppose the U.S. presence and view the Americans as purely an occupying force. Have we reached the point that such offensive operations are actually becoming counter-productive and that we are now making more enemies of ordinary Iraqis and increasing support for the insurgency?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

35. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, do you believe that the time is rapidly approaching when we should cease offensive operations by U.S. forces and should turn over such missions solely to Iraqi forces accompanied by U.S. mentors or advisors?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

MILITIAS

36. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, there are reports that American military and IIG officials are relying heavily on the Kurdish Peshmerga militia, not only as a source of individual recruits for Iraqi security forces, but even more so for its established military units, in countering the Sunni insurgency. For instance, I understand that the Peshmerga was brought in to help restore order in Mosul after large numbers of Iraqi police deserted their posts under assault from insurgents who had escaped the U.S. attack on Fallujah. Is there a change of policy, either formal or otherwise, with respect to integrating militias into the Iraqi security forces?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

37. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, how would you describe that policy at the current time?

General MYERS. [Deleted.]

38. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, will militias, including the Peshmerga, be allowed to maintain military units apart from the official Iraqi security forces?

General MYERS. Iraq must have no militias other than those agreed upon by the Iraqi government that are necessary to maintain peace and security. They will be strictly controlled, come under government supervision and not allowed to operate independently. The militia end state, as reflected in Transitional Administrative Law, Article 27, is: "An Iraqi State in which there are no armed forces or militias not under the command and structure of the Iraqi Transitional Government except as provided by Federal law." The Iraqi government has established within the Ministry of Defense (MOD) a "Director General of Iraqi Veterans" agency. The mission of this office is to incorporate all militias into the MOD and Ministry of Interior. They provide civilian training and education, retirement planning and integration training for those individuals that transition into the other ministries.

39. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, do you see a potentially significant problem in using Peshmerga units to fight the insurgency? Could this possibly accelerate a potential move toward civil war?

General MYERS. The limited use of militias in order to counter insurgent activity before the election process was in some ways a positive step. It demonstrated that local people were very interested in protecting their interests and moving forward in the political process. The effort to involve all players in the political process should mitigate the potential for civil strife. We are very mindful of the fact that the Peshmerga fought next to us as allies in the war and in some situations provided a stabilizing role in urban areas.

40. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, do you see problems down the road with militias?

General MYERS. We do not see any issues that cannot be resolved. As the new Iraqi Transitional Government emerges we will see changes that reflect Iraqi initiatives to do different things in different ways, which may include how they address

and use militias. The Iraqi government understands that militias must be strictly controlled, come under government supervision and not be allowed to operate independently.

41. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, according to The Wall Street Journal the Iraqis formed a number of militias to guard the polls for the recent election. One of them, called the Defenders of Baghdad Brigade, was supplied with rifles, ammunition and body armor by U.S. officials. A second militia from the town of Al Amarah, a Shiite city in southern Iraq, set up in early January in Baghdad's old Defense Ministry. The Journal quotes LTC Jim Bullion as saying, "These groups just started appearing like mushrooms. In the last month they have been appearing so quickly we can barely keep track of them. It's really heartening to see the Iraqis seizing the initiative." According to the Journal, military officials say they aren't sure what will happen to these groups after the elections.

Is this true that U.S. officials armed and equipped militias, including the Defenders of Baghdad Brigade, prior to the elections?

General MYERS. Yes, the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I) and the 1st Cavalry Division (1CD) armed and equipped "the Defenders of Baghdad Brigade. Prior to the January elections, there were two brigades formed. They have since been incorporated into the Regular Iraqi Army as 5th Brigade, 6th Division (2d BDE, Defenders of Baghdad) and 1st Brigade, 7th Division (1st BDE, Defenders of Baghdad). The Iraqi Ministry of Defense (MOD), on its own initiative, has recruited approximately 5,600 militia soldiers and formed them into units. MNSTC–I tracks and monitors these units, providing some equipment and aligning them with US forces for employment. The MOD will integrate these units into the Iraqi Army structure and will coordinate with Multi-National Force-Iraq to align them with coalition forces for training and partnership. One of the units created by the MOD was the Defenders of Baghdad Brigade. This brigade has three battalions, two located in Eastern Baghdad, near Sadr City and the third training at Muthana Airfield, in Baghdad. The total manning is about 1,800, all from the Baghdad area. These three battalions were under the tactical control of the 1CD, which used them effectively to provide polling station security on election day. This brigade was fully equipped by MNSTC–I and 1CD with weapons, uniforms, and ammunition but the MOD is ultimately responsible for this unit.

42. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, if true, why? What will be done about those militias now?

General MYERS. MNF–I support of these units enhances the security of the Iraqi people. The Ministry of Defense will integrate these units into the Iraqi Army structure and will coordinate with MNF–I to align them with coalition forces for training and partnership.

POST-ELECTION SITUATION

43. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, in an interview with The London Financial Times, Prime Minister Blair said that the coalition was set to agree to "timelines" with the new government that would indicate the pace at which Iraqi forces could take control of peaceful parts of the country. Other recent media reports indicate that senior U.S. administration officials expect the new Iraqi Government to ask the U.S. for a specific withdrawal timetable from the entire country. How do you see dealing with the insurgency in the post-election period? Do you envision coalition forces stepping back in that regard?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. On January 30, the Iraqi people demonstrated their sympathies lie with democracy and freedom rather than with the tyranny and intimidation offered by the terrorists. The increase in national unity created by the elections has led to an increased flow of intelligence on terrorist activities. Iraqi forces also bring unique knowledge of Iraq's language and cultures to counterinsurgency operations, and their role will gradually increase in the future. Although in some areas coalition forces will step back into more supporting roles, they will continue to work in partnership with Iraqi security forces to defeat the terrorists.

General MYERS. As conditions warrant, Multi-National Force-Iraq will progressively transition the counterinsurgency mission to a capable Iraqi security force and assign coalition forces to supporting roles with a less visible presence.

44. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, is the coalition set to agree to "timelines" that would govern the pace of Iraqi forces taking control of peaceful parts of the country?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Iraqi forces will begin to take control of parts of Iraq as their experience and performance warrant. It would be unwise to establish artificial "timelines" to govern this process as it would reduce the flexibility the military trainers of Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I) need in order to effectively train the Iraqi security forces. it is important that we continue to train Iraqis up to required standards rather than in accordance with arbitrary dates.

General MYERS. The transfer of control to Iraqi units is conditions-based and not timeline-based. The pace of transition will be driven by the capability of the ISF, the level of insurgent activity and the ability of the Iraqi government to provide essential services, infrastructure, and good governance.

45. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, have you developed metrics or decision criteria for turning over responsibilities to Iraqi forces? What are they?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. The MNF–I, in coordination with the Iraqi Ministries of Defense and Interior, is developing a system to evaluate the capacity of Iraqi security forces, under the criteria laid out by General Myers in his response.

General MYERS. MNF–I, in coordination with the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior, are developing a system to evaluate and assess the capacity of the Iraqi security force (ISF). MNF–I understands the importance of developing these capabilities metrics as the next step in security force reporting. Once approved and implemented, this will assist MNF–I's decision to progressively transition the counterinsurgency mission to capable ISF and assign coalition forces to supporting role with a less visible presence.

46. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, do you expect the new government to seek a definitive withdrawal timetable?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. To my knowledge, no Iraqi expected to assume a prominent leadership role in the ITG favors such a timetable. Instead, Iraqi leaders have made it quite clear that they want U.S. and coalition forces to remain in Iraq until they are capable of defeating the terrorists themselves. These leaders have made it clear that they are more focused on how coalition forces can help them to defeat the terrorists than how soon they can get the coalition forces out of Iraq.

General MYERS. In our regular discussions with the Iraqi Interim Government, members from all the major political parties in Iraq acknowledge the critical role of the MNF–I in helping to maintain security and stability in Iraq, given the tenuous security situation in parts of the country. In these discussions about the size and role of the MNF–I and the transition to Iraqi control, it is clear that withdrawals are predicated on conditions, not on a calendar-based timeline.

47. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, if asked, how would you construct such a timetable?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Given that this has not yet been proposed by an Iraqi official, I will not speculate on the specifics of such a scenario. We are focused on defeating the terrorists, not on how soon we can withdraw from Iraq. Discussion of a premature withdrawal based on artificial deadlines only undermines our credibility with our partners in the ITG, and impedes our ability to successfully complete the mission in Iraq.

General MYERS. The mission and role of the MNF–I is tied to the mandate from U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 and the invitation of the Iraqi government. The mandate from the resolution extends to the completion of the political process described in Iraq's Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), which is the blueprint for Iraq's democratic development as they form a permanent government. Therefore, the continued role of the MNF–I is not dependent on an artificially constructed timetable, but is tied to the progress of Iraq's political development. Currently, the TAL calls for a constitutional referendum in October 2005, followed by elections based on that constitution by the end of December 2005. However, there are extensions built in the TAL's timeline in the event the Iraqis require more time.

48. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, do you agree with reported Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimates that the elections will be followed by more violence, including an increased likelihood of clashes between Shiites and Sunnis, possibly even leading to civil war?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. The Baathist and extremist jihadists responsible for the overwhelming proportion of attacks in Iraq recognize that the Iraqi people decisively rejected their extremist ideologies on January 30. Because these terrorists can never

hope to win the political debate in a free Iraq, they continue to try to intimidate the Iraqi people through acts of mass violence.

However, I disagree with the assessment that civil war is somehow more likely in the wake of the successful elections. Since the election, prominent Shia and Kurdish leaders have stressed the importance of reaching out to Iraqis of all sects and strata in the formation of a new government and drafting of a new constitution. Similarly, Sunni leaders who boycotted the election are stating that they now want to be a part of the political process in Iraq, indicating that they are opting for accommodation with their compatriots rather than civil war.

General MYERS. Prior to the elections, the Defense Intelligence Agency assessed that an increased overall level of violence and possible increased tensions along ethnic lines would mark the post-election security environment. However, post-election levels of violence and ethnic tensions remain below what was anticipated and the post-election security situation more closely resembles the period preceding the elections. In fact, the success of the Iraqi elections has clearly shown the will of the large majority of the Iraqi people to seek a government built on votes and the rule of law, instead of rule by fear that the insurgents offer. Iraqi Shiites and Sunnis are engaged in political discussions as the parties selected in their recent elections attempt to form a government in accordance with the Transitional Administrative Law.

49. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, according to Britain's Channel 4 News, Iraqi Interim Foreign Minister Falah al-Naqib said, "I think we will not need the multinational, foreign forces, in this country within 18 months. I think we will be able to depend on ourselves." Do you believe that is a prevalent view among Iraqi interim government officials?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Interior Minister al-Naqib's statement suggests that Iraqi Government officials are optimistic about the progress made to date by Iraqi security forces, and about their continued progress in the coming months and years. Although I believe most Iraqi officials share this optimism, the prevailing view amongst Iraqi leaders is that multinational forces remain in Iraq until the mission is accomplished rather than withdraw at some arbitrarily established date.

General MYERS. Interior Minister Naqib is no doubt referring to the great progress in training the Iraqi security force (ISF) over the last year, both police forces in the Ministry of Interior under his jurisdiction, and also the Armed Forces in the Ministry of Defense. I believe his statement suggests Iraqi government officials are optimistic about the progress of the ISF as well as their continued success in the coming months and years. I believe the prevailing view among Iraqi leaders is that coalition forces remain in Iraq until the ISF is capable of maintaining domestic order and denying safe haven to terrorists. Our experience is that we cannot rush to a simple timeline when determining when the Iraqis will be able to take full responsibility for securing their own country.

50. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, do you agree with that assessment?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. It is not possible to make a precise prediction about when the Iraqi security forces will be able to take over all security operations in Iraq. As I have stated previously, I see no purpose in speculating on when coalition forces will be able to withdraw from Iraq. We are concentrating all our efforts on winning in Iraq, not on planning our withdrawal.

General MYERS. While we will certainly see progress over the next 18 months, it is premature to say that the Iraqis will be completely ready in that timeframe to undertake the full range of tasks required for the internal and external security of their country. In our discussions with Minister Naqib and other Iraqi officials, they have all recognized the importance of training to a credible standard, and not just a certain number of Iraqi troops in uniform or a date on the calendar.

CORRUPTION

51. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, media reports claim that Iraqi Government officials, including Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan, have moved $300 million in Iraqi funds to Lebanon. What do you know about the truth of this claim?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. I understand that some Iraqi politicians have already called for an investigation into Hazem Shaalan's transactions while Minister of Defense. However, at this time, I do not have enough information to make a definitive statement regarding Minister Shaalan's activities.

52. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, what is your assessment as to the degree of corruption in the IIG and how concerned are you about it?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Although there is no way to determine the degree of corruption in the Iraqi Interim Government, it clearly has the potential to become a serious problem. For more than 30 years promotions in the Iraqi civil service were not based upon merit, but rather were a reward for loyalty to Saddam Hussein and the Baath Party. As a result, a culture of corruption permeates the Iraqi bureaucracy, and threatens to become a drain on our reconstruction efforts in Iraq.

53. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, what steps is the U.S. Government taking in this regard?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. Before transferring sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government, the Coalition Provisional Authority established Inspectors General in each of the Iraqi ministries. Current anti-corruption efforts fall under the purview of USAID, which has several programs designed to build the human resources capacity within Iraqi ministries.

TRAINING MISSION

54. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, I have read of U.S. officials describing our training objective as providing the Iraqi security forces with the ability to take on a greater portion, or a larger share of the security responsibility. If that is true, then presumably we would still be required to keep our military forces in Iraq after the training is complete.

Is our objective to have the Iraqi security forces develop the capability and the responsibility to provide entirely for their own internal and external security, without relying on U.S. military forces, or are they only going to shoulder a portion of their security responsibilities?

General MYERS. Yes, ultimately as a sovereign nation Iraq is responsible for its internal and external security by maintaining domestic order, denying safe haven to terrorists and maintaining peace with its neighbors. As ISF capabilities develop and its leadership matures, Multi-National Force-Iraq will progressively transition the counterinsurgency mission to ISF and assign coalition forces to supporting roles with a less visible presence.

55. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, if we continue the train and equip mission at the current rate, how long do you expect it would take to complete that mission to the point where Iraqi security forces can provide for their own security without U.S. military assistance? Is it possible that it could take several years, or longer? What is the longest you can currently foresee that training mission lasting?

General MYERS. At this time, I cannot predict how long our training mission will last. However, in 2005 ISF will take the lead throughout the majority of the country in fighting the counterinsurgency. The pace of transition and the completion of our training mission will be driven by ISF capability, the level of insurgent activity and the ability of the Iraqi government to provide essential services, infrastructure, and good governance. ISF is gaining valuable combat experience and continues to make progress toward taking the lead in the counterinsurgency fight.

PERMANENT U.S. PRESENCE IN IRAQ

56. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and Ambassador Schlicher, there has been some public confusion about our long-term plans for the U.S. military presence in Iraq. For example, there has been public concern about the U.S. building 14 "permanent" bases in Iraq. Can you clarify whether we are building permanent U.S. bases in Iraq, or whether our plan is to bring our military forces out of Iraq when we complete the training mission. In other words, are we planning to keep our military in Iraq permanently, or to withdraw them as soon as our mission is complete?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. We are not building permanent bases analogous to those in Germany or Korea after World War II, though we are currently making improvements to existing bases that will improve the security and quality of life for our brave troops now serving in Iraq. As the President has stated on numerous occasions, our forces will not stay in Iraq longer than is necessary to complete the mission of defeating the terrorists.

Ambassador SCHLICHER. We are planning to withdraw our forces from Iraq as soon as their mission is complete. Their mission will be concluded when Iraqi security forces and the Iraqi Government are capable of assuming full responsibility for the security of Iraq, or when the Government of Iraq asks them to depart. We are

upgrading facilities in Iraq to support our forces in the performance of their mission, not to keep them in the country longer than needed. When they return home, the facilities may be useful to the Iraqi security forces.

INSPECTOR GENERAL AUDIT

57. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, Stuart Bowen, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), issued an audit report earlier this week in which he concluded that the CPA failed to establish or implement managerial, financial and contractual controls needed to ensure that funds provided to IIG ministries were properly used during the period before the transfer of sovereignty on June 30, 2004. The IG's report indicates that CPA was "burdened by severe inefficiencies and poor management" and failed to "review and compare financial, budgetary, and operational performance to planned or expected results," leaving the expenditure of nearly $9 billion in Iraqi funds "open to fraud, kickbacks, and misappropriation of funds."

As a result, the report states, there was "no assurance that funds were not provided for ghost employees." The report states: "For example, CPA officials authorized payments of [Development Fund for Iraq (DFI)] funds for approximately 74,000 Facilities Protective Services (FPS) guards' salaries even though the FPS sites and number of guards were not validated. CPA staff identified at one ministry that, although 8,206 guards were on the payroll, only 602 guards could be validated. CPA staff at another ministry validated the payroll at one FPS site and found that although 1,471 guards were on the payroll, only 642 guards could be validated."

What is your response to the CPA IG's report? Do you agree that the CPA should have instituted better managerial, financial and contractual controls over spending through the Iraqi ministries?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. The DOD fully support the important work of the SIGIR. However, we strongly disagree with many of the findings of the audit. We concur with Ambassador L. Paul Bremer's response to the report, which is included in the SIGIR's report. Our response to the audit is also included in the SIGIR's report. I have provided a copy of the SIGIR's report along with this response to the committee's questions.

We agree that the CPA faced managerial, financial, and contract challenges, given the numerous difficulties inherent in the establishment of a coalition organization exercising governance authority, the historic nature of its tasks, and the requirement to fulfill this vital mission in a combat zone. The CPA acted to address these challenges. In this light, we disagree strongly with the conclusion that, because of policy decisions regarding Iraqi management of the execution of the Iraqi funds, the CPA failed to meet objective standards for transparent stewardship of DFI funds. The attached SIGIR report includes our comments which provide additional detail.

[See inserted SIGIR report on page 73 of this hearing.]

58. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, do you support the IG's recommendation that we should perform a lessons learned study for the planning of specific managerial, financial, and contractual controls in future situations of this nature?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. In its report, the SIGIR recommended a lessons learned study "addressing not only the planning for specific managerial, financial, and contractual controls in future situations of this nature but also the national planning aspects necessary to overall management of these type of endeavors should they occur in the future."

The lessons learned study is currently underway and we support it.

U.S. MILITARY ROLE IN COUNTERDRUG EFFORTS IN AFGHANISTAN

59. Senator LEVIN. General Myers, last December our staff was told about a new interagency plan to deal with the drug problem in Afghanistan. That plan aimed to increase the capacity of the Afghan Government to deal with the production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan. However, U.S. military forces would not be required to seize drugs or drug-related infrastructure unless they came upon them in the course of their normal counterterrorist duties.

On January 31, 2005, in a letter to Secretary Rice, 31 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) recommended that coalition forces:

(1) "focus intelligence collection efforts on identifying major traffickers;
(2) cease all payments to traffickers; and
(3) assist in the destruction of laboratories and interdiction of imports of precursor chemicals and exports of narcotics."

What percentage or proportion of the Afghan drug profits go to funding terrorist activities in Afghanistan or elsewhere?

General MYERS. We believe that drug revenues may equal 60 percent of Afghanistan's current gross domestic product, but we cannot say with any certainty what. percentage is funneled to terrorist or insurgent groups. We do not have sufficient intelligence collection against narcotics trafficking to draw clear lines of support to terrorist groups. Afghanistan's nascent banking system, combined with the traditional hawala remittance system, make drug trafficking funds difficult to track. The illegal narcotics industry in Afghanistan is comparatively fragmented, with numerous organizations and smuggling networks involved. We do not believe that terrorist elements, including al Qaeda, remnants of the Taliban and Hezb-i Islami Gulbuddin control narcotics networks or rely exclusively on narcotics revenue to fund their operations. However, these groups undoubtedly garner some level of support from narcotics-related activities. We know that some traffickers provide logistical assistance to extremists and some extremist groups are raising money by taxing poppy production and profiting from the processing and sale of narcotics.

60. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, given the argument that Hamid Karzai has made that the cash from drug proceeds could be used to benefit warlords and terrorists, do you believe that the U.S. military should take direct action against the production and trade of illicit drugs?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. The goal of the U.S. Government in Afghanistan is to help the Afghan government build a capacity to govern themselves, and to provide for their own security, including to help them to take action against the production and the trade of illicit drugs in their country. The U.S. military is assisting in this effort by supporting DEA, UK, and Afghan law enforcement activities. We believe it important that the U.S. follow the Afghans' lead and to maintain an Afghan face on the war against drugs; thus, the U.S. military is not taking direct action in this area.

General MYERS. No, coalition forces should not conduct direct action against narcotics operations except as consistent with existing guidance, which incorporates U.S. law with regard to military involvement in law enforcement operations. Our ultimate objective is to assist Afghanistan in developing its own capacity to address the drug problem in the long term, while providing the support necessary to have an immediate impact. An ill-conceived counternarcotics campaign could be de-stabilizing to Afghanistan and provide a boost for the recruiting efforts of our enemies. U.S. forces do have specific guidance on handling narcotics and drug equipment when they are discovered during normal military operations, but we believe the right approach is to continue to support the law enforcement agencies as part of a multi-faceted approach to the narcotic issue and continue to help the Afghan government develop the capability to deal with the problem.

61. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, could you describe the administration position on when and how U.S. forces should destroy labs, interdict drugs, and pursue major traffickers?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. In Afghanistan, U.S. troops are authorized to conduct military operations against drug trafficking targets when these targets are encountered in the course of regular counterinsurgency operations. If our troops come across drugs or drug equipment, they have been instructed to take action against these targets while doing everything possible to keep an Afghan face on counterdrug actions. U.S. forces discovering drugs or drug paraphernalia contact Combined Joint Task Force-76 for instructions on disposition of the contraband. Whenever possible, local Afghan officials will be asked to participate if drugs are to be destroyed. If such officials are not available, troops are instructed to photograph and report the location of drug caches to higher U.S. authorities. Disposition of large caches of drugs are coordinated at the Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan level.

62. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz and General Myers, what payments are being made with DOD funds currently, and if there are any, would you favor halting them?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. We know of no DOD funds that are being provided to known narcotics traffickers.

General MYERS. We know of no DOD funds that are being provided to known narcotics traffickers.

AFGHAN DRUG ERADICATION EFFORTS

63. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, the U.N. estimated that the amount of land used for poppy cultivation increased 64 percent from 2003 to 2004, and the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy stated that there was a 73-percent increase in poppy-cultivated land from 2003 to 2004.

President Karzai has committed the Afghan military to manually eradicating about 30,000 hectares of the opium (poppy) crop in 2005, only about a 15-percent reduction in the crop if the total harvest is as large as last year's. However, Afghan capabilities are very limited; the amount of land used for poppy cultivation increased about 73 percent last year and is likely to grow again in 2005; and eradication must take place before the April harvest, coinciding roughly with the elections.

All of this implies that the likelihood of any meaningful eradication this year without foreign assistance is very low. According to a January 26 Washington Times story, State Department officials wanted Congress to earmark funds for aerial eradication, but postponed their proposal because of President Karzai's opposition. The 31 NGOs who wrote to Secretary Rice on January 31 argue that "massive eradication efforts in 2005 could risk destabilizing large areas of the country."

What is the DOD position on aerial eradication this year, or in the future?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. President Karzai has stated that aerial eradication is not an option for this year. Our understanding is that Department of State International Narcotics and Law Enforcement will provide support to Afghan ground eradication teams. There are no plans to have U.S. military forces conduct drug crop eradication.

64. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Wolfowitz, will there be any special effort to augment Afghan hand-eradication capabilities by the United States or other military forces?

Secretary WOLFOWITZ. The U.S. Government will work with the Afghan Government to help it build its own capacity to eradicate poppy in Afghanistan. The goal is to allow the Afghan Government to independently keep its level of poppy production below a level that threatens the Nation's stability and security. Toward this end, the Department of State has reprogrammed funds originally slated for aerial eradication to increase the ground eradication program. There are no plans to have U.S. military forces conduct drug crop eradication.

[Whereupon, at 1:50 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

U.S. MILITARY STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 2005

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:37 a.m. in room SR–325, Russell Senate Office Building, Senator John Warner (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Warner, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Collins, Ensign, Talent, Chambliss, Graham, Dole, Cornyn, Thune, Levin, Kennedy, Byrd, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Bayh, and Clinton.

Committee staff members present: Judith A. Ansley, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Charles W. Alsup, professional staff member; Regina A. Dubey, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Sandra E. Luff, professional staff member; Thomas L. MacKenzie, professional staff member; Elaine A. McCusker, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, counsel; Stanley R. O'Connor, Jr., professional staff member; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; Joseph T. Sixeas, professional staff member; Robert M. Soofer, professional staff member; and Scott W. Stucky, general counsel.

Minority staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Democratic staff director; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Evelyn N. Farkas, professional staff member; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Bridget W. Higgins, research assistant; Gerald J. Leeling, minority counsel; Peter K. Levine, minority counsel; and William G.P. Monahan, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Alison E. Brill, Nicholas W. West, and Pendred K. Wilson.

Committee members' assistants present: Cord Sterling, assistant to Senator Warner; John A. Bonsell, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Chris Arnold, assistant to Senator Roberts; Arch Galloway II, assistant to Senator Sessions; Mackenzie M. Eaglen, assistant to Senator Collins; D'Arcy Grisier, assistant to Senator Ensign; Lindsey R. Neas, assistant to Senator Talent; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Meredith Moseley, assistant to Senator Graham; Bob Taylor, assistant to Senator Thune; David S. Lyles, assistant to Senator Levin; Sharon L. Waxman, Mieke Y. Eoyang, and Jarret A. Wright, assistants to Senator Kennedy; Christina Evans, Barry Gene (B.G.) Wright, and Erik Raven, assistants to Senator Byrd; Frederick M. Downey, assisant to Senator

Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Davelyn Noelani Kalipi and Richard Kessler, assistants to Senator Akaka; William K. Sutey, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric Pierce, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Todd Rosenblum, assistant to Senator Bayh; and Andrew Shapiro, assistant to Senator Clinton.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER, CHAIRMAN

Chairman WARNER. The committee meets this morning to receive testimony on U.S. military strategy and operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. I welcome our distinguished panel of military witnesses: General Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General John Abizaid, Commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM); and General George Casey, Commander of the Multinational Forces-Iraq.

I particularly want to thank Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld for his total cooperation in working with the leadership of this committee to arrange this very important hearing. When I first discussed the need for this full complement of military and civilian witnesses, the Secretary's reply was: "Name the day." Today is the day. Thank you.

I want to thank each of our witnesses and the countless men and women in uniform and the civilians that they lead, for their service and their tireless efforts to protect our Nation and our allies from the ever-present terrorist threat, particularly those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan working to secure the peace and self-determination for the Iraqi and Afghan people, and to bring hope to these troubled regions.

Speaking recently to those who have lost their family members, President Bush, who has shown a steady and unflinching resolve, has asked us to remember the following; "One, we are not going to leave them, not going to allow their mission to go in vain; and two, we will complete the mission and the world will be better off for it." I agree with that assessment.

Likewise, we are ever mindful of the loss of life and limb and the sacrifices of the Iraqi and Afghan people. They are more and more each day assuming greater responsibility to secure and lead their respective nations.

On January 30 this year, the Iraqi people took a bold, courageous step, in defiance of the threats from insurgents, to rescue their country from decades of tyranny and to move in a sequence of steps to form a democracy of their own choosing. These historic elections in Iraq gave the world hope that an important milestone had been reached in the combined efforts of the international community to bring peace and security to the Iraqi people.

These initial hopes have been tempered somewhat by the reality of the political and ethical challenges that have delayed the establishment of the Iraqi Transitional Government. The process over the coming months by which the Iraqis adopt a constitution and form a permanent government is the key to success. With the support of the coalition governments, the Iraqi Government must not allow any extensions or delays in providing for a constitution, elections, and the formation of a permanent government. Only strong political leadership will provide a free Iraq.

All governments must work as partners, must stay the course, strengthen their resolve, in order to achieve the common goal. All must be truthful and realistic with their people about the difficulties that lie ahead. Political courage must be as steadfast as the military courage.

As we look back over the history of the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States in preserving our freedom, never have the challenges and responsibilities been greater than those that rest upon today's shoulders of the generation of military leaders. Terrorism knows no boundaries. Terrorists follow no international rules. They have no respect for life, limb, or anyone in their path of destruction. Terrorism of the magnitude the world is confronting today has no precedent in history. They are today's enemy.

I ask our witnesses to give us their candid assessment of the situation and the strategy for the way ahead. The American people must clearly understand what is at stake and why their mission in Iraq contributes to the United States' security, the security of the region, and to a great extent the security of the world. It is vital that our witnesses candidly give us their assessment of the commitment of the Iraqi people, the Iraqi security forces, and their willingness to increase their level of responsibility to defeat terrorism and build a peaceful nation.

No matter what level of troops, both coalition and Iraqi, no matter what level of weaponry they employ, we will not win this battle against insurgents unless every Iraqi citizen joins in supporting the efforts to ferret out and rid their nation of the insurgency.

Our great Nation has an enormous capacity for sacrifice and hardship when we understand the cause is just and that success is critical to the security of our Nation. Americans can and will accept difficult challenges and continue to support a call for service and sacrifice from our Nation's leaders. Many of us lived through such calls during World War II. This global war on terrorism today is no less vital to America's future.

Senator Levin.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First let me join you in welcoming our witnesses this morning, thanking them for their presence. I join with you, Mr. Chairman, in expressing the gratitude of the committee to our troops for their courage, their professionalism, and their sacrifice. Every American is in their debt.

Our men and women in uniform are serving with great honor. They deserve an objective assessment of the situation in Iraq. They deserve a clear layout of the next steps there. They are not getting either from the administration. Instead, they get a repetitious bugle that sounds: Things are going well, things are going well, stay the course, stay the course.

The Vice President said on Memorial Day that the insurgency is in its "last throes." But the fact is that the insurgency has not weakened. On Tuesday, Lieutenant General John Vines, Commander of the Multinational Corps in Iraq, acknowledged the fol-

lowing: "We do not see the insurgency contracting or expanding right now."

Indeed, growing numbers of fanatic jihadist suicide bombers are coming to Iraq with the intent of killing our troops and destroying the prospects for an Iraqi nation. Brigadier General Don Alston, the chief U.S. military spokesman in Iraq, said a few weeks ago: "This insurgency is not going to be settled through military options or military operations. It is going to be settled in the political process."

The administration has said that Shia and Kurdish militias operating independently are not acceptable and that only a national army is. But the ground truth is that militias are becoming more entrenched and relied upon to maintain order. The Iraqi President and Prime Minister in effect acknowledged this recently by praising the militias publicly.

Since March of 2003, more than 1,700 American lives have been lost in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), almost 13,000 Americans have been wounded, and untold numbers of Iraqis have met the same fate. The cost to the American people in dollars is $230 billion and rising. Staying the course is not only hollow-sounding rhetoric, it is an unacceptable policy. We need to change the current dynamic in Iraq. The status quo is neither static nor acceptable.

Some have proposed setting a fixed date for departure. I believe that policy would be counterproductive. It would give an incentive to insurgents and jihadists to simply outlast us and would also increase the chances of civil war on our departure. At the other extreme, the Secretary of State recently said that we would stay in Iraq "as long as needed." That is also the wrong signal, an open-ended commitment to the Iraqis that we will be there even if they fail to agree on a constitution. That lessens the chances that the Iraqis will make the political compromises necessary to defeat the jihadists and the insurgency and become a nation. Suggesting to the Iraqis that we are willing to remain without limit is not only unacceptable to the American people, it is also placing great stress on our Armed Forces and reducing military recruitment. Indeed, it is jeopardizing our volunteer army.

In looking for ways to change the current dynamic, two points are clear. First, only a political settlement will end the insurgency. The insurgency cannot be defeated by military means. Our troops and a gradually improving Iraqi force will help facilitate a settlement, but they will not on their own produce one. As General Casey said recently, the political process will be the decisive element.

Second, none of the Iraqi communities want us to leave precipitously or to leave without a political settlement in hand. Sunni Arabs gradually are becoming aware that the departure of U.S. troops would leave them vulnerable militarily because of the growing strength of the Shia in and out of the army. I believe Sunni Arab leaders recognize that our presence provides them some protection, not so much against the insurgents, but rather against the Shia prevailing if civil war broke out. Sunni leadership, which used to call for our immediate departure, no longer does so.

As for the Shia, their principal leader, Grand Ayatollah Sistani, has consistently supported our continued presence. Peaceful majority rule favors the Shias since they are in the majority, while civil war may or may not have the same result. The Shia also want settlement with the Sunnis as the only way the country can unite against the foreign jihadists, who aim their terror mainly at the Shia. The Kurds also favor our continued presence.

If those two points are correct—there is no military solution without a political one and none of the ethnic groups in Iraq want an immediate U.S. withdrawal—there is one clear message that we can and should send to the Iraqis: You need to reach a political settlement on the timetable to which you have agreed.

Secretary Rumsfeld said earlier this week that the political process in Iraq "has to move forward on schedule." I agree. The Secretary said in addition, "The more the Iraqis delay, the greater the damage, and my view is that it must go forward on schedule and that is the President's view." I agree.

Our following through on that message is essential. The Iraqis have approved a timetable for adopting a constitution, August 15, with the possibility of one and only one 6-month extension. The United States needs to tell the Iraqis and the world that if that deadline is not met we will review our position with all options open, including but not limited to setting a timetable for withdrawal.

The successful drafting of a constitution surely does involve some different issues, such as the role of Islam, the degree of autonomy for the Kurdish areas, and the protection of minority rights. We need to put some pressure on the Iraqis to deal with these issues in a satisfactory and timely manner. Failure to adopt a constitution as scheduled would represent a lack of will to create a country and would instead reflect a continued willingness to rely on U.S. troops to carry a burden that Iraqis must carry.

The possibility of our withdrawal would also lead to increased pressure on the Sunni Arabs from Iraq's Sunni neighbors. Those neighbors do not want U.S. forces to leave without a political settlement, given their fear of the prospect of civil war and instability. Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Syria are all Sunni Arab states. Instability in Iraq would threaten their own stability because they perceive it as possibly leading to the growth of Iranian power and Shia influence closer to home and to greater Kurdish pressure to separate from the rest of Iraq, with accompanying pressure from Kurdish populations in Syria and Turkey to join them.

Just the possibility that U.S. forces would leave Iraq before a political settlement would motivate Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Syria to pressure their Sunni Arab brethren in Iraq to reach a political settlement.

The most important action that we could take to change the current dynamic in Iraq would be for the President to inform the Iraqis that unless their own timetable for adopting a constitution is followed we will need to rethink our presence there with all options open. We must demonstrate to the Iraqis that our willingness to bear the burden of providing security has limits. We have opened the door for the Iraqis at great cost, but only they can walk through it. We cannot hold that door open indefinitely.

Only a constitutional agreement, a political settlement, can change the status quo and end the insurgency in Iraq. The possibility of our leaving unless such a settlement is reached can help bring about that agreement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

If I could make an administrative note, there will be a cloture vote at 10 o'clock this morning. We will recess the hearing at 10:15 and promptly resume upon the completion of that vote. If in the course of the questioning period any of our witnesses feel that their answers to be full and complete would require a closed session, we are prepared to recess at the conclusion of this open session and hold a brief closed session such that we can receive that testimony. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary.

STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD H. RUMSFELD, U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary RUMSFELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee.

Let me begin by saying that the general officers that you introduced sitting next to me: General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, are doing an outstanding job for our country. The American people and our Nation are truly fortunate to have men of this professionalism and skill and talent and dedication and courage.

One year after World War II ended, a leading news magazine published an article about post-war reconstruction efforts in Germany. It was titled "Americans Are Losing the Victory in Europe." The author disparagingly wrote: "Never has American prestige in Europe been lower. People never tire of telling you of the ignorance and rowdyism of the American troops and of America's misunderstanding of European conditions."

The year was 1946. But consider how different 1946 looks to us today. In retrospect, it was not a time to despair, but a time to build, and that is what that generation did.

It has now been 1 year since the turnover of sovereignty to the liberated Iraqi people and, just as Europe was a central battlefield, ideological and military, in the war against communist aggression, so too the Middle East and Central Asia are centers of gravity in today's struggle against violent extremism.

I know the American people still have the same determination and resolve. They know today, as then, that struggles are not won on defense; they are won on offense. Violent extremists have made clear their intention. It is to kill as many westerners and moderate Muslims as possible. They have access to money and weapons, and they are seeking even more dangerous weapons. They are surveying and targeting landmarks in our country and other civilized countries.

Terrorists have to be stopped and the world must find ways to encourage would-be recruits to choose a better path. Our Nation's actions to liberate Afghanistan and Iraq have eliminated two state sponsors of terrorism, most certainly contributed to Libya's decision to open its nuclear weapons programs to international inspection

and to renounce terrorism, and encouraged democratic movements in regions that have long been breeding grounds for violent anti-western extremism.

It is not surprising that there are questions about the situation in Iraq today. That has always been the case in a time of war. Today the questions I hear are something like this: Is the effort underway worth the cost and the sacrifice? How are the coalition and the new Iraqi Government really doing? When will Iraqi security forces be able to assume full responsibility for securing their country? What happens next, and should Congress set a timetable for withdrawal of U.S. troops?

It is important to note what success will mean. Specifically, a free, democratic, peaceful Iraq will not provide aid to violent extremists, will not plot the assassination of American Presidents, will not invade or fire missiles at its neighbors, and it will not use chemical weapons on its neighbors or its own people, as Iraq had done in the past.

Let there be no doubt, if the coalition were to leave before the Iraqi security forces are able to assume responsibility, we would 1 day again have to confront another Iraqi regime, perhaps even more dangerous than the last, in a region plunged into darkness rather than liberated and free.

Americans ask, how are we doing in Iraq? The President's strategy is clear. It is to empower a democratically elected Iraqi Government to aggressively go after the insurgents and terrorists, and that is exactly what their forces are doing, with some success, to pursue an inclusive constitutional political process, to improve public services with the help of the international community and the quality of life for the Iraqi people, and to enable Iraqi security forces to take charge of their own country.

Each of these strategies depends on the others. Success will not be easy and it will require patience and progress on each of those three fronts. But, consider what has been accomplished in 12 months—not 12 years, but 12 months—since sovereignty was passed on June 28. More than 8 million people defied terrorist threats and voted in the January election. Duly elected Iraqi leaders with input from the Sunni minority are now drafting a constitution, to be voted on by the Iraqi people by October 15.

Under their new constitution, a permanent government will then be elected on December 15, 2005. I agree completely with Senator Levin that it is critically important that that timetable not be changed.

Iraqis are building an economy and it is growing. The insurgency remains dangerous, particularly in several parts of Iraq. But terrorists no longer can take advantage of sanctuaries like Fallujah, and coalition and Iraqi forces are capturing or killing hundreds of violent extremists on a weekly basis and confiscating literally mountains of weapons.

The general officers here today are leading the troops that are contributing to these accomplishments. They are prepared to provide a detailed report on the progress of Iraqi security forces. The number of U.S. troops in Iraq has moved from a high during the Iraqi election period of about 160,000 to less than 140,000 currently. But, their priorities have also shifted, from conducting secu-

rity operations essentially to a heavier focus on training, equipping, and assisting the Iraqi security forces.

In the past, as we all know, the performance of the Iraqi security forces has been criticized as being mixed. Fair enough, but consider that 2 years ago few Iraqi security forces had the critical equipment, such as radios, vehicles, and body armor. Today, the vast majority of Iraqi security forces do have the appropriate equipment. The Iraqis had an inexperienced military chain of command and weak Ministries of Defense and Interior. Today, both are improving, but they have a way to go.

They had weak unit cohesion and insufficient mid-level leadership. Today the leaders at all levels are stepping forward. A year ago, six Iraq army battalions were in training. Today dozens of trained battalions are capable of conducting anti-insurgent operations, albeit with coalition support. Sections of the country are relatively peaceful and essentially under control of Iraqi security forces at the present time.

Finally, the question is asked, when can the coalition leave and should Congress establish a deadline to withdraw? Some in Congress have suggested that deadlines be set. That would be a mistake, as Senator Levin has said. It would throw a lifeline to terrorists, who in recent months have suffered significant losses and casualties, been denied havens, and suffered weakened popular support.

Timing in war is never predictable. There are no guarantees, and any who say that we have lost this war or that we are losing this war are wrong. We are not. Coalition military personnel are in Iraq at the request of the Iraqi Government. They are under the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council Resolution 1546. The objectives of the overwhelming majority of the Iraqis and the coalition are the same and that is a peaceful and prosperous Iraq with a representative government. Even today, that is a radical notion in that part of the world, and the fact is that a new approach is going to result in confusion, resistance, and difficulties, as we have seen, we understand that.

Iraq was a violent place before its liberation and there will undoubtedly be some violence in Iraq after the coalition forces depart. But success in this effort cannot be defined by domestic tranquility. Rather, success will be when there is a free Iraq where Iraqis are the guaranteer of their own security, with minimal coalition involvement, and that will be an historic accomplishment.

The timing must be condition-based. It will depend on the extent to which the various ethnic factions reconcile—and they are now doing that—the level of support from the international community, and with the successful meeting recently in Brussels this week international support is growing. The U.N. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), for example, are increasing their commitments.

The timing will depend on Iraq's neighbors as well, whose behavior continues to be unhelpful. Insurgents continue to come into Iraq from Syria and Iran. Nations that serve as conduits for mass murderers are not friends of the Iraqi people, they are not friends of the United States, and they are certainly not friends of the civilized world.

One final point. Someone recently asked me about the differences between my current tenure as Secretary of Defense and my previous service some 30 years ago. One thing that has remained the same is the tendency in some quarters to blame America for the world's troubles. Well, I am not one who wakes up every morning seeking ways to suggest that America is what is wrong with the world. The people who are going on television chopping off people's heads and using disabled children as suicide bombers, they are what is wrong with the world. The violent extremists that killed 3,000 innocent men, women, and children on September 11, they are what is wrong with the world.

In every war there are individuals who commit wrongdoing and there are setbacks and there are hardships. Recently the noted historian and author David McCullough recalled the year 1776 as the most important year in the most important conflict in our history. He said: "If it had been covered by the media and the country had seen how horrible conditions were and what a very serious soup we were in, I think that would have been it."

In 1864 many, including President Lincoln himself, believed that he would lose the upcoming election, due in part to the slew of criticism he was receiving for his prosecution of the Civil War. Speaking to an Ohio regiment, President Lincoln said: "I wish it might be more generally and universally understood what the country is now engaged in. There may be mistakes made some time and things may be done wrong, while the officers of the government do all they can to prevent mistakes. But, I beg of you as citizens of this great Republic not to let your minds be carried off from the great work we have before us." That was good advice.

Today's service men and women, like the generations before them, are performing noble work. Though some pundits and observers and nonparticipants have criticized the American military with inaccurate comparisons and purple rhetoric, those of us who work with the men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces know otherwise. Our fellow citizens in uniform serve with great compassion, with professionalism, amid danger and provocation, and we should not allow the actions of a few to distract from the mission we face or from the necessity to succeed.

To all U.S. military personnel and their families, who sacrifice while guardsmen and reservists are deployed in battle, I offer my fullest appreciation. One day, all those who have made sacrifices on behalf of this cause and the American people who support their important work will find a place of honor in our country's history and they will have won the appreciation and respect that they have richly earned, and I include the three general officers here today.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Rumsfeld follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. DONALD H. RUMSFELD

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee.

I am joined today by:

- General Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff;
- General John Abizaid, Commander of U.S. Central Command; and
- General George Casey, Commander of the Multi-National Force in Iraq.

These general officers are doing an outstanding job and our Nation is truly fortunate to have their able service. I am grateful and proud to be serving with them.

One year after World War II ended—a leading news magazine published an article about post-war reconstruction efforts in Germany. It was entitled: "Americans are Losing the Victory in Europe."

The author despairingly wrote:

> "Never has American prestige in Europe been lower. People never tire of telling you of the ignorance and rowdy-ism of American troops, of our misunderstanding of European conditions."

The year was 1946. But consider how different 1946 looks to us today. In retrospect, it was not a time to despair but to build as they did.

Now it has been 1 year since the turnover of sovereignty to the liberated Iraqi people. Just as Europe was a central battlefield—ideological and military—in the war against Communist aggression, so too the Middle East and Central Asia are the centers of gravity in today's struggle against violent extremism.

I know the American people still have the same determination and resolve. They know today as then that these struggles are not won on defense, they are won on offense.

The task is to help more people understand the nature of this struggle we are in. Violent extremists have made clear their intentions: It is to kill as many Westerners and moderate Muslims as possible.

They have access to money, and to weapons—and they are seeking even more dangerous weapons. They are surveying and targeting landmarks in our country.

They have to be stopped. Together with the world we must find ways to encourage any would-be recruits to choose a better path.

Our Nation's actions to liberate Afghanistan and Iraq have:

- Eliminated two state sponsors of terrorism;
- Most certainly contributed to Libya's decision to open its nuclear weapons programs to international inspection and renounce terrorism; and
- Encouraged democratic movements in regions that have long been breeding grounds for violent anti-Western extremism.

It is not surprising that there are questions about the situation in Iraq today. That has always been the case in a time of war. It was true in Washington's time, and Lincoln's time, and Roosevelt's to be sure.

Today the questions I hear are something like this:

- Is the effort underway in Iraq worth the cost and the sacrifice?
- How are the coalition and the new Iraqi government really doing?
- When will Iraqi security forces be able to assume full responsibility for securing their country? and
- What happens next, and should Congress set a timetable to withdraw?

I will comment on each of these questions.

First, whether the effort underway in Iraq is worth the costs.

It was not long ago, there was relatively little disagreement—either here at home, or in the United Nations—as to the danger the former Iraqi regime posed to the region and the world.

The only question then was how long the United Nations should wait for Iraq to comply with the 17 Security Council Resolutions it had defied.

By contrast it is important to note what success will mean.

Specifically, a free, democratic, and peaceful Iraq:

- Will not provide aid to violent extremists;
- It will not plot the assassination of American Presidents;
- It will not invade or fire missiles at its neighbors; and
- It will not use chemical weapons on its neighbors or its own people.

Let there be no doubt: If the coalition were to leave before the Iraqi security forces are able to assume responsibility—which we must not do—we would 1 day again have to confront another Iraqi regime—perhaps even more dangerous than the last—in a region plunged into darkness, rather than bathed in the light of freedom.

Americans ask: how are we doing in Iraq?

The President's strategy is clear—to empower the democratically elected Iraqi government:

- To aggressively go after the insurgents and terrorists—and that is exactly what their forces are doing with solid success;
- To pursue an inclusive constitutional political process;
- To improve public services and, with the help of the international community, improve the quality of life for the Iraqi people; and
- To enable Iraq's security forces to take charge of their own country.

Each of these strategies depends on the others. Success will require patience and progress on each of the four.

But consider what has been accomplished in Iraq in 12 months time—not 12 years, but 12 months:

- More than 8 million people defied terrorists' threats and voted in the January election;
- Duly elected Iraqi leaders, are drafting a Constitution to be voted on by the Iraqi people by October 15, 2005. Under their new Constitution, a permanent government will be elected on December 15, 2005;
- Iraqis are building an economy and it is growing—with a stock market and a stable currency;
- While the insurgency remains dangerous in parts of Iraq, Coalition and Iraqi operations are disrupting terrorist sanctuaries, such as Fallujah, and keeping them on the run;
- U.S. forces are capturing or killing hundreds of violent extremists on a daily basis and confiscating literally mountains of weapons.

The general officers here today are leading the troops that are contributing to these achievements. They are prepared to provide a detailed report on the progress of Iraq's security forces.

The number of U.S. troops in Iraq has moved from the Iraqi election high of 160,000 to less than 140,000 currently. But their priorities have shifted—from conducting security operations to a heavier focus on training, equipping, and assisting the Iraqi forces.

In the past, the performance of Iraqi security forces has been criticized for being mixed. But consider that:

- Two years ago, few Iraqi forces had critical equipment such as radios, vehicles, or body armor. Today, the vast majority of Iraqi security forces have this equipment;
- The Iraqis had an inexperienced military chain of command and weak ministries of Defense and Interior. Today, both are improving, but they have a way to go;
- They had weak unit cohesion and insufficient mid-level leadership. Today, leaders at all levels are stepping forward;
- A year ago, six Iraqi Army battalions were in training. Today, dozens of trained battalions are capable of conducting anti-insurgent operations with Coalition support;
- Large sections of the country, including much of the north and south, are relatively peaceful and essentially under the control of Iraqi security forces; and
- Responsibility for what had been one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in Baghdad was recently turned over to the Iraqi security forces, and has been relatively free of serious violence.

Don't believe it when you were told the Iraqi security forces can't cut it. They can and they are, to their credit.

Finally, the question is asked: when can the coalition leave? Should Congress establish a deadline to withdraw?

Some in Congress have suggested that deadlines be set for withdrawal. That would be a terrible mistake. It would throw a lifeline to terrorists who in recent months have suffered significant losses in casualties, been denied havens, and suffered weakened popular support.

Let me be clear: the United States made a commitment to finish the job and we must do so. Timing in war is never predictable—there are no guarantees. We can and will prevail, but only if we persevere. Any who say we have lost or are losing are flat wrong. We are not.

Coalition military personnel are in Iraq at the request of the Iraqi government and consistent with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546. The objectives of the overwhelming majority of Iraqis and the coalition are the same: a peaceful and prosperous Iraq with a representative government. Even today, that is a radical notion in the Middle East. The fact that that is a new approach is going to result in occasional confusion, resistance, and difficulties. We understand that.

Iraq was a violent place long before its liberation, and there may undoubtedly be some violence in Iraq after Coalition forces depart. But, success in this effort cannot be defined as domestic tranquility. Rather, success will be when there is a free Iraq, where Iraqis are the guarantors of their own security, with minimal Coalition involvement. That will be a truly historic accomplishment.

The amount of time this will take is not knowable.

The timing must be condition based. It will depend on:

- The extent to which various ethnic factions reconcile—and they are now doing so in impressive ways;
- The level of support from the international community—and it is growing. The U.N. and NATO, for example, are increasing their commitments. The international conference on Iraq that recently took place in Brussels elicited strong political statements of support for the emerging Iraqi democracy;
- The timing will also depend on Iraq's neighbors, whose behavior continues to be unhelpful.

Insurgents continue to come into Iraq from Syria and Iran. Nations that serve as conduits for mass murderers are not friends of the Iraqi people, or of the United States, or of the civilized world.

One final point. Someone recently asked me about the differences between my current tenure as Secretary of Defense and my previous tenure some 30 years ago. One thing that has remained the same is the tendency in some quarters to blame America for the world's troubles.

Well, I'm not one who wakes up every morning seeking ways to suggest that America is what's wrong with the world. The people who are going on television chopping off people's heads or using disabled children as suicide bombers—they are what's wrong with the world. The violent extremists that killed 3000 innocent men, women and children on September 11 are what's wrong with the world.

In every war, there are individuals who commit wrongdoing. There are mistakes, setbacks, and hardships.

Recently the noted historian and author, David McCullough, recalled the year 1776 as "the most important year in the most important conflict in our history." He said:

> "If it had been covered by the media and the country had seen how horrible the conditions were . . . and what a very serious soup we were in, I think that would have been it."

Similarly in 1864, many—including President Lincoln himself—believed he would lose the upcoming election due in part to the slew of criticisms he received for his prosecution of the Civil War. Speaking to an Ohio regiment, President Lincoln said:

> "I wish it might be more generally and universally understood what the country is now engaged in. There may be mistakes made sometimes; and things may be done wrong, while the officers of the Government do all they can to prevent mistakes. But I beg of you, as citizens of this great Republic, not to let your minds be carried off from the great work we have before us."

That was sound advice then—and it is wise counsel today.

Today's service men and women, like the generations before them, are performing noble work. Though some pundits and observers—non-participants—have criticized the American military with irresponsible comparisons and purple rhetoric, those of us who work with the men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces know otherwise.

Our fellow citizens in uniform serve with great compassion and professionalism amid danger and provocation. We should not allow the actions of a few to distract us from the mission we face. Or from the necessity to succeed.

To all U.S. military personnel, to their families who sacrifice while guardsmen and reservists are deployed in battle, I offer my fullest appreciation.

One day, all those who have made sacrifices on behalf of this cause—and the American people who support their important work—will find a place of honor in our country's history and they will have won the appreciation and respect that they have richly earned.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I might add that when a group of us had a chance to be with the President the other day, he likewise indicated the extraordinary trust and confidence he has in the military officers appearing before us today in this hearing and others throughout the world. We are fortunate to have them in the service of our country.

General Myers.

STATEMENT OF GEN. RICHARD B. MYERS, USAF, CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

General MYERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, and members of the committee. Thank you for your continuing support of our men and women in uniform and for this opportunity to discuss our progress and challenges in Iraq.

In the year since the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq, we have watched the Iraqi government and Iraqi security forces make steady progress in providing for their own security. Of course, many challenges still remain. We see that every day as violent extremists murder innocent men, women, and children and sabotage the efforts of the Iraqi people and the coalition. But, that is only part of the story. Every day as well, the new Iraqi government, with the help of the coalition, takes significant positive steps down the road to freedom and to security.

We are on the right course and we must stay that course. Under General Abizaid's and General Casey's leadership, we have the right strategy for helping build a new and secure Iraq, at peace with its neighbors, with a representative government that respects human rights and maintains the rule of law.

The stakes in Iraq are enormous. Iraq is not just a battle in the struggle against violent extremism and al Qaeda. It is currently the central battle. The enemy is counting on our resolve to weaken. I can assure you, however, that our men and women in uniform are firm in their resolve.

We are grateful for the support of the American people and that support absolutely must continue until the job is done. While we are all eager to see our troops come home, leaving before the task is complete would be catastrophic, not only for Iraq, but also for the overall struggle against violent extremism and for our national security.

Our troops understand exactly what is at stake in Iraq and they know that they are making a huge and important difference. One Army captain from Pennsylvania, currently on his second deployment to Iraq, wrote him in an e-mail: "When I am really tired, I occasionally think that I am giving a little more than my share. But, then I think back to World War II and Korea, when soldiers deployed oftentimes not knowing when they were coming home. That gets me back in the correct frame of mind."

I am very proud of all our service men and women, as I know you all are, proud of their tremendous determination, their courage, the compassion that they show every day under very challenging conditions.

Shortly we are going to celebrate the Fourth of July, the day that our Nation's first leaders told the world what we stand for as Americans. As we approach the Fourth, we are also reminded that building a free and open society is a very difficult task and it takes a long time. But, it is a most noble task. I think we are all grateful for our freedoms, we are grateful for those that have fought for those freedoms in the past and those that today are fighting to defend those freedoms as well.

We thank you for your support and we look forward to your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

At this time the committee will stand in recess until the completion of the vote. [Recess from 10:10 a.m. to 10:31 a.m.]

Chairman WARNER. General Myers, I believe you had completed your statement.

General MYERS. Yes, sir.

Chairman WARNER. We will now hear from General Abizaid.

STATEMENT OF GEN JOHN P. ABIZAID, USA, COMMANDER, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

General ABIZAID. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, and members of the committee. I thank all of you for the opportunity to join you today.

I just returned from the region and spent some time in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Djibouti. Our troops and their commanders remain confident, competent, and courageous. We honor their dedication and sacrifice.

Discussions with Afghan and Iraqi security force leaders and visits to their units in the field showed growing confidence, increased capability, and increasingly better organized chains of command. The keystone to our theater strategy is to build effective local forces and, while they have made much progress, they are not yet ready to stand and operate alone.

I know we are here today to talk primarily about Iraq, but we must not lose sight of the broader struggle under way. The same enemy that brought us September 11 fights us in Afghanistan and Iraq. They challenge our partners in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. They attack friends in Turkey, Spain, and Morocco. They organize to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction and connect their hateful ideology and recruitment through the tools of the connected world.

While we do not exclusively fight al Qaeda and their associated movements in our region, they represent the main enemy to peace and stability. Their vision of the future is best seen in the example of the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan: no music, sequestered women, executions in soccer stadiums, and destruction of treasured art. Like the ideologies of fascists and communists before them, al Qaeda seeks to be the vanguard of the extremist movement and the oppressor of free-thinking people.

Our campaign since September 11 has put them on the defensive. The enemy is under pressure, but still dangerous, still seeking to hit us again at home. I share the view of many of our troops in the field that fighting this enemy abroad makes it more difficult for them to strike us at home. We can decisively weaken the ideological extremists led by bin Laden, Zawahiri, and Zarqawi by stabilizing Iraq, stabilizing Afghanistan, and actively helping regional nations help themselves against this threat.

The great sense of confidence I gain from American, Iraqi, and Afghan troops in the field stands in often stark contrast to those who see no obvious progress on the battlefield. I can understand the confusion. This is no longer a war of mass fires and easily traced maneuvers, but rather a war of subtle intelligence action, position, precise strikes, and the painstaking work of institution-building.

The enemy does not seek to defeat us militarily, but to wait us out, to sap our confidence, and to break our will. We must not let their success about grabbing headlines confuse us about our ability to help the people of the region build better futures. Militarily, our forces are strong. They provide the shield behind which legitimate institutions form. They gain time for the political process in Iraq and Afghanistan to mature. Elsewhere in the region, their presence and assistance help shape capabilities that allow our friends in the region to resist extremism.

For those of us who have spent many months in the field, we see good progress in both Iraq and Afghanistan. We sense good progress against the extremism that once seemed so pervasive in the region. But, we are realistic and we know that great change is almost always accompanied by violence.

It is not our intention today to paint a rosy picture of tasks easily accomplished. We have sacrificed much and there is much more work ahead. Progress in counterinsurgency and counterterrorist work is not easily recognized. Setbacks, casualties, and difficult problems undoubtedly remain ahead, but with your support and the support of the American people success is undoubtedly ahead as well.

We will need patience and strength to achieve success. Our men and women in uniform have both.

Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

General Casey.

STATEMENT OF GEN GEORGE W. CASEY, USA, COMMANDING GENERAL, MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE-IRAQ

General CASEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank all of the committee for their continued support. As we approach the 1-year anniversary of sovereignty in Iraq, I continue to be inspired by the demonstrated courage, conviction, tenacity, and commitment of the Iraqi people as they march toward democracy. After more than 3 decades of living under a brutal dictator, the Iraqis have embraced the ideals of self-governance and tolerance and are fighting and dying to build a better future for all Iraqis. Such commitment deserves our admiration and continued support.

In the past year the Iraqis, supported by the coalition, have established an interim government, neutralized the Shia insurgency, eliminated terrorist and insurgent safe havens across Iraq, mobilized their security forces to confront the insurgency, increased the pace of economic development, seated a democratically elected Transitional National Assembly (TNA), and peacefully passed control from the interim government to the transitional government. The new government, after a transitional period, has formed and aggressively continued the campaign against the terrorists and insurgents while building inclusive political, governmental, and constitutional processes.

The Iraqi people are serious about their future, they are serious about building a government that respects the human rights of all Iraqis, and they are serious about defeating the terrorists and the insurgents that are doing the utmost to deny them their dreams.

I sense that many view the daily snapshots of violence in Iraq in isolation and conclude that our efforts in Iraq are not progressing. That is what the terrorists and the insurgents would like you to believe. Quite the contrary, the Iraqi people make progress every day. They are fighting for their future against the remnants of the regime that tyrannized them for over 3 decades and they are fighting for their future against the extremists with the same goals as those who attacked the United States on September 11.

Now, you hear a lot about what the insurgents do, so I thought it might be useful to consider what the insurgents and the terrorists have not done over the past year. First of all, they have lost their safe haven in Fallujah and they have not been able to reconstitute it.

Second, they have not been able to expand their support base across Iraq, nor have they attracted a broad following, largely because they have no positive vision for Iraq's future to offer. Even by our most pessimistic estimates on the size of the insurgency, we believe the insurgency constitutes less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the Iraqi population. As I have said several times, this is a localized insurgency and in 14 of the 18 provinces they still average less than 3 incidents of violence per day.

The insurgents also have not prevented the growth of the Iraqi security forces, even with almost daily attacks. Iraqi security forces, after struggling last spring and fall, drew great confidence from their decisive role in protecting the January 30 elections. These Iraqi security forces, that now number around 170,000, have been further enabled by a more proactive partnership with coalition forces that, while only a few months old, has enabled the Iraqis to begin moving toward assuming the lead for their counterinsurgency effort.

The insurgents have also not sparked sectarian violence, although they work hard at it every day. They cannot do this because the Iraqi commitment to something better is so strong.

Lastly and perhaps most importantly, the insurgents have not stopped political and economic development in Iraq. The well-known January 30 elections where 8.5 million Iraqis defied intimidation and terror to take a stake in their future, the formation of the first democratically elected government in decades, and the beginnings of the development of an Iraq constitution all indicate that the momentum is in favor of democracy and not terror.

What perhaps is less well known is the progress in the economic sector, progress that only begins to meet Iraq's needs, but progress nonetheless. In the last year, through the hard work of Iraqis, the U.S. embassy, and coalition forces, we have started over 2,500 of the 3,100 reconstruction projects funded by our government and we have completed over 1,300 of those. Even more heartening is the private construction of homes and businesses that we witness on a daily basis and attribute to Iraq's growing economy and public confidence. Iraq slowly gets better every day.

Unfortunately, the tough part about counterinsurgencies is that the insurgents do not have to win; they just have to not lose. This, as General Abizaid said, is a battle of wills and the terrorists and insurgents are challenging ours. They will continue to contest the Iraqi political, economic, and social advances by attacking innocent

men, women, and children, symbols of the government, and coalition forces. But they will not succeed.

The stark reality is that insurgencies have not done well against democratically-elected governments, particularly insurgencies that offer no positive vision. Recent polls confirm that Iraqis are: one, confident in their government and in their security forces; two, optimistic about their future; and three, they intend to vote in large numbers in both the upcoming constitutional referendum and the democratic elections. The Iraqi people are committed to something better than the tyranny that they have known for the past 3 decades and are fighting every day for the dream of a better future.

The last year was one of progress and firsts for Iraq, but one also impacted by terror and violence. Yet the Iraqi people persevered to their greatest accomplishment in decades, the January elections. Six months before the constitutional elections, I will tell you, Mr. Chairman, that we are well positioned for another Iraqi success. To be sure, there are long-term development challenges and much to be done. To be sure, Iraq's steady progress will be contested. But, this insurgency and these terrorists will ultimately be defeated as Iraqis elect a government based on an Iraqi constitution that respects the human rights of all Iraqis, as they build Iraqi security forces that can maintain domestic order and deny Iraq as a safe haven for terror, and as they continue economic development programs that help Iraq recover from decades of neglect.

The Iraqi people will continue to be enabled in their journey by the determined efforts of the coalition and our embassy personnel that have done so much and that have given so much over the past 2 years.

We are humbled by the sacrifices that they and their families have made and we continue to be humbled by their commitment and their resolve. I could not be prouder of the magnificent men and women of our Armed Forces.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that we make progress in Iraq every day. But, it is hard work and it is a challenging environment. That said, after a year on the ground I can tell you that I am more convinced than ever that this mission is both realistic and achievable. It will require patience and will, but both the region and our country will be better when Iraq succeeds.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

We have had I think very good opening statements from our distinguished panel and we will now proceed to a 6-minute round of questions.

Mr. Secretary, I would like to reread a brief part of my opening statement and a brief part of Senator Levin's opening statement. I said the following: "The process over the coming months by which the Iraqis adopt a constitution and form a government is key to their success. With the support of the coalition governments, the Iraqi government must not allow any extensions or delays in providing for a constitution, elections, and the formation of a permanent government. Only strong political leadership will provide a free Iraq."

Senator Levin has taken it a step further than I have: "The United States needs to tell the Iraqis and the world that if the

deadline is not met we will review"—that is with regard to this formation of government—"our position with all options open, including but not limited to setting a timetable for withdrawal."

In your opening statement you said you agree with Senator Levin and I would like to have your further amplification with, I presume, the statement "we will review our position"—certainly we would. "All options are open." That seems to me reasonable. "But not limited to setting a timetable for withdrawal."

My point is that I see no alternative whatsoever for the coalition of governments, and most particularly ours, from allowing Iraq to not succeed in the formation of its government. I am just wondering, if they are not able to make this timetable as laid down for the constitution, the elections, and the formation of the permanent government, what are our reasonable options? Because we have no alternative but to see that that government does succeed at some point in time. Otherwise, it will be a signal to worldwide terrorism that they stayed the course and indeed thwarted the efforts of the coalition forces to achieve the goals of some form of new government in Iraq.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Mr. Chairman, there is no question, as each one of us have said this morning, but that there must be progress on the political side, there must be progress on the economic side, and there must be progress on the security side, and they are all linked. To the extent there would be, for whatever reason, a delay in moving forward with drafting a constitution or a referendum on the constitution or holding the elections, it would retard the entire process. During this process coalition people are being killed, Iraqis are being killed, and it would be an enormous disservice in my view to delay the constitution or the elections under the new constitution.

That is what I said I agreed with. It is not for me to tell the Iraqi government what the President might do with respect to reviewing our situation or anything like that. I might make recommendations to the President, but it is for him to make those decisions, not me.

But there are a number of things the Iraqi people must do. A number of countries, 32 countries, have sent their finest young people over there and liberated that country. They now have an opportunity to grab a hold of that country and take all the wealth they have in water, intelligence, education, and oil and turn it into a model for the Middle East. It is their task to do that. They are going to be ultimately the ones who will win this insurgency.

The Iraqi people have to have confidence that they have a voice in it, all the Iraqi people. But, they have to fight corruption. They are going to have to move forward on the political side. They are going to have to provide information to the Iraqi security forces so they know where the terrorists are hiding and the extremists are so that they can capture or kill them. They are going to have to take responsibility for all the Iraqi detainees and build prison facilities and establish a criminal justice system to see that people are dealt with in a proper manner.

They have a lot of things they have to do. But, one of the first and foremost clearly is to see that they move forward on the political side and that the Iraqi people feel they have a stake in the future of that country.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

General Abizaid, you have had a very long and distinguished career in our military and much of that career of service has been in this region of the world. Your understanding of the people and the culture and their capabilities and the history—there is a lot to be said that we should have examined with greater care the history of this culture as we proceeded with this military mission.

What are your assessments as to the ability of the Iraqi people to succeed in the goals outlined very clearly by Secretary Rumsfeld just now and in other testimony?

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman, I think both General Casey and I would tell you that we spend a lot of time working very closely with Iraqis on the political side and on the military side, and we have known Iraqis that have been killed by the terrorists, that have succumbed to the insurgents. It is interesting how many times when one of them is killed another one will stand up and take their place.

The desire to be free, the desire to develop a society within their own cultural norms, that allows them freedom and opportunity for a better future for their families, is not only an Iraqi desire; I think it is a desire of most human beings everywhere on this planet. That the United States Armed Forces help to give them that is absolutely one of the most important things I think we have ever been engaged in.

We often do talk past one another culturally. We do have barriers of understanding that get in the way of efficient business sometimes. But, as we go down this road, both in Afghanistan and Iraq and in other places in the region, the cultural gap is closing, and it needs to close faster. There is nothing about Islam that says Iraq cannot move in the direction it is moving. There is nothing about the Arab culture that says that people cannot participate in their future in a free and participatory manner.

The opportunity for a new beginning is clearly there. I believe that people throughout the region, not only in Iraq but elsewhere, in Lebanon, in Syria, in Saudi Arabia, you name the country in the Middle East—but they are all looking for the opportunities for reform and a better future and for accountability from their governments, and I think that is possible.

Chairman WARNER. Let me ask a second part of this question. Should there be a delay in adopting the constitution, or the invoking of the 6-month extension, creating a perception that the formation of this new permanent government is being delayed, for whatever reason, what is likely to be the reaction of the insurgents and others who want to stop this process in Iraq? Will they redouble their efforts? Will there likely be more participants from other nations that are flowing into Iraq daily? What would be the consequences from a military standpoint should that scenario become a reality?

General ABIZAID. My view is that if there is a delay it gives the insurgents the opportunity to get better organized, it increases the number of deaths and the tempo of action. It would be a bad thing, but not fatal.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

General Casey, the committee received an extensive briefing——

General CASEY. I am sorry, sir. Before you go on, could I just add something on your question about the abilities of the Iraqis to succeed in accomplishing their goals? I alluded to it in my testimony, but we should not underestimate the impact of having lived under the regime of Saddam Hussein. We should not underestimate the impact that that has had on the psyche of the Iraqi people and the desire for something better.

They are very resilient. Again, as I said in my opening statement, they want something better.

Chairman WARNER. They manifested that in the election period.

General, in terms of the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and other weapons that are being directed at the coalition forces, and indeed these insidious type of weapons are taking a very high toll of life and limb, our committee received I think an excellent briefing from those in the Department of Defense (DOD) yesterday who have the responsibility of developing the technology and getting it into the field to counteract this problem.

There is a certain realism here that our technology has been, I think, reasonably successful in overcoming the complicated electronics and the variety of electronics being employed in these IEDs. But, now the insurgents seem to be departing from burying them and putting them in static positions and going more to the mobile platform, namely stealing a car and then utilizing that car and the armaments in it to bring about death and destruction.

Much of the technology that we put into effect does not have the same level of deterrence in overcoming those systems once you go into that mobile platform. How are we going to address this situation?

General CASEY. Senator, just two points I would make here. First of all, I thank the committee up front for their great support. I think you might be interested to know that as a result of the additional protective gear and vehicles that have been sent over there, what we have seen over the last several months is that our return to duty rate, someone who is wounded but not seriously enough to be evacuated from the theater, has gone up by over 10 percent. So now over 70 percent of our young men and women who are wounded are only wounded slightly. So that is a huge step forward.

On the shift to car bombs, I think it is not so much a shift as an increase in the use of car bombs to create terror. I think it is interesting that, while the overall number of attacks has gone down, the casualties of those attacks have gone way up because they are driving car bombs into crowds of civilians for the sole purpose of terror.

Now, how do you deal with that? This is part of the nature of the war that we are in, and really any war. Action, reaction, counteraction. Our commanders on the ground are continuously adapting and adjusting, not only to what the enemy does, but also to try to out-think the enemy and get ahead of him.

So as we work against the car bombs, while the technological solutions are not a silver bullet, as you suggested, they are a part of the adaptation of a more holistic strategy: one, to conduct operations along the borders to disrupt the flow of the suicide bombers and foreign fighters that drive those suicide car bombs; two, to attack the facilitators that take those car bombers, match them up

with the car; three, to attack the car bomb makers and the cells that make those.

We have been attacking each of those three areas here across Iraq over the past 6 weeks to 2 months. So we are adopting a holistic approach to this.

But I will tell you, Senator, it is very hard, if not impossible, to defend against someone who is willing to kill themselves to accomplish their objective.

Chairman WARNER. The suicide participant, I agree.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, can you give us your assessment of the strength of the insurgency? Is it less strong, more strong, or about the same strength as it was 6 months ago?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I would say, in terms of comparison from 6 months ago, in terms of foreign fighters, I believe there are more foreign fighters coming into Iraq than there were 6 months ago. In terms of the overall strength of the insurgents, I would say it is about the same as it was.

Senator LEVIN. So you would not agree with the statement that it is in its last throes?

General ABIZAID. I do not know that I would make any comment about that, other than to say there is a lot of work to be done against the insurgency.

Senator LEVIN. Well, the Vice President has said it is in its last throes. That is the statement of the Vice President. It does not sound to me from your testimony or any other testimony here this morning that it is in its last throes.

General ABIZAID. I am sure you will forgive me from criticizing the Vice President.

Senator LEVIN. I just want an honest assessment from you as to whether you agree with a particular statement of his. It is not personal. I just want to know whether you agree with that assessment. It is not a personal attack on him, any more than if he says that something is a fact and you disagree with it. We would expect you to say you would disagree with it.

General ABIZAID. I gave you my opinion of where we are.

Senator LEVIN. General Casey, you have said that the political process will be the decisive element. Can you expand on that?

General CASEY. I can, Senator. As we look at how to fight this war, we are fighting a counterinsurgency. If you look back historically at how insurgencies have been defeated, they have been defeated when the insurgents saw their options as better protected in the political process and their prospects for economic advancement to be better protected by the political process than fighting for them. That is the essential element here.

The timetable that has been established for the political process is a great forcing function to keep this moving. As was discussed earlier, I also support the notion that any extension of the constitutional process would not be a good thing.

Senator LEVIN. Beyond their own timetable?

General CASEY. I am not sure what you mean by "beyond their own"——

Senator LEVIN. They have a timetable of August 15 for a constitution and then they have allowed themselves under their own law one 6-month extension. That is it.

General CASEY. Right, and what I am saying is I do not even believe that they ought to have the 6-month extension.

Senator LEVIN. I agree with that fully. But if they do not meet their own timetable, what you are saying is it could have severe negative consequences on our troops and on the outcome?

General CASEY. It certainly has the potential for that, Senator.

Senator LEVIN. Well, I agree with that.

I think everybody wants them to meet that timetable. The President has flat-out said that they should meet the timetable. Our Secretary of Defense has said again this morning how important it is, how essential it is that they meet their timetable, and again earlier this week said that it is absolutely important that they meet their timetable. It seems to me that it is important that the administration say publicly that there will be consequences or might be consequences in terms of our policies and actions if they do not meet that timetable.

I very much welcome the statements here this morning as to how essential it is that they meet it. But, unless we do more than just say the words that it is important or essential or critical, unless we also give a message that we are going to have to review our situation if they do not meet their own timetable, it seems to me those words become hollow.

The Secretary of State made a statement, which is that we are going to keep our forces there as long as they are needed. That has the opposite effect of telling them that if they do not meet their timetable for a political agreement, which is essential to ending the insurgency according to all your testimony, we are going to need to assess our situation. We are not going to decide in advance we are setting a deadline. We are not going to say what the consequences are going to be, but we are going to look at all options, including the possibility of setting a timetable.

That, it seems to me, is a critically important thing for the administration to do, and what troubles me is that the only public statement that really we have had on that so far that I think is relevant is the opposite, which is the Secretary of State saying we will be there as long as we are needed. That is open-ended. If they do not agree to a constitution, if they do not agree to a political settlement, we are going to be needed for a much longer time than if they do.

So I would hope, Secretary Rumsfeld, that you would take back at least this suggestion to the administration, to the President, even though you do not want to tell us or do not know perhaps what your own advice would be on this key issue as to what public statement should be made if they do not keep their own timetable. I would hope that you would take back the suggestion that, in order for those important words to have some kind of "oomph" behind them, some kind of impact, there has to be a suggestion which is explicit: Folks, political settlement is essential to ending the insurgency. Our experts all here say that. A political settlement requires a constitution, and if you do not meet the deadline for settling your political differences and adopting a constitution, then we

are in a deeper soup than we are in now relative to the insurgency. That is the testimony here this morning.

I would hope, Mr. Secretary, that you would pass along this suggestion, that there be an explicit statement to the Iraqis that not only do we expect them to keep their timetable for adopting a constitution, but that if they do not that we would have to assess our position, not prejudging what we would do, but looking at all options, including but not limited to setting a timetable for withdrawal. Are you willing to at least consider that and take that suggestion back?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I will be happy to take that back, and I do know what I think. I would like to clarify one thing. You seem to include in their timetable the possibility of a 6-month delay. I want it very clear that I do not favor a 6-month delay even though that may be permitted under the Transitional Administrative Law.

Senator LEVIN. Well, good for you. I hope that the words then are followed by actions as to what will be the effect if they extend it. That is fine with me.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Fair enough.

Let me make one other comment, Senator Levin. You raised the question of the Vice President's remarks about the "last throes." You and I both have emphasized the importance of progress on the political side. The enemy knows that as well, and they know that if a democracy is established with a permanent government under a constitution in Iraq that they have lost a great deal. I do not doubt for a minute that they will respond to that challenge and recognize how important it is for them not to lose and in these final months between now and that constitution-drafting and the election they may very well be in their last throes by their own view because they recognize how important it will be if they lose and in fact if a democracy is established.

I think those words, while I would not did not use them, I think it is understandable that we should expect that kind of response from the enemy.

Chairman WARNER. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank the witnesses. General Casey and General Abizaid, thank you for your outstanding leadership to the men and women who are serving this Nation. Also, I would express my appreciation to others, like General Petraeus, who are doing such an outstanding job.

I share your view that there are some signs of progress that should be encouraging to us and I share your view that we have to stay the course and the worst thing we could do would be to set a time or date of withdrawal of U.S. troops until the Iraqi military is able to take over those responsibilities of ensuring the security and safety of the Iraqi people as they transition to democracy.

I also must tell you I am very worried. My concerns range from overstressing our National Guard and Reserves, some of whom are going back to Iraq for the second and third time, to our recruiting shortfalls. I am not satisfied yet with the plans that you may have to address that issue.

General Casey, I may have gotten the wrong briefing yesterday, but I understand the attacks are up and casualties are up, not down, over a year ago. Go ahead, please.

General CASEY. I was specifically speaking about attacks against civilians.

Senator MCCAIN. I see, thank you.

General CASEY. I am sorry. Just to be clear, attacks now currently as compared to a year ago are actually about the same. If they are up it is only slightly, it is not significant.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you. But the fact that it is not significantly down is not encouraging to me.

General CASEY. As it should not be.

Senator MCCAIN. General Casey, could we talk a little bit about the training of the Iraqi military? We went back and forth, perhaps for too long, in this committee about how many were trained and equipped, and then I think all of us agreed that we should grade by units rather than individuals. What percentage of the Iraqi units would you judge now are combat-ready?

General CASEY. Senator, let me use the same kind of criteria we use for the United States Army.

Senator MCCAIN. Go ahead.

General CASEY. Let me give you some generalities here. First of all, let me tell you what we have done over the past months. We have developed a readiness assessment very similar to our own readiness assessment process. We have established four readiness categories. I think General Petraeus may have talked to you about that. It is a classified assessment, just like our own is a classified assessment.

We categorize the units by those who are ready for independent counterinsurgency operations—that is a very high standard and we do not expect many of those to make that gate for some time.

The second category is those that are capable of counterinsurgency operations with enabling support from us, with our transition teams and with intelligence and medevac, those kind of supports from us. That number is increasing daily and we will get a good number of units there probably before the end of this year.

The third category is those that are good enough to operate with us, but not operate by themselves even with our help. Then the last category are those that are forming and are not ready at all.

Senator MCCAIN. I understand.

General CASEY. So, that is how we lay that out.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, I think we need to know that information, General Casey. I do not know why it is classified. We need to know how things are progressing in Iraq. That is the key element to success in Iraq.

Maybe, Mr. Chairman, we can somehow elicit that. We seem to have great difficulty getting information, including redacting of information in the Boeing thing and the failure to get other information. I find that very frustrating.

General Casey, I do not think it is an illegitimate nor should it be a classified answer, what percentage of those 170,000 are combat-ready.

General CASEY. Okay, and I am not——

Chairman WARNER. We can proceed to a closed hearing following——

Senator MCCAIN. Well, then we will proceed to a closed hearing. I think the American people need to know, Mr. Chairman. They are the ones who are paying for this conflict. But, I will drop the question for now.

General Abizaid, obviously one of the major problems that we have is this new influx of foreigners into Iraq across Syrian borders; is that not correct?

General ABIZAID. That is correct, Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. A larger and larger percentage of these suicide bombers come from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and other countries, is that not correct?

General ABIZAID. That is correct. We have also seen an influx of suicide bombers from North Africa, specifically Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco.

Senator MCCAIN. Syria is facilitating this passage through money, training, equipment, and other means; is that correct?

General ABIZAID. I think I would put it somewhat differently. I would say that there is a clear node inside Syria which facilitates it. Whether or not the Syrian government is facilitating it or ignoring it is probably a debatable question. But the key node is Damascus in Syria.

Senator MCCAIN. It is a growing problem?

General ABIZAID. It is.

Senator MCCAIN. If Syria does not enforce its borders, should we reach a point where we may not want to respect those borders?

General ABIZAID. I think that question is best put to the policymakers. But I would tell you that the Syrians have not done enough.

Senator MCCAIN. I think it is probably a tough question for you.

General Abizaid, my other comment is that I believe that too often we are going into the same places we have been in before, and that means we are not staying and clearing as opposed to coming in and striking and leaving. Maybe it is the training of the Iraqi military that would help us, because clearly we do not have enough troops to do all that. Maybe it is the training of the Iraqi troops that would do that.

But, do you see any improvement in that scenario? For example, I hear in Fallujah now we are having firefights again after one of the toughest battles in really American military history, much less in the Iraqi war. I would be interested in your comments about that.

General CASEY. If I could, Senator. It is probably more appropriate for me to take that question than it is for General Abizaid.

Senator MCCAIN. Go ahead, General.

General CASEY. As I mentioned, we are fighting a thinking enemy here. This conflict ebbs and flows—action, reaction, counteraction. We are constantly moving forces around, trying to take advantage of vulnerabilities that we see in him, and sometimes we move forces to react.

These Marine operations that we have just seen out west are intelligence-based operations designed to disrupt the flow of foreign fighters through the Euphrates River Valley into Baghdad. The op-

erations that we are doing up north, in the northwest, with our Third Armored Cavalry Regiment and the Third Iraqi Army Division, are the same thing: going out after intelligence and then conducting operations based on that intelligence.

Your notion that after these operations are conducted putting in Iraqi security forces to sustain the success is exactly the right notion, and it is exactly the notion that we are following. As they continue to develop, you are going to see more and more Iraqis taking charge of areas and coalition forces stepping back. But your notion is exactly right.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you. Again, I want to thank you for your leadership. You give us confidence, you give us hope. I can only speak for myself, but I know I speak for many of my colleagues. This is a conflict we have to win and we cannot afford to lose. We are appreciative that we have the quality of leadership that we have there today.

Thank you.

General MYERS. Can I follow onto just a couple of questions?

Chairman WARNER. General Myers.

General MYERS. Senator McCain, the one on Syria. My worry is not just the border, it is the ease with which foreign fighters transit through Syria and somehow are facilitated as well, not just getting past the borders, but what might happen in terms of identification they acquire somewhere along the way. Whether or not the Syrian Government is involved in that is pretty murky. But it is clear that foreign fighters are going——

Senator MCCAIN. At least they must be acquiescing, would you think?

General MYERS. You would think so. I mean, it is a pretty tightly controlled country, so you have to assume that they have some knowledge of what is going on in their capitals and in their land. I think that is inexcusable. It disrupts stability in Iraq and it contributes, of course, to the killing of coalition men and women. So, it is unacceptable behavior and it is happening. I would enlarge that a little bit.

The other question, you mentioned the health of the Reserve component, and I share your concerns. I think we have worked all our forces very hard. That is one of the things that we have to be very aware of. I do not know of reservists that have gone back for a second or a third time unless they have done it voluntarily. Now, in the Air Force they will have done that, but I do not know of other reservists, unless it is voluntary, that have gone more than once.

We track that. If we could track it by name we would. We do not have the data to do that, but we track it by individuals, basically, in units is how we do it.

But, I do share the concern about the health of the force, certainly.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank General Casey, General Myers, General Abizaid, and Secretary Rumsfeld for their service to our country.

During the course of their presentations we heard the words "dedication," the "commitment," "sacrifice," and "courage" to describe our Armed Forces, and that is something that all of us admire, respect, and commend for those men and women in the regular forces, the Reserves, and the Guard. Quite frankly, it puts an additional burden, I think, on all of us to make sure that we are going to get it right over in Iraq, because the kinds of sacrifice that all of you have talked about about American service men and women and in terms of the Iraqis as well mean that we have a real responsibility to get it correct.

That comes to the policymakers and moves out of those that are out there going on patrols every day and every night and doing the job that they feel is important and is important in terms of the United States. So it is the policy. It is the policymakers.

Which brings me, Mr. Secretary, to you. Secretary Rumsfeld, we are in serious trouble in Iraq and this war has been consistently and grossly mismanaged. We are now in a seemingly intractable quagmire. Our troops are dying and there really is no end in sight.

The American people I believe deserve leadership worthy of the sacrifices that our fighting forces have made and they deserve the real facts. I regret to say that I do not believe that you have provided either.

You were wrong in September 2002 when you told the House Armed Services Committee that, knowing what we know about Iraq's history, no conclusion is possible except that they have and are escalating their weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs. You were wrong when you told this committee that no terrorist state poses a greater, more immediate threat to the security of our people than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

When General Shinseki estimated that we would need several hundred thousand soldiers, you scoffed and said the idea that it would take several hundred thousand U.S. forces was far from the mark. When the massive looting occurred after Baghdad fell because we did not have enough troops for security, you callously said: Stuff happens.

You wrongly insisted after Saddam fell that there was no guerrilla war, even though our soldiers continued to be killed. In June 2003 you said, "The reason I do not use the phrase 'guerrilla war' is because there is not one."

You wrongly called the insurgents "dead-enders," but they are killing Americans, almost three a day, and Iraqis with alarming frequency and intensity.

You wrongly sent our service members into battle without the proper armor. When asked by a soldier about inadequate equipment, you said: "You go to war with the army you have. They are not the army you might want or wish to have at a later time."

You exaggerated our success in training capable Iraqi security forces. In February 2004, you told this committee: "We have accelerated the training of Iraqi security forces, now more than 200,000." That was in February of this year. In fact, we had far

fewer actually able or capable of fighting then and far fewer that are capable even now.

So, you basically have mismanaged the war and created an impossible situation for military recruiters and put our forces and our national security in danger. Our troops deserve better, Mr. Secretary, and I think the American people deserve better. They deserve competency and they deserve the facts.

In baseball it is three strikes, you are out. What is it for the Secretary of Defense?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Well, that is quite a statement. First let me say that there is not a person at this table who agrees with you that we are in a quagmire and that there is no end in sight. The presentations today have been very clear, they have been very forthright.

Second, the suggestion by you that people are painting a rosy picture is false. There has been balance in my remarks. It is always possible for you to select out a word or two and cite it and suggest that that was the thrust of it, but the fact is from the beginning of this we have recognized that this is a tough business, that it is difficult, that it is dangerous, and that it is not predictable.

Third, the issue of a guerrilla war. I mean, my goodness, I do not think it is a guerrilla war. You may think so. I do not know if anyone at this table thinks so. It is an insurgency. It is a semantic issue, but listing that as some sort of crime or wrongdoing or misleading it seems to me is a world class stretch.

I did call them "dead-enders." I do not know what else you would call a suicide bomber. What is a person who straps a vest on themselves, walks into a dining hall, and kills themselves and kills innocent Iraqi people or innocent coalition soldiers? It seems to me that that is a perfectly appropriate comment.

With respect to the Iraqi security forces, there has been a great deal of misinformation that has been thrown around in this country. You know and we have told this committee on repeated occasions that in the early periods they included the site protection people, so the numbers were higher by some 80,000. We said that. It is in the material that is presented to your committee every week or 2. There is an asterisk in there, a footnote; it says it. We have repeated it, and to then pull that number out and say it is less today it seems to me is misleading.

I will say that the idea that what is happening over there is a quagmire is so fundamentally inconsistent with the facts. The reality is that they are making political progress without question. Reality is that the American forces that are training and equipping and mentoring the Iraqi security forces are doing a darn good job, and the number has been going up steadily and consistently, and I would be happy to have General Abizaid or General Casey mention the effective work they are doing.

To denigrate them and to suggest that they are not capable—to be sure, they are not like the U.S. forces. They are never going to be like U.S. forces. There is not an army or a navy or an air force on the face of the Earth that is comparable to the United States military. But that does not mean that they are not capable of doing that which needs to be done.

To talk about the total number of 168,500 and suggest that because they all cannot be deployed across the country at any given moment, with their own lift and their own intelligence and their own combat support, it seems to me misunderstands the situation. In the material we give you a large number of them are police. They are not supposed to deploy anyplace. Policemen in Washington, DC, do not get in airplanes and fly to California.

These people are trained to be border guards. They do not deploy. They do not need to deploy. They go out to the border and they guard the border. They are policemen; they go to the city and they do their police work. There is a full range of security forces. Site protection people, they go out to an oil well and they sit there and guard the oil well.

There are a limited number of military people and special police battalions that have the responsibility of counterinsurgency and they do an increasingly good job.

I must say that I think the comments you made are certainly yours to make and I do not agree with them.

Senator KENNEDY. Well, my time is just expired. But, Mr. Secretary, I am talking about the misjudgments and the mistakes that were made, the series which I have mentioned, the disarming of the Iraqi army. Those were judgments that were made and there have been a series of gross errors and mistakes. Those are on your watch.

Isn't it time for you to resign?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, I have offered my resignation to the President twice and he has decided that he would prefer that he not accept it, and that is his call.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General CASEY. Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. But, as the commander in Iraq, I would like to put myself on the record, Senator Kennedy, as saying that I also agree with the Secretary that to represent the situation in Iraq as a quagmire is a misrepresentation of the facts. I thought I was fairly clear in what I laid out in my testimony about what is going on in Iraq, but you have an insurgency with no vision, no base, limited popular support, an elected government, committed Iraqis to the democratic process, and you have Iraqi security forces that are fighting and dying for their country every day. Senator, that is not a quagmire.

Senator KENNEDY. Mr. Chairman, I put in the record the interview of General Vines, who says the situation is absolutely static in Iraq today. That is on June 21, 2005. I will put his in the record as well. Thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]

CBS News Transcripts

SHOW: CBS Evening News 6:30 AM EST CBS

June 21, 2005 Tuesday

LENGTH: 403 words

HEADLINE: Top American general views progress in Iraq differently than Bush administration

ANCHORS: BOB SCHIEFFER

REPORTERS: DAVID MARTIN

BODY:

BOB SCHIEFFER, anchor:

One day after the president said the administration's Iraq strategy is working, a top American general in Iraq described the situation there today as a `stalemate.' The assessment came in a teleconference call with Pentagon reporters. David Martin now with more on that story.

DAVID MARTIN reporting:

Describing the fighting as a stalemate in which the insurgency is neither growing nor shrinking, a top US general in Iraq all but ruled out any withdrawal of American troops for the rest of this year.

Lieutenant General JOHN VINES (Multinational Corps Commander): At this point, I would not be prepared to recommend a drawdown prior to the election, certainly not in any significant numbers.

PLANTE: General Vines is referring to elections for a new Iraqi government scheduled for December. After that he expects to recommend that the current

level of 135,000 American troops be reduced by 20,000 to 25,000. That's not a timetable for withdrawal, but it is the most specific prediction yet of how many American troops will be in Iraq next spring, more than 100,000. Vines provided a sobering assessment of the headway the US military is making against the insurgency.

Lt. Gen. VINES: Yeah, I'm assuming that the insurgency will remain at about its current level. What we see is...

PLANTE: That assessment is very different from the one Vice President Cheney made three weeks ago.

Vice President DICK CHENEY: (From "Larry King Live," May 31) But I think the level of activity that we see today from a military standpoint, I think, will clearly decline. I think they're in the last throes, if you will, of the insurgency.

PLANTE: The way Vines describes it, the US military is simply keeping the insurgency at bay long enough for the Iraqi government and its armed forces to assume control. And he made clear if the insurgency continues at its present level, more bloody months lie ahead.

Lt. Gen. VINES: Attacks against the civilian populace were certainly--in May were the highest total since major combat operations terminated in 2003.

PLANTE: But, Bob, Vines also predicts that if and when a constitution is adopted and a new Iraqi government elected, the insurgency could, in his words, `dwindle down very rapidly.'

SCHIEFFER: All right. Thank you, David.

Chairman WARNER. This is an important issue. Are there any other members of the panel that wish to address that question?

General MYERS. It is clearly not a quagmire. It never has been. The term has been used loosely and it is not accurate in my estimation. I identify myself with General Casey's comments.

Chairman WARNER. General Abizaid.

General ABIZAID. I guess the only thing I have to say is I have been fighting this next to the Secretary for a long time and there is no doubt that I certainly have made my mistakes. But, when it comes to toughness and "stick-to-it-iveness" and fighting the enemy the way they need to be fought, I am standing by the Secretary.

Chairman WARNER. Now, Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think we all know that the cut-and-run caucus is always alive and well. It does not matter what war it is, what conflict it is, and it certainly is active today.

In the opening statement you made, General Myers, you said that for us to leave prior to the time that our mission is complete, it would be catastrophic. I agree with that, but I want to make sure that the other three witnesses get on the record as to agreeing with that statement. General Casey, General Abizaid?

General CASEY. I am certainly in agreement.

General ABIZAID. I agree with General Casey, sir.

Senator INHOFE. Good.

A year ago the American people would not have known what we were talking about if we mentioned an IED. They do today. We had a hearing, as the chairman said, yesterday or the day before on this and at Fort Irwin last week there was an IED seminar. You have briefly addressed this, but I would like to get on the record any progress that is being made, anything specific to the IED and what it is looking like in the future, if you could comment, any of you who want to, to elaborate any more than you already have.

General CASEY. Other than the session, Senator, that you have already alluded to, where the Army continues to focus their efforts technologically to give us the tools that we need to defeat these IEDs, that process is continuous and it is ongoing.

I will tell you that I have asked several times. What we really need is a way to set off a blasting cap from a distance. All of these IEDs and car bombs are all triggered by a blasting cap and if you can set that off—if you think about it, have you ever been by a construction site where you see the sign that says: "Turn off your two-way radios; blasting caps in use." My sense has always been if you can do it with a radio, why can you not do it in Iraq?

Senator INHOFE. General Casey, some of us have been exposed to some new technologies out there that are working on that right now, and hopefully there will be technological help in the field for you on that.

Any comment, General Abizaid?

General ABIZAID. Senator, it is very clear that, in today's connected world, the insurgents are sharing lessons learned. They do it on the Internet. They do it in a lot of different ways. We see their technologies moving from the battlefield in Iraq to the battlefield in Afghanistan and no doubt we will see that elsewhere.

This is, like General Casey said, it is action, reaction, counteraction. We have to tighten our tactics, techniques, and procedures as much as we can. But, I am convinced, like General Casey is, that there are technologies out there that could be more useful and we have to work real hard to find them.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you. We will try to help in that regard.

It has appeared to me that most people who are critical of what is going on over there are the ones who do not go over and see for themselves. Unfortunately, if you rely on the media for your information as to the progress of the conflict over there, then you are in really bad shape. This has bothered me a lot. I think most of the members of this committee have been there. I have been there quite a few times, twice in the last 3 months.

You go over, like in the Sunni Triangle, and experience over there with General Madhi, all of you know him. He used to be the brigade commander for Saddam Hussein in Fallujah. He hated Americans, and now he has been training with our marines. He looked at us and said that when the marines had to rotate and go out they actually cried. Here is a general that just hated Americans under Saddam Hussein and he has actually renamed his Iraqi security forces the "Fallujah Marines."

At the same time we were there, at Tikrit they had the blow-up of the training area. Ten were killed, 30 were severely wounded. General Myers mentioned, or one of you did, the fact that they are giving members of their family to replace those who are killed. All 40 families that were involved replaced the person that was either killed or injured with their own people.

As you go across the Sunni Triangle, where they are supposed to hate us the most—in a helicopter maybe 100 feet off the ground is the safest way to do it—and you see our troops throwing candy and cookies that came from the people back home, and the little kids in the villages waving American flags and waving at us. That is not the picture you get in the media.

I would only ask you this question. That was about a month ago. Do you see any deterioration in that support that we are getting from those people out in the villages as a result of some of the increase in attacks or of the negative media that we have?

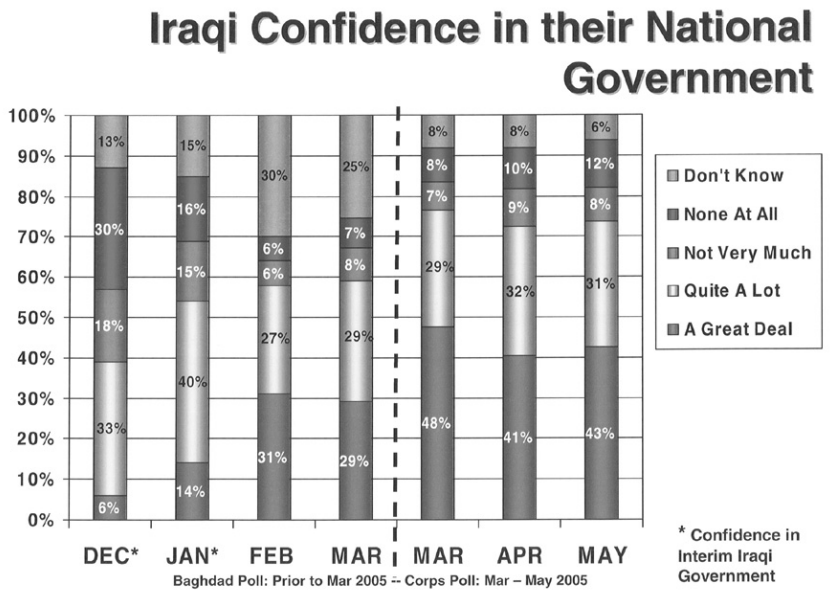
General CASEY. Senator, we do not. As I mentioned, the insurgents and the terrorists have a fairly narrow base that they operate from, and the people in the villages that you mentioned are the same people who want a better future for their family and they want to be part of the political process.

If I could just give you an indicator, that being recent polling across Iraq. Better than 80 percent of the population says that they want to vote, they are going to vote in the referendum and they are going to vote in the election based on that constitution. They want to be part of this process.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you.

General MYERS. In fact, Senator, let us put up the chart, "Confidence in the National Government."

[The chart referred to follows:]



General MYERS. It is a different slant on it, but recent polling data. This is the confidence that the Iraqi people have in their government. It starts back in December 2004 and it goes through May of this year. I know some of it is hard to read, but you can see the increase in the green and the percentage of people that have now more and more confidence as time goes on. The big surge after the elections, and that surge has continued, I think, which just adds to, adds to what General Casey said.

Senator INHOFE. I appreciate it.

Mr. Chairman, I think we should get copies of that. It is a very significant chart.

Again, let me just thank you for the great job you are doing. Hopefully we can—one last question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. I have to say, Senator, roughly calculating, these witnesses have to appear before the House at 2:00.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. I am anxious to have all members have their opportunity.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, we are at a juncture in this effort that requires not only military forces, but complementary civilian forces—State Department personnel, aid workers—because we are in a phase where we have to inspire political engagement and also reconstruct the shattered infrastructure. Do we have sufficient civilian personnel throughout the country to do that?

I am under the impression that State Department personnel are volunteers and many are volunteering out of their expertise. Is that your impression?

General ABIZAID. Senator Reed, I do not know that I can comment specifically on their authorized strength versus what is out in the field. But, I can say that this war must be fought with all of the agencies of the United States Government fully engaged, with people that stay in the field long-term, that are in the right place at the right time. I believe that there are clear indications that we have to do better in this.

Senator REED. So, without putting words in your mouth, your impression is they are not fully engaged? Again, that goes to the overriding issue of how serious we are about winning this war if a major component of our strategy, the civilian side, is manned by volunteers and is not fully engaged.

General ABIZAID. Senator, of course a State Department person, for example, is not the same as an infantryman on the battlefield. But a State Department person in a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan, or a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) person in that same sort of a location is worth an awful lot to us. As a matter of fact, the combat troops provide the shield behind which their work can be done.

I think we need more of those types of dedicated professionals out in the field. I want to make it very clear, from the time that you traveled around with me, that when you find those people out there they are magnificent, they are every bit as magnificent as our troops. We need to check to make sure we have the right ones at the right place for the right amount of time.

Senator REED. Thank you.

General Casey, you are the ground commander. What is your estimate of how long this level of violence can be sustained, the car bombing? Again, we are talking about terrorist activities more than conventional engagements. Is this a year or 2, given the flow of insurgents, given the access to weapons?

General CASEY. As several people have commented on over the course of the hearing here, Senator, political and economic advances will impact on that. So, it is very hard to gauge. I will tell you that there is sufficient ammunition stashed around Iraq purposely that is available to these insurgents. That will be available to them for some time. They are not having to import the ammunition that they put into these devices.

But, as the political process takes hold here, I think you will see a gradual lessening of the insurgency.

Senator REED. General Casey, it is interesting because we saw the political process take hold with the elections, which were quite stirring. When I was there over the Easter holiday with you and General Abizaid, there was a sense that perhaps a breakthrough had been made. But, since that time they have shown, the insurgents, great resiliency, cunning, the ability to supply themselves from indigenous stockpiles, and to create a level of violence that is extremely disturbing, at least here in the United States. I do not know if further political progress in the next year or 2 will have that much of a dampening effect.

But let me——

General CASEY. If I could, Senator. I am sorry——

Senator REED. Yes, General.

General CASEY. That first election was a first step. It was a great step. It was a magnificent day for the Iraqi people. But, as we discussed when you were there, it is a first step. I tried to talk to everybody who came over, just to say, look, this is not over yet; this is a resilient insurgency. They are committed in their own way and we are in a fight.

Senator REED. Thank you.

I am glad General Myers put that chart up, Mr. Secretary, because if you did the numbers for the American public you would probably be running exactly the opposite direction. We have a credibility gap here with the American people. Forget people here on this dais. I think it is obvious why some Americans are very distrustful of what is going on. They were told this was a war about WMDs and there are no WMDs. They were told that it was about terrorism, but there are tenuous links to terrorists. In fact, there are more international terrorists in Baghdad today than there were several years ago. They were told that we would be greeted as liberators. We are engaged in a very fierce fight that is taking roughly a battalion-sized group of Americans every month as casualties, killed, wounded, and injured. Your own plans called for a steep reduction in troops immediately after the conventional efforts. That never transpired.

We have, I think, an erosion of trust which this hearing I suppose was an attempt to stem. I think they also see at the end of this process, not this transformed democratic state in the Middle East, but a fragile client of the United States for many years to come, and that has given them great concern. The polls measure that.

I think also our moral clarity was seriously undercut by Abu Ghraib, and I do not feel yet we have held senior officials accountable for what took place there and other parts of the area of operations and indeed in Guantanamo.

Now, at the end also I think we will find a broken Army. We cannot sustain the tempo of operations for the next year or 2. The comments that Senator McCain and others made about our Reserve Forces. We still have huge threats, I would argue much more daunting than Iraqi, North Korea, Iran, and other places.

So I guess, Mr. Secretary, the question is what can you say to try to bridge this credibility gap? As General Abizaid has said, we are not truly engaged on the civic side. We have volunteer State Department people. They struggle to find enough people to go out there. That is not a serious effort to win a war. As General Casey said, this violence is likely to continue, because of supplies in country and the commitment of these terrorists, for many months ahead.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, you said even my own plan called for steep reductions. I did not have a plan like that. I am sure you can find somebody who had a plan like that, and maybe General Abizaid did or Tom Franks did. But, we had not made judgments. We had a plan that would have flown in as many troops as were needed to succeed in defeating the Saddam Hussein regime, and it happened that that occurred at the level where we stopped it.

It was not my recommendation. It was the battlefield commander's recommendation. They had a variety of sensitivities as to what

they would do with the troop levels. In the event it got worse, it would go up. If it got better it would go down.

But, to pull up that and suggest that that is some error or wrong or mistake is just inconsistent with the facts.

The broken Army argument worries me. The United States Army is the finest in the world, without question. The Air Force and the Navy and the Marine Corps are in good health. There are some shortages in recruiting for elements of the Army. Retention, however, is high. Retention is particularly high of people who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq. Thus far we have used something less than 50 percent of the Reserve components, the Guard and the Reserve. That is just a fact.

There are people who have, as General Myers said, undoubtedly served two or three times over there, or in Bosnia or Kosovo or Afghanistan or Iraq. The process we have is to do everything humanly possible to see that those are individual volunteers, and that has been overwhelmingly the case. They are people who put their hand up and said: I have been there and I want to go back and I want to serve my country.

You are quite right, there are other threats and dangers in the world. If you ask General Myers or General Pace, the people who meet with the chiefs and the combatant commanders, whether the United States is capable of meeting those other demands, they will answer you that we are capable of meeting those other demands. If you ask what are we doing about avoiding having a broken Army, the answer is—we had yesterday I think another 2 hours on the subject of all the things we can do to reduce stress on the force. We have something like 47 items that we are working on and have been for well over a year and a half to see that the stress on the force is relieved. It has involved tens of thousands of people who have been rebalanced and shifted.

The implication that there is an inattentiveness or a lack of concern about the stress on the force is simply not correct. We are deeply concerned about it and we are working the problem, and when this is over we will not have a broken Army.

Senator REED. Well, Mr. Secretary, what I think I heard you say is if the plan works it is your plan; if the plan does not work it is the Army officer's plan. I do not think that is responsible.

Chairman WARNER. Senator, we are not going to be able to allow other Senators their opportunity. I want to make certain that there is a full response to your important question. I see that the Chairman wishes to respond to the question.

General MYERS. Just 10 seconds. I just need to state my belief, and my belief is that we really—in my view, we do not have a more daunting threat to U.S. national security than violent extremists. I think that is our primary threat right now. I do not think it is North Korea or other places in the world. I think it is violent extremism is the most daunting threat and the one that can have the biggest impact on our way of life.

Chairman WARNER. General Abizaid, do you wish to respond?

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman and Senator Reed, I think it is very important that we never lose sight of this problem of WMDs. This enemy that we are fighting in the region seeks to obtain a biological, chemical, or nuclear weapon, and if they can acquire it or

develop it they will use it against us. There should be no mistake about that.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Gentlemen, we appreciate all of your service. Secretary Rumsfeld, I am particularly pleased that you have committed yourself to serving this country in the way that you have. You and the President made a commitment to allow the military to make honest suggestions about how to fight this war and to give them the resources they have needed, and I do not think it is fair to say that you are blaming them for problems if they did not ask for more soldiers. I think we know how that happened and everybody understands it, and I certainly do not believe you should resign and I honor your commitment, your transformation of the military, your tough, steadfast support for the soldiers in the field, and for our military efforts in the war against terrorism.

General Casey, this chart that was put up there I think is rather important. It showed that in December only 6 percent of the Iraqi people had a great deal of confidence, but as of May it is now 41 percent. A total of 74 percent have confidence in their national government.

Would you say that that is an absolutely critical question for the future of Iraq, the confidence that the people of Iraq have in the ability of their government to function? Is that not a source of encouragement for us of a significant nature?

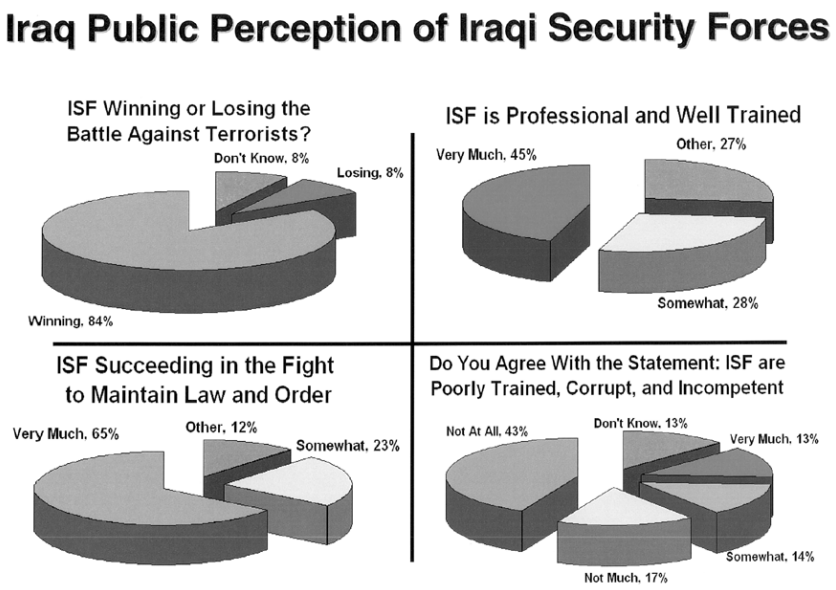
General CASEY. It is certainly a source of encouragement to me in my job. In fact, you recall I mentioned that in my opening statement, the fact that the confidence of the Iraqi people in their government is high.

Senator SESSIONS. This is in the face of this newer tactic or repeated tactic of automobile attacks that hit so many civilians. They move into crowds and have killed and injured quite a number of civilians in recent months. But still the numbers are holding firm. How do you evaluate that?

General CASEY. As I mentioned, we should not underestimate the commitment of the Iraqi people to wanting something better. What is happening there with these car bombs is murder and we ought not forget that. As I said, one tenth of 1 percent of the population we think may be supporting or participating in this insurgency. The rest of the Iraqi people are moving forward, as this chart here indicates.

There is another chart up here, if you do not mind, Senator. If you would put up the chart there with the four pie charts on it.

[The chart referred to follows:]



General CASEY. This is also very important to me here, because it reflects how the Iraqi people think about their security forces. You can see up in the top left-hand corner that they believe the Iraqi security forces are winning the battles against the terrorists. If you look on the right-hand side, they believe that their Iraqi security forces are professional and well-trained. You can follow your way around that chart.

Chairman WARNER. Excuse me, General. We will need to know who prepared that poll and the circumstances under which it was prepared.

General CASEY. I will give you that data for the record, Senator.

[The information referred to follows:]

The survey was commissioned by MNF-I and conducted by the Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society Studies (IIACSS), an Iraqi polling firm. Interviews were completed by 47 IIACSS interviewers in the governorates covered by the poll. The interviewers are engaged on a part time basis and cover regions about which they have relevant local information and knowledge on the specific culture and mentality of the people in the area.

A. The Interviewers:

The interviewers are experienced professionals (most have a B.A. from a four-year university education in social sciences). Each interviewer completed 20 or fewer interviews, and has conducted at least two previous surveys.

Interviewers knew in advance that field supervisors would check their work. At least one auditor was sent to each city to check 50 percent of the completed questionnaires and to check the accuracy of map drawings of all Zukaks (streets) being sampled. Additionally, the auditors visited at least 20 households to ensure that interviews had been done correctly.

B. The Questionnaire Design:

After designing the questionnaire, pretest was done on a pilot sample consisting of 20 households in different areas of Baghdad. Results of the pretest were used to modify the draft questionnaire and to create the final version.

C. The Sample and Procedure used

For the purpose of this research, population was defined as all adult citizens (male and female, 18 years and more) who lived in the chosen cities (Baghdad, Basra, Baquba, Najaf, Tikrit, and Irbil).
A multi-stage probability-based sample was drawn, utilizing residential listings from Iraq's 1997 Population Census. Census sub-districts (Qada) were utilized as primary sampling units (PSUs), with 47 PSUs being selected using probability-proportional-to-size procedures. Due to the size of Baghdad, the city was stratified by neighborhood to ensure that all city areas were represented in the sample. Interviewers were given all address details for households at four sampling points within each PSU. According to the census a Zukak was regarded as the sampling point. Five interviews were conducted at each sampling point. Within each selected household, one respondent was randomly selected using the last birthday method. Because most old Iraqi citizens don't know their exact birthday, a list of random birthdays was used by every interviewer to replace the birthday of every older citizen who didn't know his/her birthday.

The margin of error, assuming a 95% confidence level and the clustering effects of a multi-stage design, is approximately ± 4.0% (n~1093) for the overall sample. The margin of error varies across the samples of the individual cities.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Sessions, please proceed.

Senator SESSIONS. We all value free speech and people are able to express themselves as they desire in this great country, and we want to see people around the world have the opportunity to express themselves. It seems like to me, however, that we need to be careful about the comments that we make. We know a false story in Newsweek magazine led to riots in Pakistan when it was alleged that a Koran had been flushed down a toilet, whereas the truth is that our soldiers in Guantanamo wear gloves, they give everyone a Koran that wants one, and they treat it with respect, and many other things are done to show respect for the Islamic religion.

We have had 29 hearings on prisoner abuse and, frankly, there has been absolutely no proof of any systematic abuse, and what we have seen is consistent prosecutions and discipline of soldiers and military people and others who violated our standards of treating prisoners in a humane way.

I would just say that I think the military has handled that well. But, it does appear to me that, if you read the newspapers, you would draw a different conclusion.

General Abizaid, you have been in the region for some time. Would you say that, with regard to recruiting these terrorists to come in the country, the riots in Pakistan, the ability of our troops in Iraq to win the confidence of the people there, that our efforts can be adversely affected by false charges against our military, and does it have impact on the personal safety of the soldiers this Congress has sent in harm's way to execute our policies?

General ABIZAID. Senator, this conflict in which we are engaged is more about perceptions in many respects than about true battlefield capability. Our enemies want people to believe that we do not respect them, that we dishonor them, that we are against Islam. They want to create the impression that we will steal their resources, that we will ravage their countryside.

The truth is that as long as we tell the truth and get that story out and concentrate, not only about whatever we may have done wrong, but also telling the story, the great untold story, about this enemy, I think we will be just fine. The vast majority of people in the region hate the extremists. They do not want to follow them. False stories giving them an opportunity for hope, however, really hurt us very much.

In one of Zarqawi's letters to his followers he gave numerous reports from U.S. media sources that showed we were losing, that we were losing our will, that we were unable to fight this fight. I do not think we should give false hope to this enemy. We will defeat them.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Clinton.

General MYERS. Mr. Chairman, if I may, please.

Chairman WARNER. Yes, General Myers.

General MYERS. Let me just tag onto General Abizaid's comments. Fundamentally this is going to be about resolve, the perception issue. It is about resolve, about staying power, about patience. All war, particularly this conflict I think, demands that. When it is about resolve and persistence and patience, I can guarantee you our military is being very effective over there every day.

Our folks know how to fight. Sometimes you hear criticism about our inability to wage urban warfare. That is rubbish. We are the best urban warfighters in the world. We are better than the adversary. We have not made this a contest of who kills the most, because in the end I do not think that serves anybody very well. We have learned our lessons, and I do not want us to do that.

But, I think the American public can be assured that our military is very effective at what they are doing.

So if resolve is important, then leadership is important, and we have to be very careful what we say, all of us. We do not want to say it is too easy, it is too hard. We want to say, as best as we know, the facts and present them.

Earlier today we were talking about the threat and there was a comment made about the threat, that the threat is static according to General Vines in a Baghdad press conference that he had with the press corps back here. Here is what General Vines said. He

said: "I need to clarify. The reason that I said that I assumed the condition will remain relatively static"—and I think the condition is the insurgency—"keep in mind that those elections are only 4 months away. I mean, there—I do not have any reason to believe there is going to be a significant change in 4 months, absent a political breakthrough."

So they were well-qualified statements. We have to be very careful when we make statements that we say what we mean and we portray the facts the best we can.

I would like to enter General Vines statement in the record, please.

[The information referred to follows:]

U.S. Department of Defense
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Presenter: Lieutenant General John R. Vines, Commander, Multinational Corps Iraq **Tuesday, June 21, 2005 9:00 a.m. EDT**

Briefing on Security Operations in Iraq

STAFF: Well, I have 9:00, at the top of the hour right now, so let's go ahead and get started. I see we have General Vines. Good morning to everybody.

Our briefer today is Lieutenant General John R. Vines. He's the commander of the 18th Airborne Corps, but is currently serving in Iraq as the commander for Multinational Corps Iraq. As Multinational Corps commander, General Vines is the commander in charge of coalition forces operations in Iraq. He's going to provide us with a brief operational update and then he'll entertain some questions from you.

He cannot see you, as you can see him, so when we go to questions if you could please identify yourself and your news organization that would help him recognize some of you, because I know that many of you have met with General Vines before in the past.

So what that, General, thank you for joining us this morning, and I'll turn it over to you.

GEN. VINES: Thanks. It's good to be there with you from Baghdad. It's about 110 and dusty, but the soldiers are magnificent.

Let me talk just briefly about a couple of things going on here in country. As you know, next week will mark the first anniversary of sovereignty of Iraq, where the government assumed responsibilities for its own governance. It was the 28th of June of 2004. Since that time, there's been significant progress throughout the country. Very successful elections were conducted in late January of this year, despite threats of intimidation and attempts to disrupt the election. The transitional government has been seated; the Transitional National Assembly has been seated. The writing of the constitution is under way, and we expect that there will be a constitution drafted, a referendum in October of this year, and then we anticipate that there will be national elections in December of this year. That's the current timeline.

The security forces of Iraq are continuing to make significant progress. There are over 100 battalions of the Iraqi army fielded, and over 80,000 other forces – border police, Ministry of Interior forces, Facilities Protection Services -- have been fielded. Their performance on the whole has been very good. Where they're well led, they've proven that they are patriotic, they're willing to fight, and they do extraordinarily well.

On a given day, today, for example, typically there are about 30 battalion-sized combined operations involving coalition and Iraqi forces throughout the country that are taking place in Baghdad. All of you, I assume, have heard of Al Barq. It's been quite successful in the security of Baghdad. Veterans Forward is in the northwest in the Tal Afar area, western Ninawa province. And then out in Al Anbar province the Marines are conducting Operation Spear out there and they're having good effects out there.

But Iraqi security forces are operational throughout the country, and on the whole, they're doing quite well.

And so my concern, quite frankly, is not about their ability to conduct the operations. It's about continuing to develop national capacity, so those forces can be fed, so those forces can be sustained with equipment and spare parts and replacement personnel and the like. So development of government capacity is a concern, and it continues to develop. But that will, I think, be critical to the success of the security line of operation here in Iraq.

The soldiers of the coalition are magnificent. Late last week I presented a squad of the 617th MP Company, Kentucky Army National Guard, three Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars with V for "valor," included two females. A magnificent action. It was, quite honestly, one of the most compelling combined arms operations that I have seen. It just combined everything we expect and ask soldiers to do, and they epitomize the citizen soldiers. Soldiers are doing a great job.

In a way, the operations here in Iraq and indeed across the United States have perhaps created a bit of complacency with some elements of our population, because they've been relatively successful. The United States has not been attacked again since 11 September. And so there's some questioning, perhaps, of whether or not what's going on here is worth it. Critic -- quite honestly, I think we have a pretty clear-cut choice. We either deal with terrorism and this extremism abroad, or we deal with it when it comes to us, as it would inevitably, as it has previously.

So the security forces of our country -- our police, our homeland security elements, our intelligence services and our military operations -- all have contributed to that.

So overall, I think, that's some of the challenges that we face here in Iraq. And I'll be happy to try to answer your questions at this time.

STAFF: Charlie?

Q: General, Charlie Aldinger with Reuters. There was expectation early in the year that you and other commanders in Iraq would be ready to recommend by about this time a possible date or the possible beginning of some kind of permanent draw-down of U.S. forces in Iraq. Are you ready to do that?

And if I might tack on a couple other things, how many troops does the U.S. now have in Iraq? And do you expect you'll begin drawing those down before the referendum and the elections, or will you have a spike in size then? I guess, first, are you ready to recommend or have you recommended beginning of a permanent draw-down?

GEN. VINES: We're not at that point yet. We continually assess the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces. We say that it is conditions-based. And clearly we know that insurgents will do everything they can to disrupt ratification of a constitution. To them, that's a terrifying event, that the government is established in Iraq.

The decision ultimately over whether or not and when to draw down will not be made at my level. I will be a part of that recommendation. At this point, I would not be prepared to recommend a draw-down prior to the election, certainly not any significant numbers.

It may be that some of the units that are here now, we will not ask for replacements. And we continue to assess that, and we're not at the point where we make that decision yet.

Q: Again, if only to follow up briefly, how many forces does the United States now have in Iraq? And do you expect there might be a spike, in fact, more, to provide security for the referendum and then the general election?

GEN. VINES: Well, there's about 135,000 U.S. forces here in Iraq, and then there's some others around the region that provide support, so it depends on how you add those up. Conditions will dictate that. Right now, I would not be in a position to recommend any spike; I don't see that. Is it possible? Yes, if we think the conditions have changed, but right now I don't foresee a spike to support that referendum.

Q: Thank you.

Q: General Vines, it's Bret Baier from Fox News Channel. We've heard a lot about the insurgency and what the makeup is. And heard some from Operation Spear that there's more evidence of increased numbers of foreign fighters. Can you break down what the enemy looks like for us? And, sir, is there a division within the enemy ranks, perhaps foreign fighters versus Iraqi insurgents?

GEN. VINES: Good question, Bret. Good to talk to you.

There are four broad groups, I think, within this insurgency, and the insurgency, quite honestly, is quite narrow. The level of support for violence is pretty narrow. The jihadists or the Zarqawi elements -- sometimes referred to the al Qaeda and associated movements here in country -- that number is not very large, but it is very violent. It has access to some technical capability, and it uses foreign fighters, historically, primarily to murder other Iraqis. It brings in foreigners, and they kill themselves and others, sometimes in vehicles, sometimes with -- they'll put a vest on and detonate it among a group. And it's -- so foreigners that are brought in typically do things that Iraqis won't do to each other. That's the history of them.

There are also some Sunni religious extremists within the country. That is also a fairly narrow group. Their opposition to the new government is based on religious objections. Again, that group is quite small, but it is very violent.

Then, there's some regime elements who essentially -- a broader group, a few thousand, perhaps, and if they had a bumper sticker it would probably say, "If you like Saddam, you'd love us," because they want to resume power. And then, there's also some -- a broader group of principally Sunni, but a large -- a fairly significant number of Iraqis want to see all foreign forces leave the country, and that's understandable. We have no long-term objectives here.

So I'd say it's four broad groups.

Q: What about the division? Is there potentially a division between foreign fighters and Iraqi insurgents developing?

GEN. VINES: Well, I would say absolutely. Foreign fighters coming in here to murder Iraqis; it's astonishing to me that that is not clearly evident to many Iraqis; that people recruited in other countries by extremists who wish to seize power are brought in to murder children, women, innocent men and women. And what we see here is those people are hidden from the Iraqi populace. They don't circulate freely, and they're kept in small cells. And then, they're brought forward to when they're ready to their murderous work.

And so, yes, there is a very definite schism between the foreign fighters and the average Iraqi.

STAFF: Jim?

Q: General, if the number of insurgents and foreign fighters is relatively small, and there is a division between the foreign fighters and the insurgency, how is it then that we've seen in the past two months probably some of the deadliest months since the end of major combat? And what can you tell us about the increased sophistication of the enemy forces there? Where is that coming from? Is it internal, or are they getting outside help?

GEN. VINES: It appears to us that they're getting outside help to conduct their insurgency. Attacks against the civilian populace were certainly -- were, in May -- was the highest total since major combat operations terminated in 2003. And it is primarily, again, murders in mass numbers: people who drive cars into mosques or into crowded markets and detonate them. And again, it's very difficult to protect a populace against someone who is willing to murder themselves and others. And so we've seen an increased attack against them.

The foreign fighters are what amounts to a terrorist cruise missile. They can target a specific element without having to worry about their own survival. So they chose to use those in numbers. And because in reality, the insurgency is not very broad; you're not seeing large numbers of armed groups, you're seeing one- and two-person cells that are attacking a large group by driving into a crowded market and detonating themselves.

Q: But if I could follow up please from this other sophistication aspect; just how sophisticated has the enemy become? And where is it believed that they are getting this outside advice, expertise?

GEN. VINES: Well, they are certainly getting some outside advice, but there is some technical expertise that was resident in the Iraqi army, probably from their explosive ordnance personnel. And in reality, it is not so much that there's incredible technical expertise, but we see occasionally multiple IEDs. We might see an improvised explosive device that would detonate, and then when the first responders are there, both the Iraqi security forces and the coalition forces arrive on the scene, perhaps one will detonate 30 minutes later. Their tactics have become more sophisticated -- in some cases -- to be sure. And so that is, again -- terrorism enabled by some limited military capacity. And it is resident here in the country.

Q: And I'm sorry to press this, but where is this outside expertise coming from? Is that known?

GEN. VINES: The suicide bombers, of course, you know -- you heard where they're probably coming from. They're coming from places like Sudan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Egypt. That is our belief. The tactical expertise to do that, that capability exists here in the country.

Q: General, Lisa Meyer from AP Radio. I want to get you to clarify a couple of things that you said earlier in your statement. You said that where the Iraqi forces are well-led, that they're performing well. Is there a leadership problem which exists, or is it simply that you can't get people up and running, I guess, quickly enough? And the other thing that I wanted to ask you about: you were saying that there are -- your concern is about government capacity to support operations. Can you go on a little bit on what you mean by that?

GEN. VINES: Sure. Leadership is something that has to be developed. People don't just walk up and say, "I'm a leader," and demonstrate capacity. And so -- keep in mind that we hit the one-year mark next week. And so leaders have to develop. And there have been many strong leaders that have emerged, and mid-grade leaders in other units still have to be found. And let's just be honest about that.

So it is not a case of not having quality persons. They exist, but sometimes you have to make sure that they're in the right place. And so developing leaders takes a long time. We know this, for example, in the United States military. It's a career-long progression.

In terms of national capacity, many of the things that we take for granted, for example, in the United States -- our logistical support that comes from a well-developed Department of Defense and our various depots, our personnel systems that ensure well-trained replacements, the ability to deliver pay on time, every time; those capacities are not resident in a government that didn't exist a year ago. And so we have to make sure that when we're providing food for soldiers, that that food is available every day. When we're providing life support, that it's available every day.

And so developing the capacity for a bureaucracy, which -- bureaucracy has taken on, perhaps, a negative

connotation in some parts of the United States. But a bureaucracy is necessary to sustain a government, and certainly to sustain security forces. And that's what's in the process of being developed, and it takes time.

Q: If I could just follow up on that. How long do you think that's going to take? A year, two years, five?

GEN. VINES: It'll be a continuous process. And that is not my primary area of focus. I use the forces that the bureaucracy sustains and fields. And so I have less visibility on that. Other agencies are working that, and we've seen progress. But I suspect they will be working at still developing capacity a couple years from now. That would be my guess.

STAFF ?: (Go ahead ?), Jim Mannion.

Q: General, Jim Mannion from Agence France-Presse. There have been two basic views of the insurgency expressed. One is that it's in its last throes, and the other is that it's going to be -- this is a situation that's going to continue for years. Where do you see it?

GEN. VINES: The solution to the insurgency in Iraq is not a purely political solution. It has to be a government that's acceptable to the broad populace as a group. That has to be acceptable -- Sunni, Shi'a, Kurd and other elements. And if that government, if the transitional government has the wisdom to oversee the constitutional drafting and drafts a constitution that is acceptable to the larger segments of the population and is ratified -- I mean, my assessment is the insurgency could dwindle down very quickly. And that remains to be seen what form the constitution will take.

It could be sustained militarily for a period of time. Our responsibility is to provide space and time for this process to work, so that this new government and the constitutional process, the election process, is allowed to proceed without being murdered in its infancy by insurgents who don't want to see it succeed.

The Iraqi security forces are making good progress, but the solution ultimately will be a political one, of course.

STAFF: Jim?

Q: Sir, Jim Garamone with American Forces Press Service. The level of attacks, I guess, is up to around 70 per day. Are you seeing any drop-off in recruiting for Iraqi security forces or a drop in the intelligence tips that you get from the Iraqi population because of this increased level of attacks?

GEN. VINES: No, not at all. Recruiting remains very strong. And in fact, the tips are up.

That's one of the things we monitor very closely, is how effective the attacks are. And it's not just whether or not they're attacks; it is what is the effect on the Iraqi population, because let's be honest about that. That is -- what they're attempting to do is to intimidate, threaten, coerce the population. And we see increased evidence that the population is rejecting the insurgency. It is rejecting attacks against the population.

You know, imagine: Zarqawi asserts that it is acceptable to murder innocent Iraqis, to murder innocent Muslims in the pursuit of his objectives. Iraqis obviously don't agree with that.

And so the number of tips are up. And that's one of the indicators that we continually monitor, is whether -- what's the effect on the population. And we see the population increasingly rejecting the insurgency at large. It wants to see an Iraqi government that provides for its own security.

STAFF: The general did Jim's, so let's go to John's. (Laughter.)

Q: John Lumpkin with AP. Trying to follow up on Charlie's question from the beginning, am I to take your statements as that we should expect to see roughly the same level of troops in Iraq for the foreseeable future? U.S. troops, that is.

GEN. VINES: No, I don't think you can say that. I mean, there's -- there are a lot of factors. If, for example, there was a political solution and an agreement by some of the leading elements and the conditions changed, it could come down. The force structure could come down.

I will make a recommendation based on military conditions. And those conditions right now -- I'm assuming that the insurgency will remain at about its current level. What we see in terms of numbers of attacks, what we see in numbers of tips; what we see in the flow of foreign fighters, which is quite small, it is relatively static, it's not growing, not spreading. And I make assessments based on military conditions. And my leadership, my military leadership, will take that, factor that in, and then we'll make some determinations because the troops strength here, of course, will be made by our civilian leadership.

Q: General -- Joe Tabet, Al Hurra. Could you give us more details about what you said about the outside help? And you said also that the insurgents are coming from Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Sudan. How and who is providing support for them?

GEN. VINES: The indicators are that we see some dozens -- we will never know exactly, I don't think, whether it's 75 or 150 a month, coming principally, we believe, across the Syrian border. And we can count those by the number of people we detain who are carrying passports from various countries and where we believe they came across illegally. Once they're detained, the Iraqi government, as well as the coalition, talk to them, question them about where they came from and how they came.

And so in terms of support, we believe that there are facilitators, principally in Syria. And I have absolutely no indicator that the Syrian government is directly involved in that. But there are facilitators principally, we believe, in Syria that assist them in getting to the border and getting them across the border. And then we believe there are people who facilitate smuggling form the border regions into other areas, such as Mosul and Baghdad.

And so we believe that this insurgency is driven in large measure by money. What we find is that there's monetary value assigned to attacks against the coalition.

So, in terms of technical support, I don't see it from a government, I don't see support by other governments. We would certainly ask that the Syrian government continue its efforts and redouble its efforts to help stop this flow of illegal foreign fighters across its border. But I see no indicators that the governments are actually supporting it.

Q: General, a follow-up. Do you think operations as Spear Operation is a good choice to fight the insurgency, or do you suggest something else?

GEN. VINES: Okay, would you restate the question? I didn't pick up the first part.

Q: I said that do you think that operations like Spear Operation was or is a good choice to fight the insurgency, or do you suggest or do you see something else?

GEN. VINES: There was a fairly strong base of intelligence that areas where Operation Spear are being conducted -- and it's in an area near Al Anbar -- (inaudible) -- Al Anbar, it's in the vicinity of Karabilah -- indicators that insurgents were using that as an area to train and to infiltrate foreign fighters into eastern Iraq. So we feel like that we can't allow them to have a sanctuary, real or virtual, where they can train, equip, plan, and move foreign fighters further east to attack coalition and the Iraqi forces.

So that is only one part of a strategy, of course. Iraq ultimately needs to gain control of its own borders, and this is designed to help support that. It has to seal off the flow of foreign terrorists that are coming in and attacking this government. And again, this is designed to do that. There are people in Al Anbar who are upset that combat operations are there. But there's indisputable evidence that foreign terrorists are flowing through there into eastern Iraq.

Q: Before we move on, the general raised a point -- General, could you tell us specifically what is the monetary value put on attacks against coalition forces, Iraqis, whoever?

GEN. VINES: Well, it varies depending on the region of the country. But in some cases as little as $150 is paid to someone to put in an improvised explosive device, but perhaps a mine or two or three artillery shells into a hole with a remote detonator. So when we detain persons who were involved in that -- and they're sometimes forthcoming and they tell us exactly what they were paid and why they were doing it -- and so in many cases we find that this has no ideology. These insurgents don't have an ideology except violence and power. They have nothing to offer the Iraqi people. And so those who seek to regain power hire people for money to attack the Iraqi security forces, as well as the coalition. And so as little as $100 will buy an IED.

Q: What's the top dollar? And who's paying?

GEN. VINES: (Chuckles.) Well, I don't know that you can assign a top dollar. I mean, how much do you pay someone who's going to murder some other people when they kill themselves? So -- but it's typically in the -- a few hundred dollars involved in specific attacks, is our experience.

STAFF: Let's go over here, to Jamie.

Q: General Vines, a short time ago, you said that you're assuming the insurgency will remain at the current level. Can you explain why, if you have the same number of U.S. troops there, and every day more Iraqi security forces are being trained and equipped and joining in those combat operations, that you're saying you don't see in the near term any progress being made against the insurgency?

GEN. VINES: Well, you will recall that I said that the solution was primarily a political solution. So I -- we have to make certain assumptions as we develop courses of action. My line of effort and operation is primarily in the security line, and so I have to make some assumptions about what forces we will need that perhaps will replace the ones here. There is a significant amount of progress being made, but you have to draw from some assumptions.

We don't see the insurgency contracting or expanding right now. We see leaders who are paying other people to put

IEDs in to attack the coalition. What we don't see are groups of 2(00) or 3(00) or 400 people operating together. What we don't see is them controlling cities. What we see are small cells that pay people to attack the coalition.

The challenge, of course, is there's a large -- very large infrastructure here. There's oil. There's water. There's electricity. There's governance. And all of those can be attacked if you're paying people to do that. It requires security forces to do that.

So we make some assumptions about what it's going to take to protect many of those facilities and the elements of government. And so we think we've got about the right number of coalition forces to assist the Iraqi forces in doing that.

So intelligence-wise, I don't see anything driving the insurgency up, and I certainly don't see it growing at this point. Could either one of those change? A political solution could absolutely change the dynamics.

STAFF: We're just about out of time. We've got time for one more. Tom, you've been waiting very patiently.

Q: General, Tom Bowman with the Baltimore Sun. General Casey said back in March that he expected fairly significant reductions in U.S. forces by early next year, around March time frame. And I'm wondering: Is that still the working assumption? Is that no longer the case because of conditions on the ground? Or is it uncertain at this time?

GEN. VINES: No, I think General Casey's assumption probably is still valid. I mean, look, there is a certain element of tacit support, not active support, that is derived from the presence of foreign forces. And I think ultimately we want to come down as quickly as conditions permit.

The question earlier -- I need to clarify. The reason I said that I assumed the conditions will remain relatively static -- keep in mind that those elections are only four months away. I mean, they're -- I don't have any reason to believe there's going to be a significant change in four months, absent a political breakthrough. So that is not a long-term projection of the insurgency. I'd remind you we're still trying to sort out what the World Trade Center's replacement is going to look like four years later. So four months is not a long time in an insurgency. So I don't see a huge change during that period. I suspect we will probably draw down capability after the elections, because Iraqi security forces are more capable.

Q: Follow-up. How would you define "fairly significant reductions"? With four brigades? Five brigades? Any sense?

GEN. VINES: That would -- it would probably be somewhere in that range; that would be my guess. A huge bold shift that injects a lot of risk into the situation is probably not a wise course of action. So what I would think is, we would continually assess -- bring down part of the forces, assess what the conditions are, what those effects are, and then continue to do that. To rapidly cut it, without any significant change in conditions or without time to assess them, I would think, would not be a wise course of action.

Q: There's one broad one --

STAFF: We're going to make this the last one. We're going to go with Vince, here. He's going to get a chance. Sorry, Brett (sp).

Q: Yes, General. This is Vince Crawley with the Army Times. There's some members of Congress who have suggested a phased timeline for U.S. withdrawal, in part to energize the Iraqi government that you've spoken about. Have you given any thought to planning, if you had a timeline for withdrawal imposed? And what would that do to you?

GEN. VINES: Well, we continually assess what would happen if we were -- if we had to change conditions. And part of the change in conditions would be -- we're required to draw down. So I would be opposed to announcing the timeline. Certainly, we know what the timelines would be if we said we want to come down a certain number of brigade combat team equivalents. But I would be opposed to announcing a timeline in advance, because that's not conditions-based. That's not based on the conditions on the ground, that's an arbitrary decision that's just based on a calendar. And I don't think that necessarily meshes with the conditions we might see here in-country.

Q: Roy (sp), can we get clarification on who the general -- (inaudible) --

STAFF: Hang on -- (inaudible) -- second, Lisa. I'm going to let the Brett (sp) ask the last question here.

Q: Okay. It's just a broad question about, General, the public perception of the war. As polls continue to go down here in the U.S., is that affecting morale? If you ask the average American what they think about Iraq, they say, "What a mess." What would you say to the average American who has that perception?

GEN. VINES: I would say they don't have a good perception of what is at stake here. I would say that they don't recognize that the people that are attacking the coalition and that are murdering innocent men, women and children here want to impose that same value system on a large portion of the world. And if they are in control of the borders of Iraq, and they can plan, train and equip terrorists, and export them around the world, they will attack the United States.

I would say that people like Staff Sergeant Nein, the 617th MP Company, who is on his second voluntary tour here -- he's a National Guard soldier who we awarded the Silver Star the other day -- recognizes the risk here. The soldiers over here, for the most part, get it, almost across the board. They see what is at stake, and the fact that you might have a country that can't control its own borders and is hospitable to terrorism is not something that we want to contemplate. Iraq has to be able to control its own security and control what happens within its borders as it affects its neighbors. We want a country here that is not threatening to its neighbors or the rest of the world.

STAFF: General Vines, as I said when we started this off, we really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us, and hope that we'll see some of your subordinate commanders in the weeks ahead doing the same thing, and hope to have you back real soon, too. Thank you very much for your time.

GEN. VINES: Thanks.

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http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2005/tr20050621-3081.html

Chairman WARNER. Without objection, General; and I thank you for that contribution.

Secretary Rumsfeld.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Mr. Chairman, in that connection, where we have inaccurate statements or inaccurately cited statements, Senator Kennedy cited this statement that we go to the war with the Army we have. Let me read the full answer that I gave and if anyone can find any implication of callousness in it, I just cannot detect it.

I said: "I talked to the general coming out here about the pace at which the vehicles are being armored. They have been brought from all over the world, wherever they are not needed, to a place where they are needed. I am told they are being—the Army is, I think, something like 400 a month are being done, and it is essentially a matter of physics. It is not a matter of money, it is not a matter on the part of the Army of desire. It is a matter of production and capability and doing it. And as you know, you go to the war with the Army you have. They are not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time. Since the Iraq conflict began, the Army has been pressing ahead to produce the armor necessary at a rate they believe—and it is a greatly expanded rate from what existed previously, but—a rate that they believe is a rate that they can accomplish at the moment.

"I can assure you that General Schoomaker and the leadership in the Army and certainly General Whitcomb are sensitive to the fact that not every vehicle has the degree of armor that might be desirable for it to have, but that they are working on it at a good clip.

"It is interesting. I talked a great deal about this with a team of people who were working on it hard at the Pentagon. If you think about it, you can have all the armor in the world on a tank and a tank can still be blown up, and you can have an up-armored HMMWV and it can be blown up, and you can go down in the vehicle. The goal we have is to have as many of those vehicles as is humanly possible with the appropriate level of armor available for the troops, and that is what the Army has been working on."

The Washington Post put on the front page: "You go to war with the Army you have," implying a disinterest. It is that kind of treatment and the kind of treatment here today, dredging up that old quote out of context, that I find harmful to what we are trying to accomplish.

Senator SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, let me just say, there is a lot of politics here and we are used to give and take, and we take people's statements out of context politically a lot of times. All of us have done it. But this is a war. We have soldiers out there, and we need to be particularly careful that we do not misrepresent things that place our soldiers in more harm's way than they need to be.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here and thank you for your service under very difficult circumstances. I think that one of the challenges we face in our country as well as in Congress is that there are grounds for reasonable disagreements about how we pursue our goals in Iraq and elsewhere. I absolutely agree that our enemies are violent, nihilistic extremists. I agree that if we and the Iraqi people and their government are successful in Iraq it will be a transformative historic event.

I think it is also fair to point out that there are great risks and dangers associated with this strategy, and that the young men and women who wear the uniform of our country are put in harm's way every day. I know how heavily that weighs on all of us, those of you who command them and those of us who vote to send them there and vote to try to provide the resources that they need.

So, while there might be reasonable disagreements about how we pursue our goals, I hope, Mr. Secretary, you would agree that Democrats and Republicans, people of every political belief and none at all, united after the September 11 attacks on our Nation. That has been especially evident here in this Senate Armed Services Committee, under the bipartisan leadership of Chairman Warner and Ranking Member Levin.

Mr. Secretary, would you agree with that statement?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, there is no question but that the country and Congress united after September 11.

Senator CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, I am going to read you a quote from today's newspaper: "Conservatives saw the savagery of September 11 and the attacks and prepared for war. Liberals saw the savagery of the September 11 attacks and wanted to prepare indictments and offer therapy and understanding for our attackers."

Mr. Secretary, do you agree with that statement by a senior member of this administration?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I do not know who made the statement or the context of it, and I have just gotten through saying that when one takes a single sentence or a single comment out of a longer statement that may have context, I find frequently that it is harmful. I do not know who said it or what the context was, and obviously it is not something I said.

Senator CLINTON. I appreciate that.

Well, it is a statement by Karl Rove and it is the kind of statement that is particularly harmful and painful. It is the kind of statement that is unnecessary. It is the kind of statement that demonizes Americans of good faith, seeking to support the men and women in uniform, seeking to protect them, seeking to support you, despite the fact that we might have serious questions and even disagreements about strategy and tactics.

It politicizes and turns into a partisan game something as serious as the attack on our Nation on September 11 and something as deadly as the conflict in which we are currently engaged.

I would hope, Mr. Secretary, that you and other members of the administration would immediately repudiate such an insulting comment from a high-ranking official in the President's inner circle.

It is very disturbing to many of us, increasingly so, that we cannot have a national conversation about something as important as the conflict that we face, which I for one believe is a long-term challenge to our very existence, and is certainly a challenge that you are attempting to deal with in the field and in the Pentagon.

It is not just people on one side of the aisle who have raised these issues. A recent bipartisan group of Members of Congress called for an end to the conflict, a withdrawal of our troops, something I do not agree with. But, I understand the frustration and the concern and anxiety that motivates such a statement and question, and I would not in any way question the resolve, toughness, or patriotism of anybody who raises legitimate questions and has disagreements about how we are to pursue our objectives.

With due respect, I think it would be helpful if we would hear a little bit more of that tone from our President and from our Vice President and from our other high-ranking officials in the administration. I am old enough to remember how deeply divided our country was in Vietnam. I never want to see that again. We may have disagreements about how to engage in this conflict and how to win it, but I never want to live through that again and I do not think any of us do.

I would respectfully suggest that perhaps we adopt a somewhat different tone and approach in discussing these very critical matters for the benefit of all of us, and particularly for the benefit of the young men and women who we are so proud of and so grateful to for their sacrifice.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, I certainly agree. I think you will find the tone in my remarks fit what you are talking about. I think that it is unfortunate when things become so polarized or so politicized, and you have heard some of that here today. It is not helpful.

In my remarks I pointed out that there are a number of questions that are raised by the public, by Members of the House and the Senate, and that is a perfectly proper and legitimate thing to do. Our democracy permits that. We can live through it in a wartime period if we do it in an orderly way and a sensible way and a civil way.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Clinton.

Senator Collins, I understand you yield. Senator Graham must soon leave to preside over the Senate, so Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Senator Collins, for that. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Just recently here in the Senate we have spent a lot of time discussing what one Member said. That was, I thought, way out of bounds. That Member apologized. That was good. There was a time when no one seemed to want to correct that statement, and some of the things that Senator Clinton talked about are really not helpful.

We talk about losing the war and what it would mean. The only way, gentlemen, I see that we could possibly lose in Iraq is to leave the country in shambles, not prepared, not capable of defending itself and taking care of this new democracy because we left too soon, before they had a chance to get a functioning army and a functioning police force and to create honest judges and to have the rule of law that we would put the whole world at risk.

So to anyone, Republican or Democrat, who thinks that a timetable is the answer, I could not disagree more. How hard is it to create a country where everybody buys in? It is pretty hard, and 100 and something years ago we were in a Civil War. It started in my State. This is hard. How long does it take to get over a 1,400-year religious dispute? Probably a little longer than between now and December.

We have bought into a model that is extremely difficult, and you cannot kill enough of these people. The model is to leave in Iraq the chance for them to govern themselves where moderation trumps terrorism, where mothers have a say about their children, where you can go to court based on what you did, not who you are. That is a very big challenge and the only answer.

Losing is leaving before the job is done. What would make us leave? The last time an American lost on the battlefield was when the Confederacy was defeated. We will not lose a battle. It is not a military problem in terms of losing. We will lose this war if we leave too soon, and what is likely to make us do that? The public going south, and that is happening and that worries me greatly.

So, Mr. Secretary, you have described the dynamic in 1946, I think very accurately. There was a lot of concern about reconstructing Europe after World War II. I see this engagement in Iraq as very similar to our World War II endeavor, not Vietnam. This is not about trying to take sides in a dispute within a country. This is about taking sides in a dispute between freedom-loving people and terrorists.

Whether we should have been there or not is no longer the question. We are there. The people who want us to leave are the same people who tried to kill us on September 11.

It is a World War II event, but the public views this every day, Mr. Secretary, more and more like Vietnam. Only 39 percent in the last poll support the idea that we should be there.

What do you think is going on and how can we correct that?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, the members of this committee, everyone in this room, and everyone listening know the answer to that question as well as I do, and possibly better. Our system says that we place all our faith, all our hope, in the people of the country, and that, given sufficient information, over time they will find their way to right decisions. I believe that.

I have watched polls go from 0 to 55 percent and back down to 15 percent in 6 weeks, and anyone who starts chasing polls is going to get seasick.

Senator GRAHAM. Do you believe this is an acute problem or a chronic problem, with the public support waning?

Secretary RUMSFELD. An acute or a what?

Senator GRAHAM. Chronic problem. Because in the last year, sir, the public support in my State has turned, and I worry about that because that is the only way we will ever leave before we should, is if the public loses faith in us. I am here to tell you, sir, in the most patriotic State I can imagine people are beginning to question, and I do not think it is a blip on the radar screen. I think we have a chronic problem on our hands. If you disagree, I certainly respect that.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Well, that is the time that leadership has to stand up and tell the truth, and if you are facing a headwind you have two choices: You can turn around and go downwind or you can stand there and go into the wind, and that is what needs to be done. We have leadership in this country that is capable of doing that, let there be no doubt.

I think the American people have a good center of gravity. Individually they have inner gyroscopes that may tilt from time to time, but they get recentered, and they, given appropriate leadership and continued success on the political and the security side in that country, I am absolutely convinced that we will have the willpower and the staying power and the courage to do what is right there.

The alternative is to turn that region back to darkness, to people who behead people, and that is not a happy prospect.

Senator GRAHAM. I could not agree more.

One last thought and I have to go. General Abizaid, based on the military situation as you know it, what is the likelihood of the insurgents and the terrorists combined launching a Tet-type offensive, where there are coordinated attacks throughout the country that would result in substantial loss of American or coalition lives? Because if that did happen I really worry about the response in this country. How likely is that and what can we do to prevent it?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I can tell you, and George will undoubtedly talk about this for Iraq in particular, but there is always a likelihood of a militarily surprise. There is always an opportunity for the enemy to figure out a way to inflict casualties, to grab the headlines.

The challenge for us is to stay tough enough when that happens to see ourself through it. We cannot be defeated by the headlines. We cannot be defeated by this enemy. No doubt that they can do us damage. In Afghanistan right now in particular, we are getting ready to go to an election in September. The enemy is coming as hard as they can. They have issued orders to everybody that they can get their hands on to try to disrupt this election because they are so afraid of it. But the violence will not win.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

General CASEY. I am sorry, Senator; if I could add to that.

Chairman WARNER. Yes, General Casey, you may reply.

General CASEY. Senator, I would just respond to that last question about Tet. I believe we have greatly reduced the potential or the capability for that to happen.

As I have listened here this afternoon there seems to be some perception that the attacks have increased. Well, they have from the low levels they sank to after the elections, but last August the rate of attacks was at 800 per week. Last November—I am sorry: they were over 900. In the elections, over 800. We are talking for the last 7 weeks they have been relatively constant at about between 450 and 500. So we are almost half of where we were when it was really hard.

We have brought down that capability, and that is why the absence of a safe haven becomes so important.

Senator GRAHAM. I would like to correct the perception that some people may have. I did not disagree with what Senator Clinton said. I am all for us working together, and there are no bad Americans here. Whether you are liberal, moderate, or conservative, you are not the enemy. The enemy is the people trying to kill us.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator Bayh.

Senator BAYH. Gentlemen, I would like to thank all of you for your service to our country.

General Myers, I would like to start with you if I could. In February, in speaking about the history of insurgencies, you indicated that they tended to run from 7 to 12 years in length. I would like to ask you about that. If we say that this one has been going on for about 2 years now, does that mean we are looking at by historical standards another 5 to 10 years of this insurgency?

General MYERS. I think the answer is that we do not know. One of the things we have not done very well in the hearing so far is, when we talk about the insurgency, to describe for a minute its constituent parts, because it is not homogeneous. You have the foreign fighters who, despite what happens politically in Iraq, will continue to try to do the coalition and Iraqis in. They will only be persuaded to quit in a political sense when the Iraqi people say enough is enough and we are not going to——

Senator BAYH. I guess another way to ask my question is, knowing what you know about this particular insurgency, do you have reason to believe that it would take less time than the average that you cited, the same, or perhaps more?

General MYERS. Well, I do not know. I do not know the answer to that question. I do think that, with the political progress we have talked about, the insurgency will crest and will start to reduce. A lot of these fighters are fighting because there are foreign forces in the country. Some of them are fighting because they want to be the next Saddam Hussein regime. Those will go away. I think it will lessen over time. How long it goes on, I do not know. Certainly not at this scale for 7 to 9 years. That is not anything that I have in my mind.

Senator BAYH. Thank you, General.

Mr. Secretary, that leads me to you and a very difficult question of how do we define success. I think I would associate myself with the comments of Senator Graham and my other colleagues that the key here is the American people, our endurance. I think what they

are looking for is two things: how do we define success; and second, some benchmarks for evaluating our progress toward reaching that goal. I would like to ask you about both of those things.

What concerns me is that this may be an asymmetric situation, where even though the political process moves forward, even though the Shia and the Kurds get their act together, including some of the responsible Sunnis in this process, if you just have a hard-core—pick a figure—5 percent, 4 percent, armed and violent people, are they able to undermine the wishes and the progress of the vast bulk of a society?

So in an insurgency that may go on in some form for a considerable period of time, when do we determine the country is stable enough, no longer a threat to its neighbors, not a haven for terrorists from which to threaten the rest of the world? We may conclude that the success is something less than perfect.

So my first question is, how do we define success? Then my second question would be, what benchmarks do we look to? General Casey, this may involve you. You mentioned that there was a surge leading up to the elections, now we are at about 450 attacks a month. A year from now, what benchmark can we set? Should it be 350 attacks, 250 attacks? Are there other, economic benchmarks we should set, numbers of jobs created, that kind of thing?

What objective criteria can we look to to evaluate our progress toward what we define as success?

So, Mr. Secretary, first you on how we define success. Then you and perhaps the other gentlemen in terms of the objective benchmarks we should look to to evaluate our own performance.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, I do not know if you were here when General Casey made a comment estimating the size of the insurgency, but it is nowhere near 4 or 5 percent of the population.

Senator BAYH. No, I was just using that as an example. Some small number of people and whether—it is an asymmetric situation. Half a percent, whatever the figure might be, if heavily armed——

Secretary RUMSFELD. What did you use, George?

General CASEY. One-tenth of 1 percent.

Secretary RUMSFELD. I will answer. A handful of people can—it does not take a genius to kill people. It was 18 people who killed 3,000 people on September 11. You do not have to have armies and navies and air forces or large numbers. A small number of people, determined to give up their own lives, can go around and indiscriminately kill thousands and thousands and thousands of human beings.

Now, how do you define success? I think I would separate it between success for the United States and success for Iraq slightly. In the last analysis, if this does go on for 4, 8, 10, 12, 15 years, whatever—and I agree with General Myers; we do not know—it is going to be a problem for the people of Iraq. They are going to have to cope with that insurgency over time. They are ultimately going to be the ones who win over that insurgency, and I believe they will win.

Now, for the United States success is slightly different. Success for us is liberating those people, which is done by passing sovereignty to an Iraqi government, which is done by putting them on

a path to fashion a constitution, which is underway, and a path to elect a new government under that new constitution, helping them get support from the international community, which they now have from NATO and the U.N., and helping them to raise money from the international community to help train, equip, and organize their security forces so the security forces can take over the responsibility for the security of that country.

It is not our task to stay there forever. The success will be if you have a single country, a moderate regime that is respectful of the various elements within it, even if there is a low-level insurgency that continues at 300 or 500 or whatever the number may be, but that they have the people who can cope with that, and that they are not attacking their neighbors and they are not using chemical weapons on their own people and they are not giving $25,000 to suicide bombers' families after they go out and kill innocent men, women, and children, as Saddam Hussein was.

Senator BAYH. Which leads to the question of the benchmarks and how we can determine that point at which our job is done, even if the low-level insurgency may continue for some time. So do you, Mr. Secretary, gentlemen, do you have——

Secretary RUMSFELD. We have dozens of benchmarks in the security side for our forces and our successes. We have dozens of benchmarks that we use for the Iraqi security forces. The State Department has dozens of benchmarks they look at with respect to electricity, water, schools, those types of things, and the economic things. So you have political, economic, and security benchmarks and they all have to go forward together. The benchmarks are there and we would be happy to brief you on them.

General MYERS. If I may, let me just go into a little bit more detail on those benchmarks. In the National Security Strategy for Iraq, there are now seven strategic objectives. We just added one. The last one we added was to promote strategic communications.

The first one is to transition to Iraqi security self-reliance. So that is one of them, and that is the objective. Under the objective then we have some objectives and goals and metrics to measure our progress, just exactly what the Secretary said.

The second one, a strategic objective, is a free and democratic state of Iraq. That has a lot to do with their political development. We have objectives and goals and metrics under that one as well.

The third one is to provide essential services to the citizens of Iraq, and we have metrics under that.

The fourth one is to establish a foundation for a strong economy, and you hit on that. One of the things we track is job creation. That is one of the things that would be one of the benchmarks you would want to track.

Senator BAYH. General, will we be publishing our progress toward meeting these benchmarks at regular intervals, so that the American people can know about our progress?

General MYERS. I think we would be happy to brief people on it, sir, yes.

The fifth one is to promote the rule of law, because that is so essential to dealing with the situation they have there. The sixth one is international engagement and assistance, so we track the inter-

national community and how they support a free and democratic Iraq.

So we have done a lot of work in the strategic planning. It is not just the DOD. This is the U.S. Government. The objectives came out of the Department of State, as a matter of fact. But it is an inter-agency effort to develop metrics to track these objectives and we do that.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, you have a great deal of understanding and knowledge of the Iraqi people and their leaders. For that reason, I want to pursue with you the very intriguing proposal that Senator Levin advanced in his opening statement. That is that we need to find a way to put more political pressure on the Iraqis to make more progress toward a political solution, and he has suggested that we do that by, if deadlines are not met, saying that we would reevaluate all of our options.

I share Senator Levin's concern that we need to change the dynamic in Iraq. It worries me greatly when I read the briefing that Lieutenant General Vines gave, in which he says that, "Attacks against the civilian populace in May were the highest total since major combat operations terminated in 2003." I am convinced that a political solution is the key to ending support for the insurgency.

How do we send a message to the Iraqi leaders that they must make more rapid, sustained progress toward the kind of political settlement that is needed to end public support, to the extent that it exists, for the insurgency? Do you think it would be useful to send the kind of message that Senator Levin has suggested?

I am not talking about a timetable for a withdrawal, which I oppose, but creating some idea that there would be consequences if progress is not made.

General ABIZAID. Senator Collins, actually the person that knows the Iraqis the best in this room is the guy that meets with their leadership every day, and that is George Casey, sitting down there at the end. I defer to him.

I will say I think it is our duty to tell them what we think, to demand in a way that partners demand of one another proof of principle that they are serious about what they are doing, that they are serious about moving forward in a society that includes all Iraqis, serious in moving forward in a society where they protect human rights. We have to ask it of them. It is not too much.

Senator COLLINS. General Casey, are we sending that message very clearly?

General CASEY. Loud and clear, Senator. The charge and I meet with the Prime Minister regularly. He fully understands that they need to move out with the constitutional development process. The chairman of the TNA fully understands. The director of the constitutional drafting committee fully understands. That message gets sent loud and clear, Senator.

Senator COLLINS. General Myers, you and I have talked many times about the strain that we are placing on our Guard and Reserve, and I have to tell you that I think this is getting worse, not

better, and that we are simply asking too much of the Guard in particular through multiple, repeated, and lengthy deployments.

I want to give you an example. A constituent of mine who is a helicopter mechanic, and she is an Army National Guard Staff Sergeant, her name is Jessica Wing. She left Bangor, Maine, last Friday morning for what will be her fourth deployment overseas in 10 years—four deployments in 10 years. She has been deployed to Haiti, to Bosnia twice, and soon she will be in either Iraq or Kuwait.

Now, I understand that the Department's policy mandates that Guard and Reserve members must not be deployed for more than 24 cumulative months unless they volunteer. But the key here is the word "cumulative." I also know there is the one in five rule, stipulating that only one 24-month cumulative deployment can take place within the 5-year period. But even if the deployments are not for 24 months, it still imposes a tremendous hardship for a Guard member to be deployed overseas four times in 10 years.

What specifically is being done to alleviate repeated deployments of those, like this staff sergeant, who have specialty skills in areas that have unusually high demand? In her case she is a helicopter mechanic and I can see why you would need helicopter mechanics.

I have to tell you, from my personal conversations with Guard and Reserve members in Maine, we are already seeing the impact on recruitment and I think we are going to start seeing it on retention as well.

[The information referred to follows:]

General MYERS. Senator Collins, we are all concerned about that. The health of our Reserve component is very important to the national security of this country. There are lots of efforts going on. A couple of the major ones—and I think we have discussed these in previous hearings perhaps, but we came out of the Cold War and into this century with a Reserve Force that was pretty much set up for the Cold War, the thought being that you pressed a button—you are in World War III, you push the button, the Reserves have about 9 months to train and then they follow forces to defend the North German Plain against the Warsaw Pact.

Five Guard members leave Bangor for deployment

BY DOUG KESSELI
OF THE NEWS STAFF

BANGOR — Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jessica Wing transferred to Maine six months ago to be closer to her family.

In the back of her mind, the helicopter mechanic knew she would be needed in operations abroad, but she thought it would be a year or two before she would be deployed again. She had been mobilized three times in the last 10 years, once to Haiti and twice to Bosnia.

Mobilization came quicker than expected.

Wing and four others with Company G, 126th Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Detachment 2 left Bangor early Friday morning for Fort Dix in New Jersey, where they will be readied for deployment elsewhere, most likely in Iraq or Kuwait.

They are the mechanics who make sure that the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters run properly, something that takes on even more importance in light of the dangerous areas the pilots now fly into.

Having gone through this three times before, Wing appeared calm and casual at a brief ceremony held for those being deployed and the families they leave behind.

But she acknowledged that even with her experiences — in Bosnia landmines could be found everywhere, including on the military post — there are some things you can't get used to. It's the uncertainty of the unknown.

"It doesn't matter how many times you've been deployed, once or 100 times, it's all the same," she said. "You don't know what you're getting into."

Spc. David Rowe, 21, of Houlton volunteered for the assignment when the military decided that five members of Company G, which includes members from Connecticut and Puerto Rico, would come from Maine.

Those eligible for deployment in Maine included some with new families, so Rowe, who has no wife or children, decided he should go in their stead.

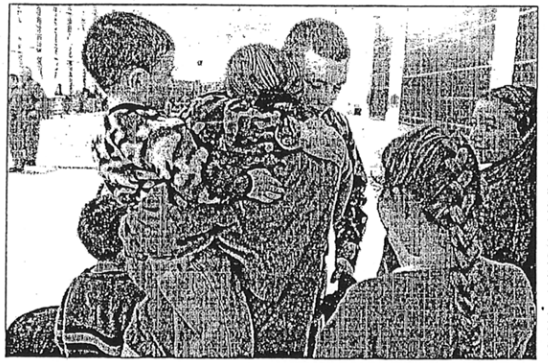
"I figured I might as well," he said matter-of-factly.

He, too, is a little anxious about what will happen, but plans to bring one of the things he loves most about Maine with him, modified for the change of environment.

An avid snowboarder, Rowe has taken up skateboarding in anticipation that wherever he's going, there won't be snow. Packed among his clothing and gear were two skateboards.

"There's no snow over there, so I've picked [skateboarding] up," he said.

For the Guard members being deployed, recent weeks and days were spent with families.



BANGOR DAILY NEWS PHOTO BY LINDA COAN O'KRESIK

Pfc. Samuel Lagoy, 18, of Milo says goodbye to his sister Samantha and youngest brother Scott (left), 4, and the rest of his family after a Friday morning sendoff ceremony for Lagoy and four other soldiers of G Company, 126th Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Detachment 2 who are heading to Fort Dix, N.J., for deployment. Lagoy, who is one of 15 children, had lots of hugs to give before his departure.

"I'm going to miss everybody a lot," said Pfc. Sam Lagoy, 18, of Milo, whose family includes eight sisters, six brothers and five nieces and nephews. Most of them were present to see him off in Hangar B at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Bangor.

As a way to help keep him in touch with his big family, Lagoy bought a laptop computer.

Specialist David Spaulding, 30, of Dexter, another full-time guardsman and a veteran of two deployments, is leaving behind a wife and 2¼-year-old son Aidan, who happily played in the pilot's seat of a Blackhawk helicopter, the kind his father fixes and maintains.

Big families or small, the five — including Pfc. Kenneth Larrabee of West Paris — are leaving behind loved ones, Maj. Gen. Bill Libby, Maine's adjutant general said. He stressed that message in both his speech before those gathered and as he met with each soldier leaving, individually.

"You're not the only people making a sacrifice in this deployment," Libby said, a Blackhawk helicopter behind him. "I want you to remember that on a daily basis."

Back home, people like Mikee Spaulding will have to make do without her husband, although Libby said families won't be left alone. The Maine National Guard has support services that can help fill in the gaps.

Stepping into the crowd that is Lagoy's family, Libby sought to assuage concerns of both the departing soldier and his family.

"We're going to take good care of him over there and we're going to take good care of you," he said.

We find ourselves in this security environment with a much different threat and a much different need. Even before this threat, we recognized the need to transform our Reserve component. So we are rebalancing over 100,000—I think it is 115,000 or 125,000—reservists so we have more of what we need.

We clearly have in our Reserve components—I am talking Army now—more artillery capability than we need, less military police (MPs), less intelligence companies, less transportation companies. So the Army is about, while we are at war, transforming their Reserve components to be configured more appropriately with the needs of today. That will take time.

In the meantime, helicopter mechanics are at a premium because a lot of our capability, by conscious decision back in the 1970s and 1980s, was put in the Reserve component. So when the Nation is at war, that is where you go.

Now, we have also tried very hard for the last, well, since September 11—and we have done this imperfectly at the beginning; I think we are still not perfect, but we are pretty darn good at trying to provide predictability to people like the mechanic you talked about in Maine, because you are right, reservists make big sacrifices, not only like the rest of the active duty, but they have employers to worry about and other situations. So, it is more difficult.

I cannot talk about her four deployments and how long each one was and so forth. My guess is some of them were probably not all that long. We do not argue with the cumulative issue. We know what the law is, but the Secretary's policy is, we mobilize you one time and you may not reach your 25 cumulative months, but we are not going to remobilize you just because you have 6 months or a year left. We are not going to do that. We have a policy of no remobilizations of the Guard and Reserve unless they are volunteers. I do not know the status of this young lady, if she is a volunteer or not. She might very well be a volunteer. You probably know. I do not happen to know.

[The information referred to follows:]

CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20318-9999

8 July 2005

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Collins,

You expressed concern during the 23 June hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee about the extent to which National Guard and Reserve forces have been used in overseas deployments. You provided a specific example of Staff Sergeant Jessica Wing, a helicopter mechanic in the Maine Army National Guard, who had just left for her fourth overseas deployment in 10 years. Please allow me to share a few insights.

I, too, am deeply concerned about the well being of all our forces: Active, Guard and Reserve. At least 47 specific initiatives across the Department of Defense address those concerns, and I am encouraged by the progress I see. While many of our guardsmen and reservists have volunteered to serve longer, to my knowledge none have been involuntarily mobilized for more than 24 cumulative months.

As to Staff Sergeant Wing, she is a well-respected Soldier who has served this Nation with honor and distinction. During her 12 years of service with the Active Component of the Army, she deployed overseas three times. Each of these missions took several months for a total of approximately 15 months. The number and length of these deployments is well within the norm for our active duty forces. After a 1-year break in service, she joined the Army National Guard in 2001, and is currently preparing for her first overseas deployment as a guardsman.

I deeply appreciate Staff Sergeant Wing's selfless service to our country as an Active and Reserve Component Soldier, and I thank you for your continued support of our men and women in uniform.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Chairman and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and asking that it be made part of the record for the hearing.

Sincerely,

RICHARD B. MYERS
Chairman
of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

So I think as we go forward we need to restructure the Guard and Reserve so we do not have shortfalls and have to rely on a lot of in lieu of training, which means we pick units that are not particularly trained for a certain skill, MPs for instance. We will take an infantry unit or we will take an artillery unit and we will train them in MP skills. That takes more mobilization time to do that.

We have to reconfigure our Guard and Reserve. We are doing that. I think we are providing very good predictability. The Guard and Reserve know they are only going to be called up one time for this conflict. That is our policy right now.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, General.

Senator, it is such an important question. Would you try and provide for the record the questions raised by the General?

Senator COLLINS. I would be happy to.

[The information referred to follows:]

The Guard and Reserve understand they are likely to be called up one time, not to exceed 24 months during this conflict. As of May 31, 2005, 509,229 Reserve component service members had been mobilized, 86 percent were mobilized once; 12 percent were mobilized twice, and 3 percent were mobilized more than twice; none were mobilized in excess of 24 months.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses very much for being here today.

I want to begin in an unusual place. By total coincidence, in going through the annual reading of the Bible that I do, this morning the page turned to a story from the Book of Numbers where the children of Israel, having been liberated from slavery in Egypt, having experienced the miracle at the Red Sea, having been brought to Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments, are now getting closer to the Promised Land.

The people essentially ask Moses to send some representatives to scout out the Promised Land. As well remembered, most of them come back with what turns out to be an unreliably negative report, that there are giants there and that this is an impossible situation, except for Joshua and Caleb, who argue: Remember our history, remember what we have just experienced. Remember the promise we have, the purpose we have, one might even say the destiny we have.

The people, unfortunately, listen to the naysayers, and actually ask if they might be returned to Egypt. The Lord is not happy with this response and the rest, unfortunately, is history, which is they wander for 40 years before they enter the Promised Land.

Now, I am not comparing the situation in Iraq today to that story from the Bible. But as always, I think the Bible is instructive and offers us some lessons here, and particularly because we are at a moment, as Senator Graham described, where I fear that American public opinion is tipping away from this effort. We have to, as Joshua and Caleb did, remind them of the history and of our own national purpose and destiny, that in fact because of the bravery and brilliance of the American military the people of Iraq were liberated from a brutal dictator and a real enemy of ours, a ticking time bomb to us, I believe; that the Iraqi people came out and voted in great numbers; that they have formed a government; that they are working on a constitution; and that they face a brutal enemy, but one that will never defeat the American military on the field of battle.

They will only defeat us, as one of you said earlier, on the field of American public opinion. We cannot let that happen. The consequences for our security would be disastrous.

I happen to believe, following the State Department, that Saddam Hussein was a supporter of terrorism. That is what the State Department said before the war. Many did not believe that. But today there is no doubt about it, this is the central battlefield in the global war on the terrorists who attacked us on September 11. They are streaming in there. If we hesitate, if we do not draw to-

gether, if we do not understand how much we and the Iraqi people have accomplished and that we have a purpose here that is related to our national destiny, the future for our children and grandchildren is going to be a lot less safe than we all want it to be.

I believe that is an opinion that is shared broadly in this Congress. There may be differences of opinion about tactics, but we have to draw together to make that case to the American people, because today most of what they know about the war is the stories they see every evening about the suicide bombers. They do not know about the progress on the ground. They do not know about the political progress, et cetera, et cetera.

So I want to ask, toward a strategy of victory, this question, Mr. Secretary. We have been over this ground before and all of us I think have to be honest with each other and with the American people. I continue to be worried about whether at this moment we have enough troops in Iraq. I read the stories in the paper of field commanders saying they take a city but they do not have enough people to leave, either our own coalition forces or the Iraqi security forces, to secure it, and then the insurgents, the terrorists, come back.

When I was last in Iraq—and I have been there three times in the last year—I was so proud of our military and the great morale there. I asked about the stream of insurgents and foreign fighters coming across the Syrian border, why do we not stop it? They said we do not have enough personnel to do it.

I want to ask you two questions about that. One, at this moment—forget the past; we are talking about now and in the future—until the Iraqi security forces are fully where we want them to be, do we not need—let me ask it in a more open way: Do we need more troops?

Then I would ask a second question. If we had a larger active duty Army and Marine Corps, would we have more troops there on the ground? I know you understand the difference between those two forms of that question.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator Lieberman, I must say I find myself in agreement with almost every word that came out of your mouth and I respect the thoughtfulness of it. I guess the only thing I would say is, you say you sense the American people are tipping away from support. I have a feeling they are getting pushed myself.

But it has always been so. George Washington was pounded and pounded and pounded and almost fired. Abraham Lincoln was pounded and pounded. It was not popular. There were deep divisions, deep disagreements, and our country survived them all.

My goodness, in the first part of World War II we lost battle after battle after battle and people said: Oh my goodness, is it not terrible; we are going to lose. In the Cold War, people wanted to toss in the towel. We have always survived these things. We can do that.

The American people are solid, and I do not mean solid in support of the war. They are solid human beings, and if we tell them the truth and provide the right kind of leadership, by golly, they will support a worthy, noble goal. When it is done they are going to be able to look back with a great deal of pride on what has been accomplished, just as the men and women in uniform do.

Now, we cannot seal our own borders. It does not surprise me a bit that you can say some commander in Iraq says we do not have enough troops to seal the border. But my goodness, that is the plus side. You might seal the border if you had solid people along there and all kinds of military equipment. You would have to have force protection for it, and you would become a world-class occupying power. You would immediately assume all the burden of the intrusiveness of hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of troops trying to seal that border.

Now, I am not the one to answer your question. The people at this table are the ones who give military advice as to how many troops we ought to have in that country. I am the one who catches the dickens from everyone who says we should have more or we should have fewer. The number we have is the number they have asked for. The number they have is the number I have agreed with. The number they have is the number I have recommended to the President, and I happen to believe they are right. I am convinced they are right.

There is a tension between too many and too much intrusiveness and too much of an occupation and alienation of the population and too few. I think we are about right. I would like to hear their answers.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So would I. Thank you.

General ABIZAID. Senator Lieberman, I will certainly comment about the force levels within the CENTCOM area of operations. It sometimes is not readily apparent, but having more troops in the region is not necessarily the answer to all of our problems out there.

First of all, we have to recognize that we are the shield behind which politics has to take place, economic development has to take place, diplomacy has to take place, et cetera. Too much of a footprint in the region creates more resistance than I think people generally appreciated. It is very important that we work the art of this, which is to have the right number that allows the development of local security forces to be successful.

This is really an insurgency that Iraqis and Afghans will have to win. This is really a part of the world where the people of the region will have to show that they want a better future and they are willing to fight for themselves. We can help them. We can help them shape that future. But, to do it with too many troops I think creates a burden and a direction that is not necessarily one that will be successful.

Senator LIEBERMAN. If I may just shape the question to General Myers and General Casey: I hear you and my question is now in this next period of months, which are very important because of the constitution-writing, the referendum, and the election, when there is going to be an incentive on the terrorists to escalate, do we have enough troops there? Are the Iraqi security forces adequately prepared to take on the responsibility themselves?

General CASEY. Senator, we do today. As I mentioned, we are constantly reading the enemy, adjusting, adopting, looking for ways to affect him. I have said since my confirmation hearing before you: If I assess that I need more troops, I will ask for them. Before the last election, we did our assessment, saw that we needed more

troops, and we asked for them and we got them, and they made a huge difference in the election.

Now, we are certainly looking ahead to October. It is 4 months out. We are looking at that very carefully. You have the Iraqi security forces who are developing and, as I mentioned, we have increased our focus on their development with our transition teams and with partnership relationships between our units and theirs. So they are getting better faster.

We are in the process right now of doing what I mentioned to you. We are reading the situation and we will make our assessments, and if we decide we need more, Senator, we will ask for them.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate that.

Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Ensign.

Senator ENSIGN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Obviously we all agree that getting America and American troops out of there as quickly as possible is in all of our interests. I am one of those who believe that our very presence there inspires more insurgents. But frankly, it is obviously way too early to get us out.

I think the Iraqi people and the Iraqi government really appreciate the fact that we are there, that we are sacrificing, that we are losing some of our troops and others being wounded. They would like to see us out as early as possible, but, as has been said, not too early.

To address that need, and you all have shared before this committee many times, the key to withdrawing that is to get the Iraqis up and trained as quickly as possible. I was just in a meeting with the Senate leadership and the Prime Minister of Iraq just about an hour and a half ago. The whole issue of training came up and there were several questions addressed with the Prime Minister on training.

Historically, if you look at what America has done with Latin America, we have brought a lot of their folks up here and we have trained them here. It has been something that has been very effective, not only for the training itself but also post-training and when they are in government we have then a lot of people who actually think pretty positively about America and some of the values that we have up here.

We posed this question to the Iraqi Prime Minister. France I guess has offered—although the Iraqi Prime Minister does not think that they have been clear on exactly what they have offered—and some of the other countries have offered to train in their country. We are doing, obviously, a huge amount of training. We are trying to get it up as quickly as possible.

But the question remains, how do we get more countries to step up to the table to help us with the training and how do we get the Iraqis then to accept, if those countries want to do the training in their country? With our experience with Latin America it seems to have had a positive effect. How do we get the Iraqis to go along with that? Anybody who wants to answer that I would be more than pleased to hear from.

Secretary RUMSFELD. We are already training Iraqis outside of the country. They are being trained in several countries for different purposes, and certainly they can be trained in country, they can be trained out of country. It is something that is already happening.

Senator ENSIGN. I realize that, but the question—even the Prime Minister answered this morning on, for instance, the French. The French have supposedly offered to train 1,700, taking some of the Baathists who, when we de-Baathified there, trying to take some of those folks who we have cleared through and get that officer corps up and trained. That was something that was addressed with the Prime Minister and he did not seem to think that the French had necessarily made clear exactly what they have offered. Some of the Senators who were there thought that the French had made it clear what they had offered to train on their soil, but the Iraqis were resistant to bringing them to France to train.

General CASEY. I am not aware of that, but I will certainly look into it when I get back.

Secretary RUMSFELD. It just came up very recently and I am sure the Iraqis are sorting it out with the French.

Senator ENSIGN. Let me go down a different line of questioning, then. I believe, and it has been said today, the critical piece of this is that the American people—there is no question that the American military is the best fighting military in the history of the world and these insurgents cannot on a military level defeat us. The only way that they can win is back here, back home, defeating us politically if we lose the support of the American people and if the leaders do not stand up and show the kind of leadership that leaders in the past in America have shown.

General Abizaid, I would like to ask you—and with what has happened in these last 2 weeks, this puts you in a tough position, but you are a big boy and you have been in tough positions before. This is a very political institution here and I want to ask you a tough political question, because I think we have responsibilities as political leaders to be careful when we are at war in the words that we choose, how we say them and what we say.

Recently we have had some leaders here in the U.S. Senate and the House that have talked about and compared what some of our troops have been doing at Guantanamo Bay to the Nazis and other terrible regimes around the world in the past. Does that damage what is going on in our war efforts? Does that encourage recruitment, funding for the terrorists, the morale? Does it hurt the morale of our troops? Does it help the morale of the other side?

I guess I would like to have some honest assessment of some things that have been said up here, and I know we all know what we are talking about here.

General ABIZAID. Well, Senator, I have been in a lot of tough positions, but I am certainly not going to comment on any specific political person who might have made a specific political comment.

I will tell you something very important. I travel around the region a lot and as I was just coming out of Afghanistan, Iraq, Djibouti, and various places where I talked to our troops and the troops we are training in the Iraqi and the Afghan security forces, I never sensed the level of their confidence higher. When I look

back here at what I see is happening in Washington, within the Beltway, I have never seen the lack of confidence greater.

Now, I cannot answer that question. Maybe it is something we are not doing right in the field. But, I can tell you that when my soldiers say to me and ask me whether or not they have support from the American people, that worries me. They are starting to do that. When the people that we are training, Iraqis and Afghans, start asking me whether or not we have the staying power to stick with them, that worries me too.

I would say we need to have a frank discussion with ourselves. I am not against the debate. We that are fighting the war and think it is a war worth fighting. We are making a huge difference. The people we are helping think that we are fighting a war that is worth fighting. We are making a huge difference. But, we cannot win the war, American soldiers cannot win the war, without your support and without the support of our people.

We cannot ignore the problem. We need to move together to understand it and fight it together.

Senator ENSIGN. Well, Mr. Chairman, I realize my time is expired and I appreciate your indulgence. The point that I think is important to make here is that all of us as leaders, we have a responsibility in choosing our words very carefully at a time of war.

America is about free and open debate and we should never back away from that. However, with freedom comes responsibility. We as leaders have a great responsibility, especially when it comes to the lives of the men and women who are in uniform who are in harm's way. If we are endangering those, if we are encouraging the enemy, we had better be careful with the words that we choose.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator, that is a very important question that you have asked and I commend General Abizaid for his very candid and forthright reply.

Senator Byrd.

Senator BYRD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for this hearing, and I thank our friend here for what he has said, your ranking member.

I have been listening to what has been said here, and there has been a good bit of speechifying on both sides. I regret that it seems to be a situation in which the witnesses have all the time they want to talk, but not the Senators.

Mr. Secretary, I watched you with a considerable amount of amusement. We have to be careful what we say, that is what everybody is saying, so I am going to try to be careful in what I say.

I have been here a long time, longer than you have. But that does not make any difference. I have seen a lot of Secretaries of Defense that have come before this committee. I was on this committee years ago when the late Senator Richard Russell was the chairman. I do not think I have ever heard a Secretary of Defense who likes to lecture the committee as much as you appear to do. I hope I am not wrong in my judgment.

I say with all due respect to you, I think you have a very tough job and in many ways you have been a good Secretary of Defense.

Let me tell you, nobody knows more about the courage of our soldiers and marines and people, nobody knows more about that than

we do. We know about that. Nobody questions the ability of our soldiers. They are the finest in the world. Of course they are. We all know that. Nobody criticizes that. I hope that anything I say never leads the people out there who are risking their lives every day, risking their lives this very minute, I hope nothing I ever say reduces the respect for them or makes them feel that we do not respect them. We love them, our troops. Our troops, yes, they are out there every day giving their lives.

I think we all have to be careful what we say, we here and you too. There have been a lot of careless statements made by the administration, and you too, Mr. Secretary, I say most respectfully. I make mistakes too. Who does not? But to come up here and lecture these people, you seem—you are pretty feisty. I kind of like that in a way, but at the same time I remember that it is we the people that count. We are up here, we try to represent the people. We have to run for election and re-election.

I cannot refute a sneer. Who can refute a sneer? Many times I think that that is what we get, Mr. Secretary, when you come up here. I cannot refute a sneer. I say that with great respect.

But, let me tell you something. The people up here have to go before the people out there. You may not like our questions, but we represent the people. This Constitution [indicating], what is it about? "We the people." Now, you may not like our questions, but we represent the people.

I have had my fill of the administration forgetting that this is a constitutional system in which there are three separate but equal branches. Sometimes I think this administration forgets that the legislative branch is the first branch mentioned in this Constitution. We poor Senators, you can lecture us if you like, but we ask the questions that the people ask of us, whether you like it or not. We are going to ask you.

The problem is we did not ask enough questions at the beginning of this war that we got into, Mr. Bush's war.

I know that my time is up, but I have been waiting a while. That is the problem here, we do not have time. I know you have another engagement.

There are three separate branches, and it is about time that the administration understands that we have not asked enough questions. The press did not ask enough questions. The Senate did not ask enough questions when they voted wrongly to shift the power to declare war, as it were, to one person. That was wrong. I do not care whether he is a Republican or a Democrat.

We represent the people of this country. We are elected. We have to ask questions whether you like it or not. These people around here may phrase their questions any way they want and some of them may be loaded, they may be political. I have heard a good bit of politics on both sides of this question.

But, when it is all said and done, the men and women out there who are dying and their people back home, their wives, their sisters, their fathers, their brothers, their husbands, their mothers, they are wondering, too.

We did not ask enough questions when we went into this war. The Senate did not ask enough questions and I am ashamed of my

own great body here that it did not ask enough questions. It was said, well, you will appear to be unpatriotic if you ask questions.

We are asking questions. The American people are asking questions. I may not like it, but they are asking questions. They are the people who are in there—the American people have not been told the truth. You say we should tell them the truth, Mr. Secretary. That is the problem, the American people have not heard enough of the truth.

Forgive me to appear to be perhaps discourteous. I do not mean to be discourteous. I have just heard enough of your smart answers to these people here who were elected. We were elected. You are not elected. We are elected. You have been elected. You know what it is to have to run for office, so you asked questions too when you were on this side of the table. We have to ask questions. The people out there want us to ask questions.

Get off your high horse when you come up here. I have to run for reelection. You do not, I do. This is the Constitution and we represent the people who send us here. That is what we are supposed to do.

Now let me ask a question. We have been paying for the war in Iraq on a cash and carry basis from the very beginning. I have asked these questions before. I do not necessarily hold you to blame, but somebody ought to do better. We have been paying for the war in Iraq on a cash and carry basis from the very beginning. The administration has consistently refused to budget for the war—you have heard me say this before—in the annual budget process, opting instead to present a series of must-pay bills to the American people in the form of supplemental appropriation requests.

When are we going to see some truth in budgeting from the administration? The cost of the war in Iraq is not just a one-time pop-up expense. It has evolved into a long-term financial burden on the American people.

Now, Congress is considering proposals to add billions of dollars in bridge funding to this year's defense authorization and appropriations bills. Simply put, Congress is being forced to take up the slack for the administration's refusal to budget for the war.

The American people have not been told the truth. You say if we tell the American people the truth. The American people have not been told the truth. I have asked this question from the beginning: What is this war going to cost? Well, I kind of get a sneer back. What is it going to cost? It is costing the American people in blood and it is costing them in their treasure.

Is this any way to budget for a war? Why will not the administration send to Congress a detailed budget estimate for Iraq for fiscal year 2006? That is a good question, Mr. Chairman. It is a rhetorical question, but we have to face it here. We do not get a budget from the administration. We just get supplementals: These are bills we have to pay. The American people do not really see and understand what we are paying for this war.

Chairman WARNER. Could the witness respond to your question, Senator?

Senator BYRD. Yes, but I am going to have my say, too.

If you wish to respond to this, Mr. Secretary, in your usual fashion, go ahead. But, I am asking questions that the people back home ask me. All I have said, I hope I have said it with considerable respect. I respect you. You have a hard job. I know that. We have a job, too. We have to ask questions.

So what is your answer to that question, if you care to?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator Byrd, my recollection is that we did try to budget in advance for Operation Enduring Freedom and Congress refused to allow us to do it and said that the information was too tentative and preliminary because you cannot know what is going to happen in the future in a war, and they preferred that we do it in supplemental. It is a matter that was worked out between the Office of Management and Budget and Congress. It is not something that any Department has a voice in.

Senator BYRD. That was at the beginning. That was a long time ago.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Yes, sir. My understanding is that wars have historically been budgeted through supplementals.

Senator BYRD. That is not exactly the truth.

Secretary RUMSFELD. In any event, the American people do get told the truth. Congress is presented with a budget, and then it is simultaneously frequently presented with a supplemental and all the information is there. It is just not integrated into the budget. But, it is not as though there is something that is not known to Congress, because Congress has the responsibility of appropriating the funds, as you know better than any.

Senator BYRD. Is that your answer?

Secretary RUMSFELD. That is my answer, yes, sir.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you, Senator Byrd. I have to move on. I have three other colleagues.

Senator BYRD. Mr. Chairman, I thank you. You are a great chairman and I respect you. I know what you are up against. It is not your fault. Thank you very much.

Thank you, thank you. I thank all of you for what you are doing every day for our country. I respect that. I respect that uniform that you wear, every one of you. But, you too have to understand that we are the elected representatives of the people. We have to ask questions and they do not have to be softball questions.

Thank you very much for what you do. Have a little respect for what we try to do.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Talent.

Senator TALENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just give you my evaluation of what you have been telling us and then ask a couple of questions——

Chairman WARNER. Would you allow me an interruption?

Senator TALENT. Sure.

Chairman WARNER. The full panel has to appear before the House of Representatives. I will recognize each of the remaining Senators here, then we will have to draw this hearing to a close.

Senator TALENT. All right, then maybe I had better skip my evaluation and just ask the questions.

Chairman WARNER. Just in terms of others who would like to follow.

Senator TALENT. It seems to me that, in the areas of economic reconstruction, political activity, and the formation of a government and political institutions, we are making progress. I think it is a significant thing that there has been no ethnic or religious civil war as such there. That was always the worst case scenario in my mind. I think maybe we have Ayatollah Sistani and some other people to thank for that.

There has been no attack here, and I think we have to take the cost of the war, a couple hundred billion dollars—what is that, 1 to 2 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the last couple of years. I do believe there is a connection between that and the fact that we have not been attacked here. It is harder for them to attack us when we are on the offense, and that is a big plus.

I also think it is an enormously important strategic objective for us to gain. All that I think may be on the side of progress and, if not good news, progress toward accomplishing the objective. On the con side, if you will, or the negative side, the IED problem is worse than we anticipated, and I do not know that we have figured out yet what to do about it.

It is striking to me that the training is harder than I think we maybe thought it was going to be. Let me ask you this with regard to the training. One of my difficulties is a lot of what I want to ask about I think I have to ask about in closed session. Is it your sense that a substantial proportion of the Iraqis that we are training are willing to stand and fight in a combat situation? Maybe they are poorly led, maybe they do not have all the sophistication that our troops have, but do they have the fire to fight? That is the first question.

If they do not and to the extent that they do not, what can we do about that? Because wars against terrorism are part combat, but they are also a lot questions of resolution between who has the resolve. They are struggles between peoples in that sense.

The second is a broader issue. It does seem to me that this whole enterprise would be easier if we had a larger Army, simply for a larger rotational base. Mr. Secretary, I hope—and I liked your comment on this—that as you do the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and we move forward that we consider this with regard to all the services, that we do not—we try and predict with the QDR what the threats are going to be, but we do not know. I hope that we will err on the side of having too much rather than too little.

I said this all throughout the 1990s, when we went at the beginning of that decade from 12 divisions to 10. I suspect if we had those other two divisions and maybe if we had done some different apportionment between the Reserve components and the Active-Duty components, this would be a lot easier now just from a rotational perspective.

So first, is it your sense that they are willing to stand and fight, if you can answer that in an open session? To the extent that that is not true, what are we doing about that? What can we do about that?

Then, Mr. Secretary, would you comment on whether the situation with the Army in Iraq has affected your thinking regarding the QDR?

General CASEY. Senator, I will take the first one there. As I mentioned in my opening statement, after some difficulties last spring the Iraqi security forces are in the fight every day and we have not had a failure of the Iraqi security forces in the face of fairly determined opposition since the elections.

Again, as I said in my statement, they gained a lot of confidence in themselves in what they did during the elections. You have heard the stories about tackling suicide bombers and falling on top of them to protect the people. So that spirit has continued on through our training and development.

Senator TALENT. When you say "have not had a failure," you mean that they have not just turned and run or hunkered down and refused to confront the enemy?

General CASEY. Just exactly the opposite. They have been attacked by multiple car bombs. They have stood and they have fought.

I will tell you, our strategy to put small teams of coalition forces with them has also helped to stiffen their will and their resolve and their capacity.

Senator TALENT. That is true when they are encountering bands of insurgents in small arms attacks and ambushes and the like?

General CASEY. Everything we have seen so far.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, you are quite right, the QDR is underway and one of the key questions is the size of the forces, particularly the ground forces. Simultaneously we have been doing a series of things that have the effect of increasing the size of the Armed Forces, and particularly in the skill sets that are needed.

For example, in the Navy we have been using sea swaps, where we change crews overseas, so we maintain a capability and use fewer people for longer times. We have thus far only used about 40 or 45 percent of the Guard and Reserve. The problem is that their skill sets are not properly balanced, so we have been shifting the balance within the Guard and Reserve, and as between the Active Force and the Guard and Reserve.

Under the new National Security Personnel System, we are going to be able to do a much more effective job with our civilian force and we are going to be able to take a number of military people out of the jobs they are in, which are essentially jobs that can be done by civilians. So, without increasing the overall size, we will have a larger number of uniformed personnel available for military functions.

In addition, we have increased the size of the Army. We are increasing it by 30,000 troops beyond the increases that we are achieving through all of these other activities. But in the process, the QDR should come out with some visibility as to what might make sense for the period.

Senator TALENT. My time is up, Mr. Chairman. But I am speaking more in terms of an attitude as you size all this up. I know this is what I am going to be thinking when we receive the QDR over here, that let us err on the side of too much—because if we are wrong, if we cut it too fine an area, we have to spend a whole lot more to try and deal with that than we would if we had sustained a somewhat larger force.

I know the recommended force when I came into Congress in 1993 was 12 divisions, and I am wondering if we should not, to take care of all contingencies, just err on the side of having too much rather than too little. I hope you will consider that as you consider the QDR.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Talent.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen. As always, thank you for your appearance here today and providing the information, but most of all thank you for the great leadership that you are providing. General Abizaid, General Casey, when you get back in theater just let your troops know that we greatly appreciate the great service that they are providing, not just to our country but for freedom around the world and the hopeful freedom of the Iraqi people.

General Myers, I was interested in your comment in your opening statement where you said troops understand what is at stake in Iraq. You are exactly right.

General Casey, you were kind enough to host a couple of us over there several months ago. We were there at Thanksgiving. When I had the opportunity to go out and look your troops in the eye, what we saw were very professional men and women who are committed to freedom, who understand why they are there, and who would rather be at home, but they know they are there for the right reason and they are doing great work.

You have a young captain over there who happens to be from my home town, a young man that I have known all his life. He is my first West Point graduate. I sent him an email. It has been about a month or so ago, I guess. He is with the 3rd Infantry Division. He was in the original march to Baghdad. He is back over now for his second tour.

He responded with an email. Mr. Chairman, I would like to quote a little bit of this email that I got back from this captain. He said: "Things have been progressing well here in our sector, although Baquba still sees its fair share of violence every now and then. Most if not all attacks are conducted via car bombs, probably the most cowardly manner in which a terrorist can become a martyr. We think these car bombers are mostly foreign fighters." Again, you have verified today that exact fact.

He talks about, General Abizaid, something called a q-a-d-a-h. Is that a "qadah"? I do not want to be mispronouncing that. Apparently it is the equivalent of a county in the United States. He says: "We have over $19 million dedicated to the qadah assistance alone. We have built countless numbers of schools, roads, mosques, water treatment plants, switchboards, et cetera. We just recently finished up a project that will provide fresh drinking water to over 25,000 people in three different villages for the first time in 35 years. The local governments would be operating completely on their own if it were not for the lack of a budget. They are in the process, however, of compiling and submitting budget requests for fiscal year 2006 to Baghdad by no later than the end of July, so we are seeing great progress in that area."

He then talks about the economy over there and what is happening in the local community relative to an increase in economic activity, and he concludes that paragraph by saying: "Once the security situation is under control, I think we will see a huge capacity for private businesses investing in the local economy."

Secretary Rumsfeld, in agreeing with you, as I do, relative to what you said about getting pushed, I think that is exactly right. This young man said: "Most people back home do not hear about all of these things and I wish the press would do more to cover them."

He then goes on to address an issue that a lot of us have asked questions about and a lot of the press have asked questions about for the whole time that we have been there. I did not ask him this in my email to him. He volunteered this. He says: "Additionally, our equipment is all to standard. We receive updated material and technology almost weekly and soldiers feel more than safe with their equipment. The biggest threat by far is still roadside bombs, followed by vehicle accidents. The armored HMMWV is an excellent machine, however, and it does its job 99.99 percent of the time. Whenever we leave the gate, it is standard operating procedure to wear all protective equipment—throat guard, shoulder guard, groin guard, arm guards, kevlar vest, helmet, ballistic eye protection, and earplugs. It is plenty heavy, but it saves lives."

He concludes by saying: "The bottom line is that we are making great progress, and we may be replaced by an Iraqi battalion instead of a U.S. unit. This is in line with reducing the footprint of coalition forces in Iraq."

I wanted to get that in the record. We have a job to do here. Senator Byrd is right, we are required to ask tough questions, but by the same token when things are being done right over there I think we have an obligation to tell the American people it is going right.

Part of your responsibility in being here today is to answer those tough questions, but also to get the message out that things are being done right. War is very difficult, it is nasty, and we are dealing with people who want to kill and harm Americans every day. That is their sole goal in life. But, thanks to the folks that are operating under each of you every single day in Iraq today, in Afghanistan and other parts of the world, we are making progress with freedom. We are going to continue fighting until we win this war. It is all because of the leadership of you gentlemen here, but it is also primarily because of the brave men and women that serve under you. So I just thank you for that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator, I thank you for your statement and I wish to associate myself with your observations.

Senator Dole.

Senator DOLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank each of you gentlemen for your tremendous leadership, for all that you are doing in service to our country. It is a privilege to have you here and to hear from you.

General Casey, you mentioned in your opening statement that the Iraqi people make progress every day. I have been heartened to learn of the Iraqi government's television ad campaigns encouraging the Iraqis to report insurgents' movements. I have been in-

terested in this very popular Iraqi television program, "Terrorism in the Hands of Justice," that profiles captured suspected insurgents. Apparently there are hundreds of calls coming in through the insurgent tip line.

Could you comment on this growing trend of the Iraq people to speak out and not tolerate insurgents in their midst? I would be interested in just hearing more of your thoughts on that.

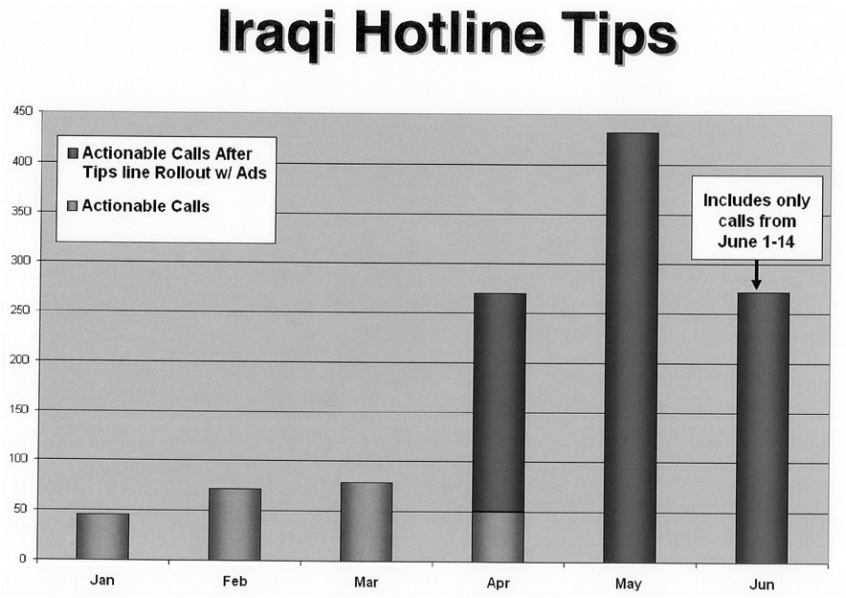
General CASEY. We have, Senator, seen quite a large increase in the willingness of Iraqis to come forward and provide information on the insurgents.

This television program that you mentioned, "Terrorists in the Hands of Justice," has become a national phenomenon. When you talk to the Iraqis, when they see someone who tries to be looked at as something to be feared and they see that it is just a wimpy little man, they feel much stronger than that.

On the tips, you mentioned that. We have seen a huge increase in the tips on these hotlines. We had less than 50 back in January. We are up over 1,700 now.

I am not sure what this chart here says.

[The chart referred to follows:]



General MYERS. That is the number of hotline tips and how they have grown since January. They have really started to spike since April when the Iraqi government started to advertise that this service was available. In an insurgency, of course, intelligence is key and indigenous intelligence is even more key, and that is what that represents.

General CASEY. So, we have seen them up over 1,700 when you add up the ones from all of the different division areas across the country.

The other thing I would say is people are walking in and pointing out weapons caches to us in large numbers. We have picked up over 1,300 weapons caches just since the elections. These are people going out and saying: See that stick right there; dig underneath there. There will be tons of ammunition underneath it.

So the Iraq people are taking a stake in the future and are becoming more and more forthcoming.

Senator DOLE. Thank you.

Now, in the past reconstruction projects have been spread throughout the country. Utilizing this approach can be difficult because security forces can be spread too thin. The Iraqi Foreign Minister is now advocating for a more geographically focused reconstruction effort in safer areas, as I understand, where there is less risk and security can be concentrated.

What about this? Secretary Rumsfeld, can you comment on that? What do you recommend to better facilitate reconstruction efforts?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Well, as we indicated, Senator, all three pieces have to go forward together. The security has to go forward for the economic piece of it and the reconstruction to take hold, and the political piece has to go forward for each of them to take hold.

There has been a tension clearly over time of in some instances trying to put more reconstruction funds into areas that are the least friendly, on the idea that it will make them happier and their electricity will be better and their water will be better. The argument against that, obviously, is that you are rewarding bad behavior. So, there are others who say put the reconstruction money first into places that are behaving properly and supporting the government and doing things that are rational, and that is a perfectly legitimate position as well.

No matter where you put it, it makes no sense to use reconstruction funds if it is going to be destroyed immediately thereafter. As I say, it does not take a genius to blow up something and to damage something. It takes a genius to build something.

I am not familiar with what you said about the latest Iraqi government. Are you, George?

Senator DOLE. The Foreign Minister.

General CASEY. No, I am not familiar with that, either. But, I agree with what the Secretary said. There are different ways of looking at this, but all of our commanders have some flexibility with the money that they have for economic projects. They use that to influence support for us rather than support for the insurgents.

General ABIZAID. Senator, if I could add just one comment. It kind of gets back to the points that Senator Levin was making about asking our partners in Iraq to be accountable. We really must focus in on the rule of law in terms of justice, prisons, detainees, et cetera. In the long run, corruption and criminality could be a greater threat to a free Iraq than terrorism, and it is vital that we focus on the rule of law.

Senator DOLE. Thank you.

The Center for Army Lessons Learned released a report in April, I believe, of 2004. They emphasized: "A missed intent in local negotiations can mean future significant problems in dealing with other issues. It is imperative that communications be clear and effective and that all concerned are aware of its implications."

I would like to ask you just to comment briefly on the efforts to overcome the cultural barriers; the previous shortage, for example, in translators, where we are on that.

General CASEY. We have made great progress in translators here over the last 6 months, and I am well over 80 percent of filling our requirements for that. It is especially important because I added a requirement for an additional thousand translators for these teams that we are putting out with the Iraqi units.

For all those teams, we have put them through an extensive training program that emphasized the cultural context, basically to inform them so they could deal well with the Iraqis. We worked that very hard, and I think what we are going to see is the more time that our folks spend working directly with the Iraqis the closer the bonds become and the more effective the working relationships become.

Senator DOLE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

This concludes the question period. Senator Levin, do you have a comment?

Senator LEVIN. Just very quickly. Senator Dayton was really looking forward to the hearing, but he has a Base Realignment and Closure Commission regional meeting today in North Dakota and he is therefore unable to be here. But, I wanted just to make that note for the record.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this hearing. As you and I think all of us agree, we are deeply appreciative of the dedication and service of our witnesses here. These hearings always should be lively, given the circumstances that I think are very challenging, and it lived up to that description.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Levin.

I would like to make an observation. I thank you again, Mr. Secretary and our witnesses, for making this hearing possible. It really is of historic proportions, and I think we have had an excellent exchange of views and I commend you on your responses to a series of tough questions.

There remains, General Casey, some material which I am sure you will provide the committee with regard to the classified sections relating to the status of the training and the ability of the current Armed Forces of Iraq.

Senator Byrd mentioned Senator Russell and it reminded me that I was privileged to be at the DOD at the time he was here in the Senate and occupied a chair not unlike that which you are in now, Mr. Secretary, before that distinguished Senator. I have had the privilege of dealing with every Secretary of Defense in the 35 years that I have had the opportunity and really the privilege to associate with the DOD in one way or another.

I want to say, Mr. Secretary, through the years that we have known each other I have enjoyed our working relationship. I look forward to continuing that and I have full confidence in your ability to lead the DOD, under the direction of a courageous Commander in Chief, our President.

The hearing is concluded.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

1. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, in the last 2 days, there has been a great deal of media coverage with regard to improvised explosive devices (IEDs). It is apparent from our casualties that the biggest danger our military faces in Iraq is a result of IEDs. Coalition forces, Iraqi security forces, and Iraqi civilians face these same threats. Brigadier General Joseph Votel, USA, the Director of the IED Defeat Task Force, is quoted in Defense News as stating that IED incidents—the discovery or detonation of a bomb—have surged in recent months and are currently running at about 30 per day. I realize and applaud all the fine work that is being done by this Task Force in a very time critical environment to diminish any further escalation of these devices. Like you and my colleagues and all Americans, I remain concerned about what more we can do to keep the insurgency from continuing to make and adapt these devices to combat whatever offensive or defensive measures we put in place.

I know there was a counter-IED seminar at Fort Irwin last week, which was also attended by some of our coalition partners. Without getting into any classified areas, what assurances can you offer that there continue to be initiatives in the pipeline to defeat the insurgency's successful use of IEDs, especially the recent elevated use of vehicle-born IEDs, and what can Congress do to better protect our troops on the ground?

General ABIZAID and General CASEY. Central Command's (CENTCOM) counter-IED initiatives fall into two broad categories: adaptive tactics and material solutions. The Joint Improvised Explosive Defeat Task Force (JIEDD TF) Field Teams are very effective in developing and teaching tactics to our deployed units. Material solutions, such as enhanced body armor and armored vehicles reduce the lethality of IED attacks. Moreover, the growing suite of technical countermeasures is also very beneficial in countering the IED threat. Congress' continued support to programs which develop and field counter-IED solutions provides many of the tools our service members need to adapt to evolving IED threats.

2. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, it is my understanding that to track and capture the makers of these IEDs, human intelligence (HUMINT) plays an especially critical role. Are there any blockers to continuing to build our HUMINT capability as rapidly as we need to and what are we doing to overcome any such blockers?

General ABIZAID. HUMINT does play an especially critical role in the effort to identify, track, and capture IED makers and others involved in these attacks against U.S. and coalition forces. CENTCOM is working to build a HUMINT capability that will make us more effective in countering IED and other types of attacks; however, there are blockers that will need to be overcome. Primarily, the blockers fall into two related areas, Operational and Technological.

Operationally, CENTCOM is challenged by the lack of trained and experienced collection teams. Due to increased demand in Iraq and Afghanistan, beyond pre-war projected requirements, there are not enough trained personnel to meet requirements for continued force rotations into the AOR. To address this issue, the Services are making a concerted effort to recruit and train HUMINT collectors to satisfy current requirements and provide for a sustained HUMINT collection effort to support OIF, OEF, and the global war on terrorism. CENTCOM is also doing a better job of educating our tactical commanders who control these assets to ensure efficient utilization and to focus on priority threats such as IEDs.

Technologically, CENTCOM is challenged by the lack of a streamlined information management architecture that puts priority intelligence information into the hands of the warfighters in a timely manner. To address this issue, CENTCOM has developed web-based reports portals for U.S. and coalition collectors and this has greatly improved the ability to report and disseminate validated intelligence information. CENTCOM is also working on solutions, such as the Joint Intelligence Operations Capability-Iraq (JIOC–I), that will enable the movement of information from battlefield collectors to analysts and on to the affected commanders who need the intelligence to counter IED and other threats. CENTCOM will need a continued commitment of resources to sustain this effort and to seek advanced solutions, up to and including an overarching intelligence community architecture that is capable of direct support to the warfighter.

General CASEY. HUMINT plays a critical role in tracking and capturing the makers of IEDs. Our HUMINT experience base is increasing and our methods are evolving to meet the threat. The services are increasing the number of interrogators and

tactical HUMINT collectors to meet our current needs. We have certainly had HUMINT successes and continue to integrate lessons learned to develop sources that can provide the actionable intelligence we need.

3. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, I believe we all agree that the success of a new Iraq depends on Iraq being able to secure itself. We are making great progress in this area. I have seen positive changes in my two visits to Iraq this year. What I'd like to know is, with the increasing casualties amongst Iraqi security forces and civilians, are you seeing the Iraqi populace and the new Iraqi government providing critical information or taking definitive actions to "help us, help them" be a free people and defeat this insurgency by pinpointing where the insurgent is hiding, and where the IEDs are being manufactured?

General ABIZAID. The Iraqi populace and the new Iraqi government are both providing an increasing amount of critical information to counter the insurgency to include taking definitive actions in pinpointing where insurgents are hiding and where they are emplacing and manufacturing IEDs. CENTCOM's goal in this effort is to facilitate the establishment and growth of coalition and partner nation Counter-IED capability, including transfer of C–IED Technology, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP).

General CASEY. Overall, there is an extremely positive trend in the flow of information between the Iraqi people and coalition forces. For example, the number of tips that we are receiving from average Iraqi citizens is significant. In the month of May alone, Multi-National Corps-Iraq received 1,282 tips of which over 70 percent were considered actionable.

Multi-National Force-Iraq and the Iraqi Transitional Government routinely share intelligence and operational information to detect and defeat insurgents. This organizational cooperation, along with information provided by the Iraqi people, are powerful tools toward defeating the insurgency in Iraq.

TROOP LEVELS AND END STRENGTH

4. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, recently, many of my colleagues in Congress have been pressing the Department of Defense (DOD) and the administration to reduce the number of troops in Iraq. Right now we have about 135,000 U.S. troops on the ground in Iraq. They have a mission, a critical mission: to defeat the insurgency, train the Iraqi security forces to protect themselves, and enable a free Iraq. I believe and support strongly that we base any withdrawal timeline on the mission, and only on the mission. There has been significant progress in Iraq. I have seen it. We expect continued progress with the Iraqis scheduled to hold their first election under their new constitution at the end of this year which the current Iraqi government is working toward.

Along with our Active-Duty Forces, we have relied heavily on our Reserve and National Guard, all of which who have done an exemplary job. However with recruiting and retention challenges, I am concerned if we are maintaining adequate end strength in our military forces to meet the rotational needs of the Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) mission. Gentlemen, is this a concern you share?

Secretary RUMSFELD and General MYERS. Thanks to you and the other members of this committee and the support of Congress, we have adequate end strength to meet the needs of the Nation. However, current operational and personnel tempos are significant and will likely remain so for the near term. Accordingly, the Services are working to rebalance within and between Active and Reserve components to increase warfighting capability and responsiveness and to ease stress on our units, troops, and their families. Some of the initiatives include the Army's transition to 43 "modular" brigade combat teams, shifting billets across the Services from low demand to high demand skills, and capitalizing on military-to-civilian conversions. In addition, end strength is a significant focus item for the Quadrennial Defense Review.

General ABIZAID. Recruiting and retention is a concern to everyone that wears the uniform but this question is better answered by the Services since they are responsible for recruiting. The Services have continued to fill Central Command's force requirements with properly trained and equipped units for our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the rest of the Central Command area of responsibility.

General CASEY. I maintain a consistent dialogue with the services that provide forces for OIF, and they are able to meet the operational requirements with the existing personnel structure. I defer any assessment of overall end strength issues to the Service Chiefs and Department of Defense leadership.

5. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, what do you see on the horizon with regard to the negative recruiting trend, particularly in the Army and Marine Corps, and what plans are there to address this concern?

Secretary RUMSFELD and General MYERS. We anticipate that the rest of fiscal year 2005 will be very challenging for both active and Reserve component recruiting, and are particularly concerned with the active Army, Army Reserve, and Army Guard. To mitigate the challenges, we have increased the numbers of recruiters, enhanced enlistment bonuses, and have focused our marketing strategy not only on potential recruits but also on the influencers (parents, teachers, etc.) who play an important role in our overall effort.

General ABIZAID. Recruiting and retention is a concern to everyone that wears the uniform but this question is better answered by the Services since they are responsible for recruiting. It should be noted that the Services have continued to provide the forces needed in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) and those troops remain fully capable of completing the mission.

General CASEY. First, let me say that the patriotism and performance of the young men and women serving with me in Iraq is unsurpassed. These young Americans serving in Iraq—from both the active and Reserve components—tend to re-enlist at rates exceeding the established goals.

I remain confident that recruiting and retention programs of each service will continue to meet the foreseeable operational requirements in my command. I defer any assessment of overall end strength issues to the Service Chiefs and Department of Defense leadership.

PRISONERS AT GUANTANAMO BAY

6. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, a lot of controversy has surrounded the prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay lately. Inflammatory statements have been made and inflammatory articles have been written. Many claim that we should charge these prisoners or just let them go. This is of course the same group of people who believed we should treat terrorism as a crime and not as a war. This is the same group of people who watched as Osama bin Laden and his thugs attacked American interests repeatedly and simply sent the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to investigate and try to bring these people to justice, after the fact.

In a Washington Post article dated October 22, 2004, John Mintz wrote: "At least 10 detainees released from the Guantanamo Bay prison after U.S. officials concluded they posed little threat have been recaptured or killed fighting U.S. or coalition forces in Pakistan and Afghanistan. . . . One of the recaptured prisoners is still at large after taking leadership of a militant faction in Pakistan and aligning himself with al Qaeda. . . . In telephone calls to Pakistani reporters, he has bragged that he tricked his U.S. interrogators into believing he was someone else." The reporter further reported about one former detainee named Mehsud: "Mehsud said he spent 2 years at Guantanamo Bay after being captured in 2002 in Afghanistan fighting alongside the Taliban. At the time he was carrying a false Afghan identity card, and while in custody he maintained the fiction that he was an innocent Afghan tribesman, he said, U.S. officials never realized he was a Pakistani with deep ties to militants in both countries. . . ."

Last week, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said, "There are 12 people that we have released that we know have come back and fought against America because they have been recaptured or killed on the battlefield. . . ."

I would like to hear your view of this debate. Should these men be charged or released? Do you believe they would return to theatre to cause you additional trouble?

Secretary RUMSFELD and General MYERS. The bottom line is crystal clear: the United States Government (USG) should not serve indefinitely as the world's jailer. Much of the controversy surrounding the prisoners detained at Guantanamo Bay is based upon an inadequate understanding of who we have detained there, the circumstances of their capture, and of the processes we have instituted to continually evaluate their status. When detainees began to be captured in the field, the USG created a formal system of evaluations culminating with annual reviews to determine the status of each individual detainee. Despite protests to the contrary, our system and its procedures are fair and impartial; detainees' rights are acknowledged. Some detainees are released. A few have been recaptured. To date, the rate at which released detainees from Guantanamo Bay have "returned to the fight" has been between 5 percent and 6 percent.

The Department of Defense continues to believe that detainees remaining under military control should be carefully screened, thoroughly evaluated, and either released or transferred to their home countries, or charged and tried in a military commission. No evaluation process is without risk, and we are confident that we have mitigated that risk as much as possible.

General ABIZAID. Those detainees that the U.S. Government believes to be credible and continuing threats to U.S. interests should continue to be detained until they are no longer a threat. These individuals will in fact, as they have asserted, and in some cases have shown, return to the fight if given the opportunity. Releasing detainees from Guantanamo prematurely will endanger not only U.S. military forces, but the United States, its citizens, allies, and interests. CENTCOM strongly believes the majority of detainees held at Guantanamo would attempt to re-engage our military forces in armed conflict if released.

General CASEY. Although the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay are outside my direct purview, whether any individual will be released or charged will be decided on the facts and circumstances of each person's case. It is always possible that anyone who is released may return to cause us trouble in the future. Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546, we are working with the Iraqi Transitional Government to secure Iraq and help establish an Iraqi system of processing detainees based on due process principles.

MEDIA COVERAGE

7. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, during my last two trips to Iraq I met many soldiers and marines who believed the media coverage was unbalanced. They told me the successes achieved by our forces seemed to not be news worthy, and the media at every opportunity touted the insurgents' successes. With the exception of the coverage of the election in January, I must agree. What is your perception of the media coverage? How does that affect your mission?

General ABIZAID. The media trends toward reporting on the negative and/or sensational issues; that is the nature of the news business. To some extent the events in Iraq and Afghanistan are viewed through a "soda straw." The 24-hour news cycle compresses the allotted time for coverage forcing the new agencies to pick the most sensational stories. This results in not every story being reported. The most unreported story in Iraq and Afghanistan is the true nature of the enemy. This is a despicable enemy that people need to understand. They are killing civilians, Muslims, and are destroying Iraq's national infrastructure. This continued perception that the media only reports the negative out of Iraq and Afghanistan does have an impact on the morale of the troops and CENTCOM does all it can to counter that effect.

General CASEY. Media coverage needs to focus on the progress in Iraq as well as the violence.

8. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, what can we do to get a more balanced story?

General ABIZAID. CENTCOM has a proactive and aggressive program of embedding and getting interviews and stories out to the news media. Transparency is the best policy and CENTCOM has worked hard with the media to maintain that transparency and will continue to do so. In Afghanistan, hundreds of media embeds have taken place and since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, CENTCOM has embedded over a thousand media representatives with CENTCOM forces. Observing the events as they occur, and living with U.S. forces for days or weeks at a time has produced some of the most accurate reporting we have seen. CENTCOM has also devised a "virtual embed" program in which we use satellite technology to enable a news anchor to speak directly with a home town soldier, marine, sailor, or airman. The potential audience reached through this program has totaled more than 2 billion. CENTCOM will continue to seek new and innovative methods to tell our story.

General CASEY. Have reporters get out with units and stay long enough to understand what is going on.

DEMOCRACY IN THE ARAB WORLD

9. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid, in a recent article you stated: "Politics will assure the defeat of the insurgency, provided the politics are open, transparent, and legitimate. It is clear we are moving in that direction." It seems to me that this same strategy is starting to work in Lebanon, Libya, Afghanistan, and maybe someday in Egypt and Saudi Arabia to name just a few countries in the region. What

do you see as the major obstacle to achieving an open, transparent, legitimate political environment in Iraq and what is your assessment of the changes we see taking place in the region? Are they sustainable?

General ABIZAID. The main obstacle to achieving an open, transparent, legitimate political environment in Iraq is providing inclusiveness in the political process for the diversity of religious, ethnic, and tribal influences throughout the country. Eventual success in Iraq will not be won by military operations on the ground, but by the formation of a central government that is representative of the people, and therefore fully supported by the people. This inclusiveness must be protected by a constitutional structure that guarantees the minority rights. If the Iraqi people truly believe that their voice is fairly represented in governmental decisions and that the government represents stability and a better future for them and their children, the insurgency will no longer have a place to hide.

The need for inclusiveness during the political process is well recognized at all levels of the political spectrum and continues to be a priority of all concerned. More importantly, the Transitional Government of Iraq recently demonstrated its commitment to inclusion when the parliamentary committee charged with drawing up Iraq's new constitution approved the appointment of 15 additional Sunni representatives to assist with this all important task. So while equal representation for all in the political process is a major obstacle, it is an obstacle that is receiving the proper attention at all levels and will be overcome.

The recent political events observed throughout the region in Lebanon, Libya, and Afghanistan is indeed encouraging. These events also lend credibility to the concept that an open, transparent, and legitimate political process can significantly alter the direction in which a country is moving. The sustainability of these events throughout the region cannot be predicted, but our eventual success in Iraq and Afghanistan will certainly play a role in the continuation of future change throughout the region.

10. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid, in the same article you stated: "The Afghans and Iraqis on this trip kept saying to me over and over again, 'Are you going to stick with us?'. . . I kept telling them over and over again, 'Yes we will.' I ask the American people not to make a liar of me." What will happen in the region if we don't stick with them?

General ABIZAID. While it is hard to predict the unknown, it is possible to foresee certain possible outcomes. Leaving Iraq before the security forces and government are ready to take on the challenges of an evolving democratic state could have far reaching consequences for Iraq and the region as a whole. The greatest concern would be that the fledgling government would collapse and Iraq would devolve into civil war, with the country eventually splitting into the autonomous regions of Kurdistan, Shia south and Sunni western and central Iraq. If this were to happen, Iraq could become a major terrorist sanctuary and a destabilizing influence for Iraq's surrounding neighbors, resulting in a regression from the gains in regional democratization that has been recently witnessed.

Iraq's energy infrastructure would also likely continue to fall in a state of disrepair due to internal strife resulting in increased pressure on the world's oil markets. Certainly, none of the above would be in the strategic interests of the United States and would require an even greater investment than currently anticipated to rectify such a situation.

With regard to Afghanistan, the effect of abandonment would be slower to evolve than in Iraq due to the more advanced progress of the political process and the greater degree of governmental control there. Yet, while greater maturity exists, the political, economic, and security infrastructure simply is not in place to ensure the continued success of democracy in Afghanistan. Recognizing the presence of a substantial narcotics influence in the country, you could see a gradual degeneration into a narco-terrorist state dominated by warlords and terrorist activities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR SUSAN COLLINS

NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE DEPLOYMENTS

11. Senator COLLINS. General Myers, you and I have talked many times about the strain that we are placing on our National Guard and Reserve. I am concerned that the situation is getting worse, not better, and that we are asking too much of the Guard in particular, through multiple, repeated, and lengthy deployments.

I would like to share an example with you. A constituent of mine is a helicopter mechanic and an Army National Guard staff sergeant. Her name is Jessica Wing.

Staff Sergeant Wing left Bangor, Maine, last Friday morning for what will be her fourth deployment overseas in 10 years. She has had four deployments in 10 years—to Haiti, to Bosnia twice, and soon she'll be in either Iraq or Kuwait.

I understand that the DOD's policy mandates that Guard and Reserve members must not be deployed for more than 24 cumulative months unless they volunteer, but the key here is the word "cumulative." I also know there's the one-in-five rule stipulating that only one 24-month cumulative deployment can take place within the 5-year period. But, even if the deployments aren't for 24 months, it still imposes a tremendous hardship for a Guard member to be deployed overseas four times in 10 years.

I would like to know what specifically is being done to alleviate the repeated deployments of those like this staff sergeant who have specialty skills in areas that have unusually high demand? In her case, she's a helicopter mechanic, and I can see why there is a high demand for helicopter mechanics. From my personal conversations with Guard and Reserve members of Maine, we are already seeing the impact on recruitment, and I think we are going to start seeing it on retention as well.

General MYERS. The senior DOD leadership shares your concerns. At least 47 specific initiatives across the Department of Defense address these concerns regarding the high demand for our Reserve Forces and there is progress. Many of our guard members and reservists have volunteered to serve longer, but none have been involuntarily mobilized for more than 24 cumulative months.

Staff Sergeant Wing is a well-respected Soldier who has served this Nation with honor and distinction. During her 12 years of service with the active component of the Army, she deployed overseas three times, for an approximate total deployment time of 15 months. The number and length of these deployments is well within the norm for Army Active-Duty Forces. After a 1-year break in service, she joined the Army National Guard in 2001, and is currently preparing for her first overseas deployment as a guard member.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN THUNE

OPERATIONAL TEMPO

12. Senator THUNE. General Myers, can you describe the impact and strain of the repeated rotational deployments of ground units and air squadrons to Iraq—some are beginning their third tour—has had on yearly training cycles, readiness ratings and maintenance cycles—and, of course on the home-base infrastructures that support these units?

General MYERS. As we continue to source theater requirements, there are many units that are going to experience significant operational tempo and personnel tempo, impacting on people, equipment, and training. These stresses are not likely to decrease in the near term. Low-density, high-demand assets, combat support and combat service support forces are especially strained because their skills are critical to current global operations. The continuing operational requirements for these specialists will result in reduced between-deployment dwell time and additional training requirements. Because many of these units are in the Reserve component; their challenges are further affected by Reserve mobilization policies and time constraints.

The most significant impact of repeated deployments has been on at-home preparation for full-spectrum wartime missions. In some cases, units are completing training cycles that are modified to suit theater-specific requirements, including additional work on non-primary tasks. For example, combat units that would usually train to high-intensity conflict also train for stability operations, or an in-lieu-of unit receives additional training because it will be performing a non-primary task. Over the course of repeated deployments, our challenge is to ensure that each unit maintains its readiness in primary tasks while prepared for its current mission.

The requirement to leave equipment in theater, wear and tear, and combat losses have accelerated maintenance cycles and increased some equipment requirements in theater. These requirements have been met by focused depot maintenance in theater, cross-leveling into deploying units, and by sourcing from new production. These efforts ensure deployed units have everything they need, but some non-deployed units and home stations will report reduced readiness rates as a result.

We have initiated multiple efforts to reduce and mitigate the impacts of these challenges. The Active/Reserve component balance is being restructured to relieve stress on high demand units. Supplemental funding has been targeted to address

many materiel shortfalls. U.S. Joint Forces Command, as the joint force provider, is now sourcing globally to address requirements.

Along with resetting returned units, the Army is transforming to a modular force that will increase the number of available combat units, reducing sourcing stress. In addition, the Army has implemented a new process of Army Force Generation, the structured progression of increased unit readiness over time. Army Force Generation results in a larger steady-state pool of usable, trained, ready, and cohesive units available for operational deployment in support of regional combatant commanders and civil authorities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

FORCE PROTECTION

13. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, recently General Conway, Director of Operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters that insurgents are developing a shaped explosive charge "sufficient to penetrate certain levels of armor." Could you tell us what steps you are taking to improve the armor on High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs), Bradleys, and Strykers to compensate for this new explosive?

Secretary RUMSFELD. [Deleted.]

U.S. STRATEGY IN IRAQ

14. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, recently we have witnessed little reduction in the number of insurgent attacks, little increase in the ability of the Iraqi Armed Forces and police to protect their own countrymen, and have seen a drop in support by Americans of the ongoing conflict in Iraq. My question to you is what efforts, if any, are being undertaken by the Department to adjust the U.S. military strategy in order to make progress in these areas before there is any further erosion in the support of the global war on terrorism?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Although I share your concern over the how the continued violence in Iraq may affect support for the war on terror, I do not believe that events in Iraq warrant a major change of U.S. military strategy at this time.

The key to victory in Iraq, as with all counterinsurgencies throughout history, is the creation of an indigenous Iraqi security force capable of protecting its people from internal and external threats. Although the American forces in Iraq represent the most lethal and highly trained military force ever deployed in history, there are limitations to what they can achieve. Iraqi forces possess linguistic and cultural knowledge that U.S. forces lack, and can undertake missions such as searching for weapons caches in mosques that may be self-defeating when performed by Americans. Our basic strategy, therefore, is to hunt and kill or capture terrorists in order to create the breathing space necessary to train and equip the Iraqi security forces that are the key to winning the counterinsurgency fight.

Although the terrorists can still achieve tactical victories by slaughtering innocent Iraqis, this basic strategy is succeeding. As of 20 June 2005, we have trained and equipped more than 168,000 Iraqi forces. While it will take time for all of these forces to develop leadership, unit cohesion, and field experience, it is incorrect to say that there has been little increase in the ability of the Iraqi Armed Forces and police to protect their own countrymen. Iraqi security forces now bear the primary responsibility for securing Haifa Street and portions of the Diyala Province—two former focal points of insurgent activity—with the result being a significant reduction in terrorist attacks. Equally tellingly, not a single police station has been abandoned under fire this year, a quantum improvement over some of the worst setbacks of 2004.

The terrorists have similarly failed to deal any significant setbacks to our political strategy of developing a representative government in Iraq that is effective, suited to Iraqi culture and conditions, respectful of Iraq's diverse population, and conducive to the development of free institutions. Although the terrorists have nihilistically killed scores of Iraqis, they have failed to stop the transfer to Iraqi sovereignty, failed to incite an Iraqi civil war, failed to stop the Iraqi elections, failed to stop the formation of a democratic Iraqi government that represents all of Iraq's diverse population, and failed to derail the drafting of the constitution. Because of our efforts to build a democratic government that represents all of Iraq's religious, ethnic, and sectarian groups, Iraqis continue to volunteer in droves to serve in the Iraqi security forces.

We will obviously make adjustments to the development of these forces as necessary. This year we have begun to place greater emphasis on improving their logistical capability to sustain operations and their ability to support and conduct operations above the battalion-level. We have also begun deploying U.S. military mentors with Iraqi security forces to help with their on-the-job training. But, in my opinion eschewing patience and determination for radical shifts in our military strategy, even as we see that strategy bearing fruit, would be a mistake at this time.

15. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, the preferred targets of the insurgents continue to be the Iraqi police and security forces. In the past you have testified that while there is no exit strategy for the United States, we are committed to ensuring that the Iraqis can provide security for their citizens and their elected government. In the past, you have provided testimony to this committee that included the number of Iraqi security forces that have volunteered, the number that have been trained, and lines of Iraqis waiting in line to volunteer, thus increasing the size of the Iraqi security forces. What impact do these insurgent attacks have on the U.S. strategy of remaining in Iraq until the Iraqi security forces are capable of maintaining order in that country?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Each terrorist attack in Iraq is a tragedy, and the United States regrets the loss of life and suffering caused by each bombing. However, although attacks against Iraqi recruits represent tactical successes for the insurgents, they do not alter the reality that the terrorists have failed to achieve any of their strategic objectives. The terrorists have failed to stop the transfer to Iraqi sovereignty, failed to break our coalition and force a mass withdrawal by our allies, failed to incite an Iraqi civil war, failed to stop the Iraq elections, and failed to stop the formation of a democratic Iraqi government that represents all of Iraq's diverse population. Similarly, despite the brutality of the attacks you cite, they have failed to stop Iraqis from volunteering in droves to serve in the Iraqi Security Forces. Leaders from all of Iraq's major ethnic, religious, and sectarian groups (including the Sunni Arabs) have declared that it is permissible and desirable for their followers to serve their country and join these forces. Hence, the size and capability of the Iraqi security forces continues to grow, and these attacks have had no decisive impact on our broader strategy in Iraq.

IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

16. Senator AKAKA. General Abizaid and General Casey, the preferred targets of the insurgents continue to be the Iraqi police and security forces. In the past this committee has received testimony that while there is no exit strategy for the United States, we are committed to ensuring that the Iraqis can provide security for their citizens and their elected government. Previous testimony to this committee has included numbers of Iraqi security forces that have volunteered, numbers that have been trained, and have shown lines of Iraqis waiting in line to volunteer, thus increasing the size of the Iraqi security forces.

My question for each of you is with the increase in insurgent attacks against the Iraqi forces, are you seeing a reduction in the number of volunteers similar to the reduction the U.S. is seeing in its recruitment numbers?

General ABIZAID and General CASEY. There has not been a decrease in the number of volunteers to join the Iraqi security forces. On the military side, there are more than 15,000 recruit volunteers in the pipeline waiting for basic military training dates. Additionally, the 5 active military recruiting centers continue to process between 50–100 recruits per day. On the police side, there is currently a hiring freeze because the Ministry of Interior exceeded their authorized police personnel requirements by 70,000. There remains great interest in joining the Police service as evidenced by the Baghdad Police recruiting center turning away 1,200 volunteers on 10 July 2005 because of the aforementioned hiring freeze.

17. Senator AKAKA. General Abizaid and General Casey, news reports indicate that in some cities it is the political parties that control security through their militias, not the Iraqi police forces or Iraqi security forces, especially in the south. Reports, for example, indicate that in the southern city of Basra the local mullahs have to give individual approval to police officer recruitment. These militias may become even more important as the Iraqis take over more political control. Are you concerned about this and what should we do about it?

General ABIZAID and General CASEY. CENTCOM is aware of the militias and closely monitors their activities. Currently, there are no indications that political

parties control security through their militias. Ultimately the status of militias will be determined by Iraqi law. Until that decision is taken, CENTCOM's objective is to ensure that militias do not interfere with the function of government or the legitimate political process in Iraqi.

[Whereupon, at 1:31 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

U.S. MILITARY STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2005

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m. in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator John Warner (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Warner, McCain, Inhofe, Sessions, Collins, Ensign, Talent, Chambliss, Graham, Cornyn, Thune, Levin, Kennedy, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Dayton, Bayh, and Clinton.

Committee staff members present: Charles S. Abell, staff director; Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk; and Fletcher L. Cork, receptionist.

Majority staff members present: Charles W. Alsup, professional staff member; Regina A. Dubey, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Gregory T. Kiley, professional staff member; Sandra E. Luff, professional staff member; Thomas L. MacKenzie, professional staff member; Elaine A. McCusker, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, counsel; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; Stanley R. O'Connor, Jr., professional staff member; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; Kristine L. Svinicki, professional staff member; and Richard F. Walsh, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Democratic staff director; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Gabriella Elsen, research assistant; Bridget W. Higgins, research assistant; Gerald J. Leeling, minority counsel; Peter K. Levine, minority counsel; and William G.P. Monahan, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Micah H. Harris, Jessica L. Kingston, Catherine E. Sendak, Jill Simodejka, and Pendred K. Wilson.

Committee members' assistants present: Cord Sterling, assistant to Senator Warner; Chris Arnold, assistant to Senator Roberts; Arch Galloway II, assistant to Senator Sessions; Mackenzie M. Eaglen, assistant to Senator Collins; D'Arcy Grisier, assistant to Senator Ensign; Lindsey R. Neas, assistant to Senator Talent; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Jen Wilson, assistant to Senator Graham; Russell J. Thomasson, assistant to Senator Cornyn; Stuart C. Mallory, assistant to Senator Thune; Sharon L. Waxman and Mieke Y. Eoyang, assistants to Senator Kennedy; Erik Raven, assistant to Senator Byrd; Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Sen-

ator Reed; Darcie Tokioka, assistant to Senator Akaka; William K. Sutey and Caroline Tess, assistants to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric Pierce, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Kimberly Jackson, assistant to Senator Dayton; Todd Rosenblum, assistant to Senator Bayh; and Andrew Shapiro, assistant to Senator Clinton.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER, CHAIRMAN

Chairman WARNER. The committee meets this morning to receive testimony on U.S. military strategy and operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in other areas of the Central Command (CENTCOM). We welcome our distinguished panel of witnesses: Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld; General Richard B. Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs; General John Abizaid, Commander, U.S. Central Command; and General George Casey, Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq. We look forward to your testimony.

I, and other members of this committee, wish to thank each of our witnesses and the countless men and women they represent for their service and their tireless efforts to secure peace and self-determination for the Iraqi people, Afghanistan people, and others.

I want to especially thank General Myers for his service, not only for the past 4 years as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, but over 40 years of distinguished service in uniform. Tomorrow, you will turn over your responsibility as Chairman to General Peter Pace, United States Marine Corps. This will be an important day for you, your lovely wife and family, and General Pace and his family. You've served the Nation faithfully, with distinction, and with great credit to the uniform that you proudly wear, General. Well done, sir.

General MYERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. We're ever-mindful of the sacrifices of the men and women of the Armed Forces, and that of their families at home, as we open this hearing.

We have an unusual day in terms of the schedule of the Senate before us; and, in consultation with the ranking member, I've made the decision that we will proceed this morning until the hour of approximately 11:15, at which time we'll stand in recess, such that the colleagues on this committee can join all others in the vote on the next Supreme Court Justice, Chief Justice. So, after that, we'll resume at 12:15. At about 1:15, we will go into a closed session for a short period, in room 219, following which our distinguished panel of witnesses go over to the House of Representatives.

Given that set of circumstances, I'll ask unanimous consent that my statement, in its entirety, be put into the record, such that we can move promptly to our witnesses.

[The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JOHN WARNER

The committee meets this morning to receive testimony on U.S. military strategy and operations in Iraq. I welcome our distinguished panel of witnesses: Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld; General Richard B. Myers, USAF, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General John Abizaid, USA, Commander of U.S. Central Command; and General George Casey, USA, Commander of Multinational Force-Iraq. We look forward to your testimony.

I want to thank each of our witnesses, and the countless men and women they represent, for their service and their tireless efforts to secure peace and self-determination for the Iraqi people, and to bring hope to a troubled region. I want to espe-

cially thank General Myers for his service, not only for the past 4 years as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, but for his 40 plus years of distinguished service in uniform. Tomorrow, you will turn over your responsibilities as Chairman to General Pete Pace, USMC. This will be an important day for you, your family, General Pace, his family, and the Nation. You have served your Nation faithfully and well—well-done, sir!

On October 15, the Iraqi people will take another courageous step—in defiance of the terrorists—to rescue their country from decades of tyranny and move a step closer to democracy. The historic elections in Iraq—elections for a transitional government last January, this upcoming referendum on the constitution, and elections for a permanent government in December—give us hope that success is within reach in our efforts to achieve peace and security for the Iraqi people. Political, religious, and ethnic challenges remain, and a persistent insurgency continues to hinder stability and reconstruction efforts, underscoring the importance of our continued commitment to 'stay the course.'

I ask our witnesses today to give us their candid assessment of the situation and the strategy for the way ahead. The American people must clearly understand what's at stake, why the operation in Iraq contributes to U.S. security and the security of the region, and why continued sacrifice of blood and treasure is necessary, particularly in light of new, pressing needs at home.

We are mindful of the loss of life and limb, and the sacrifices of the Iraqi people, as they are more and more—each day—assuming greater responsibilities to secure and run their nation. It is important that our witnesses address the commitment of the Iraqi government, the Iraqi Security Forces and the Iraqi people to defeating the terrorists and building a peaceful nation. We have seen many Iraqis sitting on the fence to see who will win. We even hear talk of the possibility of civil war in Iraq. The turning point in this conflict will come when Iraqis truly want to take charge of their destiny and join in ferreting out those who perpetrate violence and chaos to further their own goals.

During the course of Operation Iraqi Freedom, we have often heard of "turning points" or "critical milestones." I too believe we are approaching a "turning point," in terms of the willingness of the American people to continue to support the effort in Iraq, particularly as we face significant challenges at home in the aftermath of two devastating hurricanes.

I have great confidence in the wisdom of the American people. Our great Nation has an enormous capacity for sacrifice and hardship when we understand that the cause is just and that success is critical to the security of our Nation. Americans can accept difficult news and support a call to service and sacrifice from our Nation's leaders. Many of us have lived through such calls to duty during World War II and the Korean War. This global war on terrorism is no less important. We must show the American people we are making real progress, and if we are not, we must work harder. They will respond with their support.

At the same time, we must ensure that the Iraqi Government is developing the structures that will fairly and efficiently provide the services its citizens require. We have heard that the several changes of interim governments and the associated turbulence within ministries has caused uneven development and shortfalls in the support for the Iraqi people. I hope our witnesses can address how we can expect that recent announcements that the Department of Defense will take over assistance and mentoring of the Iraqi ministries of defense and interior will improve and accelerate the ability of the Iraqi Security Forces to establish a more secure, stable environment in Iraq.

Over the next 3 months, the Iraqis will vote on a constitution and elect a permanent government that is, hopefully, inclusive of all ethnic, religious, and tribal elements and committed to democratic principles. We must help them to develop the security structures that will allow for necessary political and economic development, and that will allow our troops to begin coming home.

We are engaged in a worthy cause in Iraq; a cause about which our men and women in uniform are, and should be, justifiably proud. It is not only the United States and its coalition partners that have a stake in Iraq. The whole world will be a better, safer place with a free, democratic, prosperous Iraq that can serve as a model of hope for the region and beyond.

Yesterday, Generals Abizaid and Casey, in a classified briefing for all Senators, outlined the strategy for the way ahead. I hope some of the key points of those very thorough briefings can be shared with the American public today so they can understand the scope of our efforts, the importance of this endeavor, and the challenges that lay ahead.

Yesterday's session was very comprehensive and informative, but did not permit detailed questions. I intend to manage the time this morning so that all Senators

have the opportunity to ask their questions and so that we can adjourn for a classified session in order to permit a full discussion. As you all know, we have a very important vote at 11:30 p.m. for the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Accordingly, we will recess this hearing at 11:15 a.m., reconvene at 12:15 p.m., and recess at 1 p.m. We will then proceed to a closed session from 1:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m., and then adjourn.

Mr. Secretary, I know you and your fellow witnesses are scheduled to testify before the House Armed Services Committee this afternoon. I will ask my colleagues to help me manage our time to be respectful of that commitment, as well.

I thank all of our witnesses for being with us today.

Chairman WARNER. After the Secretary's comment, we'll receive briefings from General Abizaid and General Casey. The Senate, in closed session yesterday, had those briefings, again this morning at a breakfast briefing, on the House of Representatives side, for Senators and House members.

I wish to make a point that I think you're setting forth, with great clarity, the strategy of this country and the importance of everything that is being done by the Armed Forces of the United States to secure the freedom of this country here at home and abroad. I commend you for what I have heard in the past 24 hours from each of you.

Senator Levin.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to join Senator Warner in welcoming our witnesses this morning.

I especially want to express our gratitude and our congratulations to General Myers for his more than 40 years of distinguished service to this Nation. I have a fuller statement about that, but like most of the rest of my statement, I will be putting that in the record.

General Abizaid and General Casey, thank you both for your service, and please convey to the personnel under your command our gratitude for all that they have done, and are doing. Please assure them that while there are differences among us about a number of issues relative to Iraq, all Americans hold our troops in the highest esteem and are united in our determination to give them and their families our full support.

This is a important hearing, coming, as it does, a little more than 2 weeks prior to the national referendum in Iraq on its draft constitution. Our military leaders have repeatedly told us that there is no purely military solution in Iraq and that a genuine broad-based political settlement among Iraqis is essential for success and for the defeat of the insurgency. That means that we must do all that we can to encourage that political settlement, which many believe is not embodied in the Iraqi constitution in its present form.

While the Kurds and Shiites are generally happy with the draft constitution, the Sunni leadership strongly opposes that draft constitution. While our hope is that a new constitution would serve to unite the Iraqis, the more likely scenario is that the Sunni Arabs will vote overwhelmingly against it, but will be unable to defeat it. If that scenario comes to pass, the danger is that the draft constitution will cement the differences between the Sunni Arabs, on the one hand, and the Shiites and Kurds on the other.

The distinguished International Crisis Group, in a policy briefing released just on Monday, concludes that "Without a strong U.S.-led initiative to assuage Sunni Arab concerns, the constitution is likely to fuel, rather than dampen, the insurgency, encourage ethnic and sectarian violence, and hasten the country's violent breakup."

I believe that if the Iraqis do not come together to reach a political solution by the end of the year—and adopting the draft constitution in the face of overwhelming opposition of one of the three main Iraqi groups doesn't meet that description—that we must then consider a timetable for the withdrawal of our forces. I emphasize the word "consider." That is not setting a date for departure at this time. That's simply conveying clearly and forcefully to the Iraqis that the presence of our forces in Iraq is not unlimited. The administration's repeated statements that we will stay in Iraq as long as needed sends the wrong message. We should not mislead the Iraqis into thinking that they have unlimited time to reach a broad-based political settlement. Because if they think that, they are less likely to make the compromises necessary to reach a political settlement.

I would hope that our witnesses would address the importance of a political coming-together on the part of the Iraqis, in terms of a military success. I would hope our witnesses would talk about whether the insurgency has declined or whether it has increased or whether it's about the same as it was a few months ago, when they were here last. I would hope that our witnesses would discuss the status of Iraqi forces, in terms of their capability and their ability to take on the insurgency.

I would ask that the balance of my statement, Mr. Chairman, be inserted in the record.

Chairman WARNER. Without objection.

Senator LEVIN. I thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Levin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

I want to join Senator Warner in welcoming our witnesses this morning.

I especially want to express my gratitude and congratulations to General Myers for his more than 40 years of service to the Nation.

General Abizaid and General Casey thank you also for your extraordinary service and please convey to the personnel under your command our gratitude for all that they have done and are doing for us and to assure them that, while there may be differences among us about a number of issues relative to Iraq, all Americans hold our troops in the highest esteem and are united in our determination to give them and their families our full support.

This is an important hearing, coming as it does a little more than 2 weeks prior to the national referendum in Iraq on its draft constitution.

During my last trip to Iraq in July, I met with many of the leaders of Iraq's three major groups—Kurds, Shiites, and Sunni Arabs—to obtain their views on a number of issues. On one issue, I found the leaders of all three groups to be in agreement, but for different reasons. None of them wanted the U.S. military forces to leave Iraq now or in the immediate future. Shiites want us to stay until the Iraqi security forces are strong enough to deal with the insurgency on their own. The Kurds want us to stay indefinitely. The Sunni Arabs want us to stay as a deterrent against those who might want to take revenge against them for the actions of Saddam Hussein who favored the Sunni Arabs.

Our military leaders have repeatedly told us that there is no purely military solution in Iraq and that a genuine, broad-based political settlement among the Iraqis is essential for success and for the defeat of the insurgency. I believe that we must do all that we can to encourage that political settlement, which many believe is not embodied in the Iraqi constitution in its present form. The Kurds have pushed for

a loose federalism in which they can organize into an autonomous region with a strong measure of local control over the region's natural resources.

The Shiites have also supported a loose federalism with an expectation that they can also organize into one or more autonomous regions with control over natural resources. The Sunni Arabs, on the other hand, who are predominant in the central and western areas of Iraq, which are lacking in oil resources, favor a strong central government that has a higher degree of control over Iraq's natural resources.

The upshot is that the Kurds and Shiites are generally happy with the draft constitution and their leaders, notably including Grand Ayatollah Sistani, are encouraging their followers to vote for the draft constitution in the October 15 referendum. The Sunni leadership strongly opposes the draft constitution.

While our hope was that a new constitution would serve to unite the Iraqis, the most likely scenario is that the Sunni Arabs will vote overwhelmingly against it but will be unable to defeat it. If that scenario comes to pass, the danger is that the draft constitution will cement the differences between the Sunni Arabs on one side and the Shiites and Kurds on the other. The distinguished International Crisis Group, in a policy briefing released this past Monday, concludes that "Without a strong U.S.-led initiative to assuage Sunni Arab concerns, the constitution is likely to fuel rather than dampen the insurgency, encourage ethnic and sectarian violence, and hasten the country's violent break-up."

Within recent days, the Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, has been warning that Iraq was hurtling toward disintegration and could drag the region into war. He is quoted as saying that "There is no dynamic now pulling the nation together. All the dynamics are pulling the country apart." He said that his concerns are shared by Iraq's neighboring countries. What, if anything, can we do to encourage a different result?

I believe that, if the Iraqis do not come together to reach a political solution by the end of the year (adopting the draft constitution in the face of the overwhelming opposition of one of the three main Iraqi groups, doesn't meet that description), we must consider a timetable for the withdrawal of our forces.

That's not setting a date for departure at this time. That's simply conveying clearly and forcefully to the Iraqis that the presence of our forces in Iraq is not unlimited. The administration's repeated statements that we will stay in Iraq as long as needed sends the wrong message. We should not mislead the Iraqis into thinking they have unlimited time to reach a broad-based political settlement. If they think that, they are less likely to make the compromises necessary to reach a political settlement.

Nor should we engage in self-deception. We can't stay for an unlimited time due to the strain on our forces and the impact on recruitment from repeated tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There are other important reasons why we can't stay in Iraq for an unlimited time: The United States has borne a heavy burden to rid Iraq of Saddam Hussein and to try to bring stability to the country. More than 1,900 U.S. service men and women have made the ultimate sacrifice and more than 14,000 have been wounded. We are also mindful of the more than $200 billion of taxpayers' funds that have been expended in support of that effort. The American people will not support an open-ended "we'll stay as long as they need us" commitment if the Iraqis don't make the compromises they need to make so they can achieve the political unity so vitally necessary to defeat the insurgency.

We must also be candid about the situation in Iraq.

Consider this statement:

> Four months ago, Vice President Cheney said "I think the level of activity that we see today, from a military standpoint, I think will clearly decline. I think they're in the last throes, if you will, of the insurgency."—Larry King Live, May 30, 2005.

That's wishful thinking, according to all the sources available to me.

Similarly, we must not engage in wishful thinking about the capability of the Iraqi security forces. The Department of Defense, at first, and the Department of State, now, provide an unclassified report relative to that on a weekly basis to Congress. The most recent report, dated September 21, 2005, states that there are 192,000 trained and equipped Iraqi security forces, with 104,000 under the Ministry of Interior and 88,000 under the Ministry of Defense, of whom 87,000 are in the Iraqi Army. What is missing is any statement as to the capability of that force, particularly what number of Iraqi security forces are capable of dealing with the insurgency independently of U.S. and Coalition forces.

Secretary Rumsfeld, in a press briefing on September 9 with Iraqi President Talibani, said "The coalition forces and the Iraqi security forces now numbering

something like 190,000 are aggressively attacking or capturing or killing terrorists or insurgents all across this country. . . . The skill of the Iraqi security forces is improving every week. . . ."

That statement inaccurately suggests that 190,000 Iraqi security forces are aggressively attacking or capturing or killing terrorists all across Iraq. But the facts are far different than that suggestion.

Thus far the Department refuses to give Congress and the American people unclassified information about the capability of the Iraqi security forces. The justification that providing the information in an unclassified form would be aiding the enemy just doesn't wash. The enemy knows very well what the capabilities and weaknesses of the Iraqi forces are—Americans have a right to know too.

General Pace's answer to my question for the record on June 29, 2005 at his nomination hearing to be the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff provided more unclassified information than any report we have received to date. In his answer, General Pace stated:

> "Only a small number of Iraqi security forces are taking on the insurgents and terrorists by themselves."

Exaggerating our progress in defeating the insurgency or in standing up an Iraqi Army that is capable of independently dealing with the insurgency serves no useful purpose.

Our best chance of success in Iraq is to press for a political solution by letting the Iraqis know that our military forces can't stay in Iraq indefinitely and if they do not reach a political settlement by the end of the year—one way or another—we must consider a timetable for our withdrawal. For as our military leaders often remind us, there is no purely military solution in Iraq and a genuine, broad-based political solution among the Iraqis is essential for success and for the defeat of the insurgency.

I wish to convey my congratulations to General Richard D. Myers on his retirement from the Air Force and thanks for his nearly 40 years of faithful service. General Myers entered the Air Force through the Reserve Officer Training Corps and served in a variety of operational command and leadership positions in a variety of Air Force and joint assignments, culminating the highest position a military officer can hold—that of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As Chairman, he joined a very select group of only 14 other generals who came before him in that position. Unlike many of those generals, General Myers served as Chairman during war, with the extraordinary responsibilities attendant to a wartime Chairman. In so doing, he never forgot that his first loyalty, and his highest priority, was toward the health and welfare of all of our military personnel and their families. I wish General Myers and his family the best for a well-deserved retirement.

Chairman WARNER. Colleagues, before we begin to hear from our witnesses, I recognize that a quorum is present. I now ask the committee to consider a list of 3,979 pending military nominations. These nominations have been before the committee the required length of time. No objections have been raised regarding them.

Is there a motion to favorably report 3,979 military noms in the Senate?

Senator LEVIN. So moved.

Senator INHOFE. Second.

Chairman WARNER. Hearing both, all in favor, say aye. [A chorus of ayes.]

Opposed? [No response.]

Ayes have it. Passed.

Secretary Rumsfeld.

STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD H. RUMSFELD, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary RUMSFELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Chairman Myers and I are joined today, as you pointed out, by the combatant commander of the Central Command, General John Abizaid, and the Iraq commander, General George Casey. They are back in Washington for meetings of the combatant com-

manders and to brief the National Security Council. We're all pleased to be able to have this opportunity to meet with this committee.

These general officers have been entrusted with protecting the interests and security of the American people in those vital parts of the world. The President has great confidence in them; and the country, I believe, can be encouraged and grateful to them for their leadership.

General Abizaid's briefing is based on his perspective as the combatant commander responsible for the region of the world most troubled by violent extremism. General Casey will discuss the situation in Iraq—certainly an important front, but not the only front in the global war on terror.

As you pointed out, Mr. Chairman, this will be General Myers' last appearance before this committee as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. For the past 4 years, Dick Myers has been a wise and valued counselor to the President, to the National Security Council, and to me during all of the most important discussions and decisions affecting the security of the American people. Members of the National Security Council have asked his advice on literally thousands of matters. It has always given me great confidence that I always knew that every piece of advice he has given has been rooted in his devotion to the United States of America, to the American people, and to the men and women in uniform. I certainly want to join in thanking General Myers for his four decades of superb service to our country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

General Myers.

STATEMENT OF GEN. RICHARD B. MYERS, USAF, CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

General MYERS. Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee, as the Secretary said, I have just over 24 hours left as the chairman. I also understand that this is my 64th congressional hearing. Perhaps it's fitting that this is one of my last official activities since the job began, with confirmation hearings, just over 4 years ago.

Through all the national security discussions we have had over the years, it's clear that all of us share a deep love for our country, and we share a strong belief in the ideals upon which this Nation was founded—freedom, justice, equality—and we share our commitment to defending those ideals. Our united efforts to meet this commitment—never been more important than today, when violent extremists and terrorists threaten all that we hold dear. So, I thank you, this committee, for your leadership in sustaining our Nation's unity and resolve for the long war.

I think we also share tremendous pride in our troops and all their accomplishments—their professionalism, their courage, their selflessness, their compassion. They are 100 percent committed to accepting nothing short of winning this important struggle, and they understand perfectly what they've been asked to do.

They can take great pride in their many successes—the recent elections in Afghanistan, the constitution being debated in Iraq,

and the growing capabilities of Iraqi and Afghan security forces. All they need from us is the resources to finish the job, the continued resolve of the Nation, and the support of the American people. I thank you for ensuring they have those three things. It's been an honor to serve alongside all our men and women in uniform and to represent them in front of this committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General Myers.

General Abizaid.

STATEMENT OF GEN JOHN P. ABIZAID, USA, COMMANDER, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to join you today.

Over the past several months, I have spent considerable time in the CENTCOM theater meeting with regional leaders, our commanders and troops, and our partners' commanders in the field. The region churns with undercurrents of change representing both opportunities and challenges for us. Our troops continue to perform at levels of operational excellence that are unmatched. It's a privilege to lead such courageous young men and women. They are courageous, they are committed, they are competent. If I could bottle up what they represent, and sell it, I'd be a rich man.

I want to talk briefly today about the al Qaeda threat. That's the main threat that we face in a region beset with many difficulties. While al Qaeda does not represent the main part of the insurgency in Iraq, it is certainly present in Iraq. While it doesn't represent the main source of difficulties in Pakistan's Northwestern Territory and Waziristan areas, it certainly plays a role there. Al Qaeda has struck in Saudi Arabia, in Egypt, in Spain, in London, in Washington, in New York. Its global reach and its ability to inflict damage should not be underestimated. In this year alone, over 400 suicide bombers have been deployed worldwide, and thousands and thousands of innocent civilians, most of whom are Muslims, have been killed by al Qaeda, as al Qaeda attempts to become mainstream, ideologically, in the region.

In June, I briefly spoke to you about the broader struggle in the region, and I wish to deepen this discussion by focusing on the al Qaeda threat. I think such a focus should also provide a fuller understanding of what's at stake in the region, where Iraq and Afghanistan fit, and causing the dialogue to extend beyond just what's happening in Iraq and just what's happening in Afghanistan, as if what's happening there is unconnected to the broader pressures in the region caused by extremism, such as represented by al Qaeda, and other issues, such as Sunni/Shia violence that we see starting to develop in various places.

Al Qaeda and associated extremists are the main enemy to peace and stability in the region. The enemy that brought us September 11 continues to represent one of the greatest dangers to this Nation.

First, this enemy is driven by a militant ideology that celebrates murder and suicide. In the Taliban's rule, in Afghanistan, we saw how this ideology oppressed the masses and covered a nation in

darkness—no music, executions in soccer stadiums, women sequestered, works of art destroyed.

The good news, however, is that the vast majority of people in the Middle East and Central Asia and the Horn of Africa don't buy this perverted view of Islam. They want to lead a better life. They want to lead a more prosperous life. They do not want the extremists to win.

But the grip of this ideology should not be underestimated. Communism and fascism started with relatively few, but deeply committed adherents, and the hate preached by al Qaeda resonates with some misguided people who believe that al Qaeda represents a true Islamic alternative. It does not.

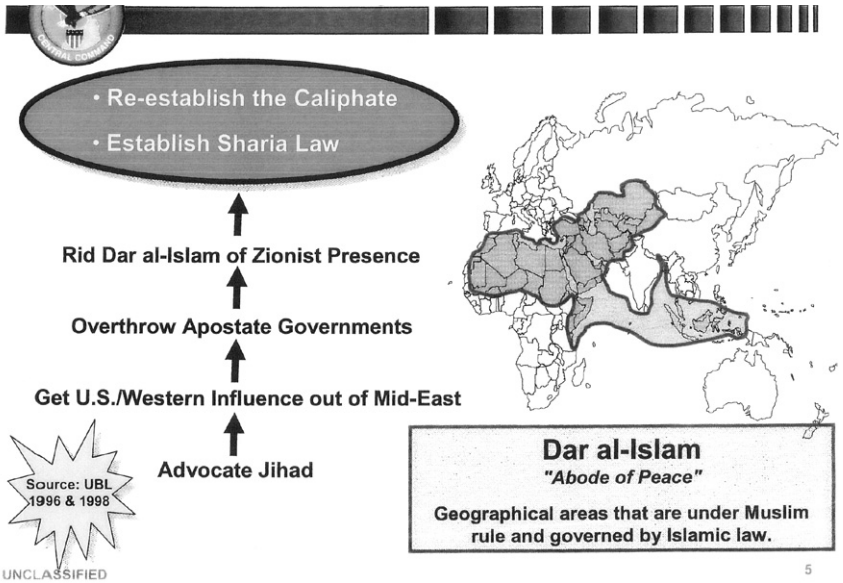
Second, the enemy is empowered by modern communications, expertly using the virtual world for planning, recruiting, fundraising, indoctrination, and exploiting the mass media. Their main effort is not to defeat us militarily, but to break our will by capturing the headlines, by making us think that we cannot help the people in the region help themselves against the extremist ideology. They know that propaganda and grabbing headlines are more important than military operations.

Importantly, this enemy seeks to acquire weapons of mass destruction, and will certainly use such weapons if they obtain them. They experimented with anthrax in Afghanistan. They tried to develop crude chemical weapons in Afghanistan. They're always talking about how they might develop a radiological dispersal device. If they could buy or acquire a nuclear weapon, they would. This is not my guess; this is what they say. It's well known, they want to do this, and they'll stop at nothing to try to do that.

These extremists are ruthless. Their depraved attacks and robust suicide-bomber network intimidates entire communities, and, indeed, intimidates entire countries. They are masters of intimidation, but they are not masters of the battlefield. They can kill innocents, but they can't win a single engagement against military forces properly deployed. This ability to intimidate gives them power beyond their relatively small numbers. It also gives them a chance, if we fail in our mission to prevent them from spreading their ideology, to gain more and more adherents, and eventually gain an opportunity to achieve a safe haven, not unlike the one that they achieved in Afghanistan.

I'd ask the committee to bear with me for a few moments and look at a few charts that describe the enemy's strategy in their own words.

[The slide referred to follows:]

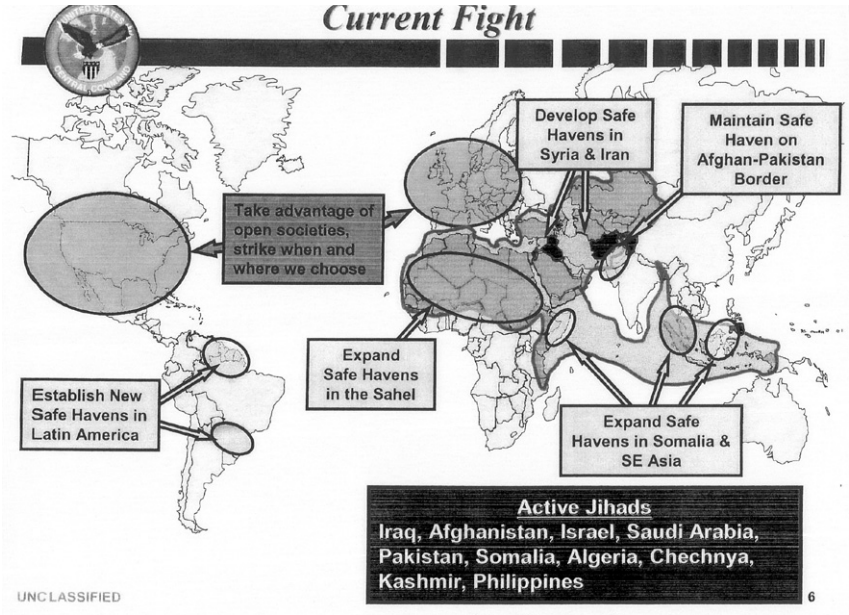


Their objectives are very clear. They believe in a jihad—a jihad, first and foremost, to overthrow the legitimate regimes in the region. But, in order to do that, they have to first drive us from the region. This is what they believe. They believe, ultimately, that the greatest prize of all is Saudi Arabia and the holy shrines there, and no one knows this better today than the Saudis do.

The enemy will then try to create and expand a geographic safe haven in the region, which they will call the Caliphate. That's what they called it in Afghanistan. That's what they called it in Fallujah. That's what they call it in Waziristan. They will try to reestablish a Caliphate throughout the entire Muslim world and apply a very, very narrow form of Shariah law, a form of Shariah law not believed in, or practiced, anywhere in the Muslim world today. It certainly would allow al Qaeda and their proxies to control a vast degree of oil wealth that exists in the region. It certainly is clear that they intend to destroy Israel in the process, as well.

Next slide.

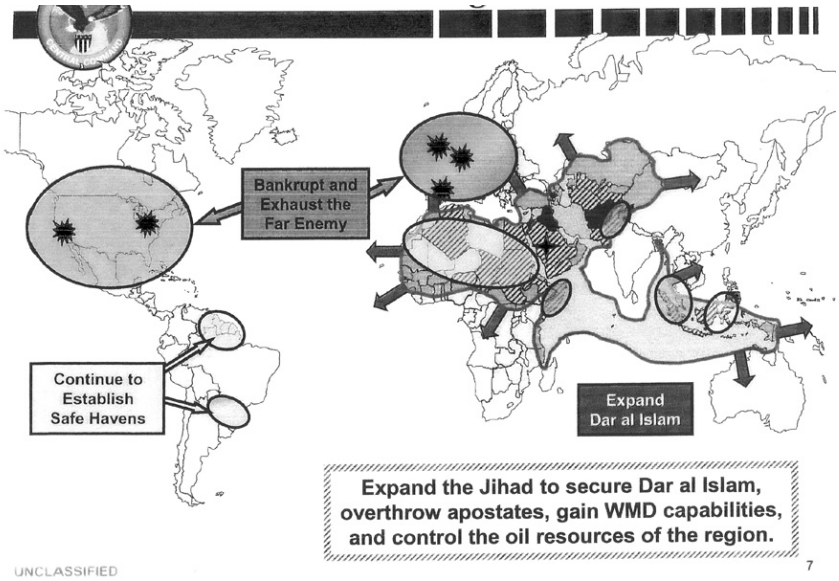
[The slide referred to follows:]



As they expand to look for safe havens, they are moving into areas of the world, such as the middle of Africa, the Horn of Africa, Southeast Asia, and they operate from bases of relative safety, especially within the virtual world, where they purvey their hatred through the Internet from places such as Germany, Holland, and even use servers here within the United States. They aim to take advantage of open societies and strike those open societies when they're ready, at their time and place of choosing.

Next slide.

[The slide referred to follows:]

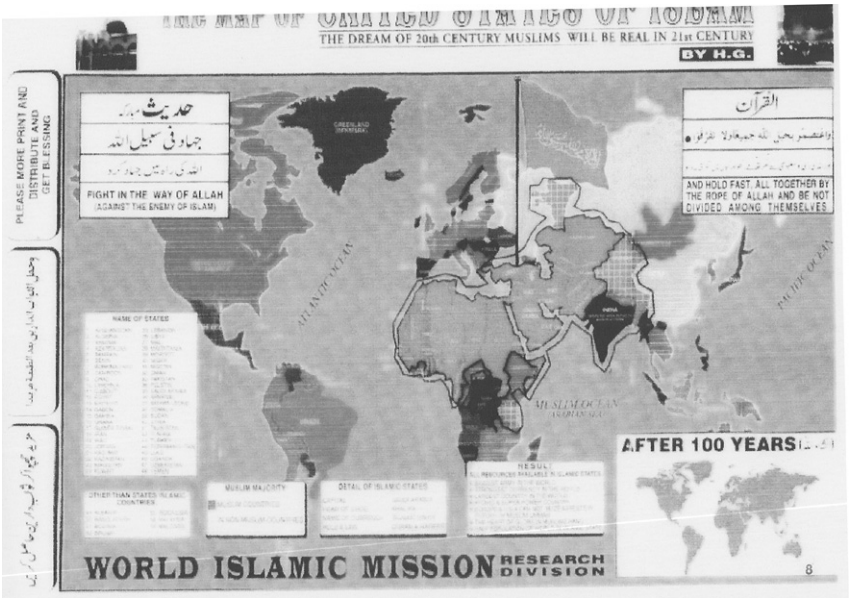


There are many active jihads, of course, that they are participating in. While they are not the main enemy in all of the jihads, they participate in every one of them because they are trying to cause instability. They feed on instability.

You see here the future fight. They'll eventually exhaust the far enemy, which is us and our allies, and overthrow the regimes of the region.

To see, in their own view, off of one of their Web sites—next slide—to give a view of how they see it, you see here, in green, the first step to achieve an al Qaeda-dominated Caliphate throughout the known Muslim world. Then you see, down in the corner, where they think it will go in a hundred years. Let there be no doubt about what they think.

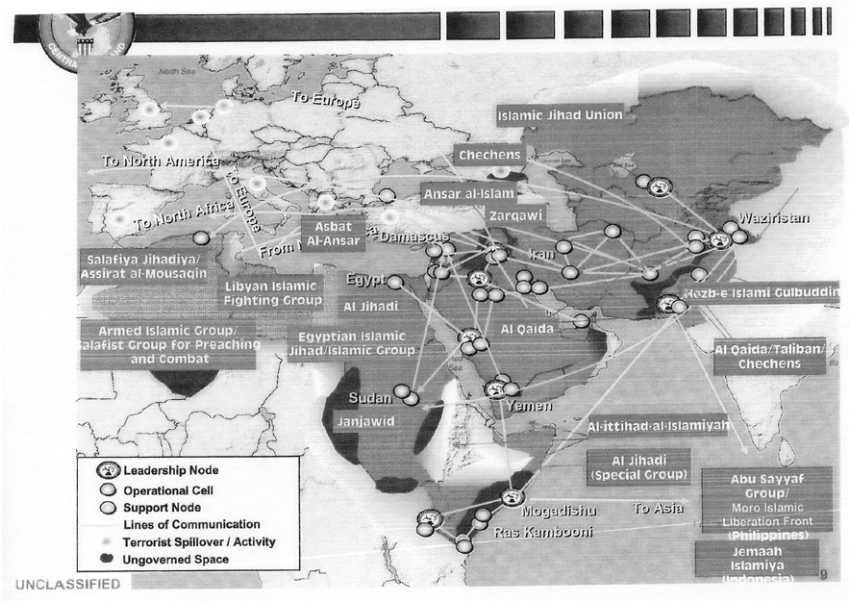
[The slide referred to follows:]



Just as we had the opportunity to learn what the Nazis were going to do from Hitler's words in "Mein Kampf," we need to learn what these people intend to do, from their own words.

Next slide.

[The slide referred to follows:]

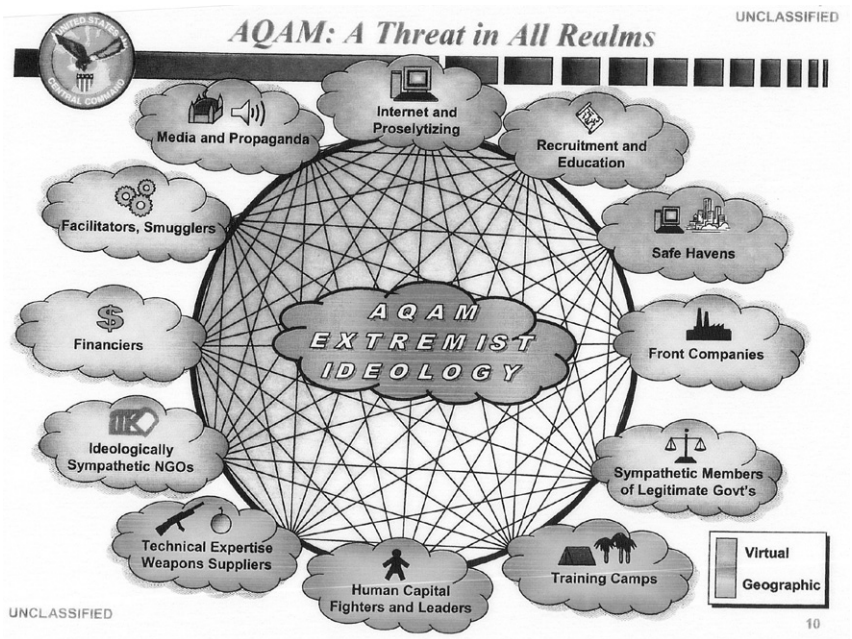


There are a lot of different ways to look at this enemy. Perhaps the most classic way to look at this enemy is by taking a look at a map and see support nodes and leadership nodes, lines of communication, places where the enemy can operate, where we know them to operate, where we understand that their cells exist, where they are not openly active, yet somehow manage to organize suicide bombing and activity against reasonable governments and properly appointed governments in the region. They also operate in areas where there is no governance, and they take advantage of these ungoverned spaces to operate decisively, and organize and plan and train.

If you look at the geographic representation of al Qaeda and their associated movements, and you see how distributed it is, you get the mistaken belief that it is not a global or borderless organization. It's not like IBM, a monolith that's centrally led from a central headquarters; it's much more like McDonald's, a franchise that is decentralized and linked, in many ways that I think the next chart represents in a much better way.

It shows, at the bottom, the traditional areas of where we find the enemy—in training camps, places where military forces can have effect against them, where leaders and fighters can be captured and killed, where technical expertise can be interdicted. But, in reality, this enemy has adapted to the environment of our strength and our power, and the strength of regional governments, and they have developed a media and a propaganda campaign, that you see up here in the blue, an Internet and proselytizing campaign.

[The slide referred to follows:]



Recruitment and education. They develop safe havens that are both geographic in ungoverned spaces and virtual, within the Internet and within the mass media world. They have front companies. They buy off politicians. They develop facilitators and smugglers. They deal with financiers that move drug money around, as well as other illicit money. They have sympathetic nongovernmental organizations that they sponsor to transfer some of their hateful ideology in very, very insidious ways around the region.

This type of enemy is a type of enemy that requires not only military pressure to get at those things that you see in yellow, but it requires all elements of international and national power to put pressure throughout the network over time in order to squeeze the ideology, defeat its sources of strength, and ultimately allow the good people of the region to have the courage and the ability to stand against this type of an organization.

We know the enemy's strategy, and we have a rare opportunity to get in front of these extremists and focus on them now before al Qaeda and its underlying ideology become mainstream. We will do this through an indirect approach. We must help others in the region help themselves by promoting self-reliant partners who are willing to face the enemy from within their own countries and within their own borders. As we do this, we should in fact, in the long war over time, reduce our military footprint in the region, being mindful of the fact that first we must stabilize Afghanistan, stabilize Iraq, continue to deter Syria and Iran, and protect the flow of oil vital to all the economies of the world and the peoples of the region. We must make clear to the people of the region that we have no designs on their territory and resources. We must make clear that we fight with them out of mutual respect and mutual self-benefit.

We must also enhance our own networks among our agencies, our allies, our coalition, and the partner governments to ensure that we're coordinating all of our instruments of national power in the fight against al Qaeda.

Our military forces in the region are playing a key role in implementing this strategy to defeat al Qaeda, and we have had much success. We recently were able to kill the number-two leader in al Qaeda in Iraq. Our allies in Pakistan, and our friends in Saudi Arabia, have relentlessly produced results against al Qaeda in certain parts of their territories. Our own forces have fought al Qaeda wherever we've found them, and have had good effect, but we have not finished the job. Their leadership remains at large, their financial flows remain, and we must continue to keep pressure on them over time to ensure that the ideology that they represent does not grow mainstream within the societies.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, our forces provide the shield behind which legitimate and representative governments and economic development are taking root. It is so important for us to understand that it is a combination of military power, economic power, diplomatic power, and political power that will ultimately spell the end of al Qaeda's hateful ideology.

Elsewhere, such as in the Horn of Africa, our training assistance enables nations to strengthen their military capabilities and to

strengthen their counterterrorist capabilities over time. We are part of a much broader force.

Back in March 2003, there were about 275,000 American troops in the region. Today, it's about 200,000. As Afghanistan and Iraq stabilize over time, you could see it possible—and indeed beneficial—for that strength to come down as, and only if, indigenous capabilities improve to the point that local nations can fight the fight themselves.

Certainly there has been progress, and General Casey will talk about progress in Iraq. But in Afghanistan, the recent successful elections there constituted another significant setback for the Taliban and al Qaeda. In Pakistan, President Musharraf is leading his country, not only in hunting down extremists, but in discrediting their ideas. In Saudi Arabia, security forces are aggressively combating that country's terrorists that have been so aggressively pursuing all of the instruments of national power that exist within the Kingdom.

It is important, I think, in closing Mr. Chairman, that we recognize the global threat that al Qaeda presents to the United States and to the civilized nations of the world. We are not yet organized to the extent that we need to be to fight this enemy with coordinated and synchronized international and interagency action. We have time to do that, but we need to seize the moment and do it now.

Thank you, sir.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General. I appreciate that you and General Casey have returned from your duties abroad to meet the important challenge to brief not only the President, but as you have been briefing here for 2 days, Congress and the American people about this global threat and how we, working with other nations, are combating it.

General Casey.

STATEMENT OF GEN GEORGE W. CASEY, USA, COMMANDING GENERAL, MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE-IRAQ

General CASEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As we approach the referendum on the Iraqi constitution, and for the elections for a government based on that constitution, the Iraqi people are locked in a struggle between tyranny and democracy.

They're fighting for their future against the remnants of the regimes that tyrannized them for over three decades and against the elements of the global terrorist network, that General Abizaid just talked about, who seek to establish Iraq as a base from which they can export terror throughout the Middle East and around the world. With our support, I am convinced that the Iraqis will prevail.

Our efforts in Iraq have been guided by a campaign plan and a strategy based on proven counterinsurgency principles in close coordination with successive Iraqi governments to guide us to our end state, and that end state is an Iraq at peace with its neighbors and an ally in the war on terror, with a representative government that respects human rights and security forces that can maintain domestic order and deny Iraq as a safe haven for terror.

I'll say more about the strategy, the operational concept, and our assessment of the enemy and the insurgency in closed session, but I think it's important to note some of the broad concepts that underpin our efforts in Iraq.

First of all, the capacity of Iraqi security forces has increased quantitatively and qualitatively over the past year. At transfer of sovereignty last June, there was one battalion in the Iraqi Army, some number of partially trained and equipped National Guard Forces—Iraqi National Guard Forces, and some 3,000 police. Today, the number of police is more than doubled. We have more than 100 Iraqi Army and special police battalions participating with us in conducting counterinsurgency operations. We have also developed with the Iraqis, a readiness reporting system, not unlike that we have—the one we have in place for our own forces, that allows us to measure their capabilities and their growth monthly. So, over the past 18 months, we have built enough Iraqi capacity where we can begin talking seriously about transitioning this counterinsurgency mission to them.

Second, our strategy was underpinned by a close study of the histories of counterinsurgency operations, and that told us a few things that we have weaved into the strategy:

First of all, history tells us that external powers, without a strong indigenous partner in the security side, have not fared well in dealing with insurgencies.

Second, the average counterinsurgency in the 20th century has lasted 9 years. Fighting insurgencies is a long-term proposition, and there is no reason that we should believe that the insurgency in Iraq will take any less time to deal with.

Third, based on history and my personal experience in the Balkans, we determined that the longer that the coalition bears the brunt of the counterinsurgency fight, the longer we'll bear the brunt of the counterinsurgency fight. This is about dependency.

So as we looked at all those things, we adopted a strategy to take early action to empower Iraqis. I think this is a key element of our strategy that everyone needs to understand. The Iraqi people have confidence in their security forces, and they want to be protected by them. Iraqi leaders want to take the lead in defending the Iraqi people, and the strategy that we've crafted helps them do this.

Third point. We and the Iraqis adopted programs to enhance the development and performance of the Iraqi security forces by placing coalition transition teams with Iraqi security forces and by partnering Army units with coalition units to enhance the amount of training and capabilities that were available to help the Iraqis grow. This process began in the spring, and is currently implemented across Iraq in army, special police, and border units. These programs allow us to directly improve the operational capability and effectiveness of Iraqi units, to build strong Iraqi chains of command and counterinsurgency capability, and to enhance the development of Iraqi military and police institutions. We have just completed an assessment of the transition team concept, and we're very pleased with the positive impact that these programs have had across the Iraqi forces.

Fourth point. Our aim is to defeat the terrorists and foreign fighters and to neutralize the insurgency while we progressively

transition the counterinsurgency campaign to increasingly capable Iraqi security forces and ministries. This is no easy task, and it will not be done overnight. But we strongly feel that getting the Iraqis into leading the counterinsurgency effort, as they are capable, will allow us to gradually reduce the visibility of coalition forces across Iraq and ultimately, as conditions warrant, to begin to reduce our presence in Iraq, taking away one of the elements that fuels the insurgency, that of the coalition forces as an occupying force. We are quite clear that whatever we do with the Iraqi security forces must be sustainable over the long term.

Now if I could, I'd just like to take a moment to address a couple of questions that relate to this that I am continually asked:

Question one: Do you have enough troops?

Question two: Do you still see it's possible to take fairly substantial reductions next spring?

Now, these are difficult questions that cause some people to scratch their heads, especially when you ask them both at the same time. But let me take a couple of swings at those.

First of all, I have and I will continue to ask for what I need to—what I need to have to accomplish this mission. You asked me that, Mr. Chairman. I think the ranking member asked me the same thing at my confirmation hearing. I've continued to do that. Today in Iraq, we have over 350,000 coalition and Iraqi security forces available for security operations.

Second, I think it was Yogi Berra that said, "Predictions are hard, especially when you're talking about the future," and it is. You can only make predictions if you make assumptions and then by going back and continually evaluating those assumptions. With my subordinates, we continually reassess the situations on the ground in Iraq, we challenge the assumptions that we've made, and we make projections on our requirements for forces, and we adapt our projections to the situation on the ground.

Third, as I suggested earlier, in Iraq more coalition is not necessarily better. More and more capable Iraqi security forces are better. Increased coalition presence feeds the notion of occupation, it contributes to the dependency of Iraqi security forces on the coalition, it extends the amount of time that it will take for Iraqi security forces to become self-reliant, and it exposes more coalition forces to attacks at a time when Iraqi security forces are increasingly available and increasingly capable.

Fourth point, reducing the visibility and ultimately, the presence of coalition forces as we transition to Iraqi security self-reliance remains a key element of our overall counterinsurgency strategy. Any changes to our posture will be conditions-based and made in conjunction with our coalition and Iraqi partners; but it remains a key element of our overall strategy.

So, there are a lot of factors that we consider and some tough calls that we're going to have to make here over the coming months, but I want to reiterate to you again, Mr. Chairman, what I said to you at my confirmation hearing. I'll continue to ask for what I need to successfully accomplish this mission.

Back to the strategy then. We've crafted a strategy for success in Iraq based on historical lessons, counterinsurgency principles, and the realities on the ground in Iraq, and this is a strategy that

will enable the Iraqis to take charge of their future. To be sure, the next couple of months are going to be tough and difficult, as our enemies also recognize what's at stake here as we complete this political process. They're already challenging the referendum process with increased terror attacks to create the impression that attempts at progress are futile and that Iraq will never become a modern democratic society. They're attacking the will of the Iraqi people and the will of coalition publics. They're failing in Iraq.

Across Iraq, 98 percent of eligible Iraqis have registered to participate in the referendum and the elections. Better than 90 percent of Iraqis have stated their intent to vote. Probably most importantly, Sunni Arabs who boycotted January's election remain committed to participating in both the referendum and the election. This is a significant step forward from earlier this year.

Further, as I mentioned, we continue to make substantial progress with Iraqi security forces. Today, we expect to have 60,000 to 70,000 more Iraqi security forces available for referendum security than we had in the January elections. By the elections in December, we expect that to rise to about 100,000 more Iraqi security forces available for election security. As a result, I only asked for 2,000 additional forces to help us with this year's election process, as compared to 12,000 that I asked for, for the January elections.

Militarily, coalition forces and Iraqi security forces continue to pressure terrorists and insurgents across Iraq, and Iraqi security forces are progressing and continuing to take a more prominent role in defending their country. In the recent success in Tal Afar Iraqi security forces outnumbered coalition forces for the first time in a major operation. A year ago, that division didn't exist. We've also had good successes against the al Qaeda network, killing or capturing more than 20 of their key leaders since July, including the recent death of one of Zarqawi's key lieutenants, Abu Azzam.

We and our Iraqi colleagues remain postured to provide security for the referendum and the election. While I expect the insurgents and the terrorists to pull out all the stops, they will not be able to stop the political process from going forward.

We're in a tough fight, but we've been in tough fights before to advance the cause of democracy and to protect our way of life. We should not be afraid of this fight. We and the Iraqi people will prevail in this battle of wills if we don't lose ours.

Now, I know some of you worry about the impact that the calls for early withdrawal from Iraq has on our troops in Iraq. In some recent discussions with a group of soldiers, I asked them, what was the impact—what did they think about with what was going on in the United States with the antiwar movement? A sergeant major responded to me that he'd just had a conversation about that with some of his soldiers. Here's what they said, "Tell those folks not to speak for us. September 11 won't happen again. We'll beat them here."

The soldiers get it. This is the mettle of our troops. As I've said many times, and as General Abizaid said at the beginning of his statement, I continue to be amazed at their courage, their commitment, and their ability to make a difference in a challenging environment every day.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, we and our Iraqi colleagues continue to make progress in Iraq every day. Some days, the steps are smaller than others, but we are more relentless in our progress than those who seek to disrupt it. We have a strategy and a plan for success in Iraq, and we are broadly on track in achieving our goals.

It's hard work in a challenging environment, but we have the best of America and coalition countries, military and civilian, committed to defeating terrorism and tyranny in Iraq so that we can all live safer. Success in Iraq will require patience and will, but both the United States and the region will be safer when we prevail.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

Again, General Abizaid, General Casey, those are strong statements preparing Congress with new knowledge with regard to your detailed plans to confront the uncertainties of the future. Through each of you, we convey, again, to the men and women of the Armed Forces under your command and their families, our deepest appreciation for their service and their sacrifice.

Secretary Rumsfeld, we often hear the phrase "stay the course," and we are now receiving, I think, a good briefing as regard to the military progress. I personally agree that there is progress. I was privileged to be in Iraq several weeks ago, and I saw it with my own eyes. General Casey, the thoughts of your troops, I confirm their belief in what they are doing and their willingness to stay the course.

But, Secretary Rumsfeld, the infrastructure in Iraq is an integral part of any measure of progress. In the course of our visit—myself with Senator Stevens—I'll speak only from my own views—I felt that the Secretary of Defense in that organization was not, in my judgment, showing the strength and the decisiveness that is needed at this time. To some lesser extent, I was concerned about the Interior Ministry, and that individual's ability to step up and deal with this situation.

I want to ask you—I saw reports the other day about a change, which I heartily endorse. When we started, the basic responsibility of the refurbishment of the infrastructure—now, that's electricity and water and security and other matters—was largely under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense, and then it shifted when Ambassador Negroponte took his office to the Department of State. Now, could you clarify, with regard to the Defense Ministry and the Interior Ministry, some, as I understand it, re-shifting of that responsibility back to your Department. I, frankly, endorse it, but I think the details should be made known.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that the—if, by "infrastructure," you mean electricity and water and sewage and all those types of things, I know of no plans to move those—responsibility for those to the Department of Defense. I am told that General Casey and U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, have recommended to Washington that the Department of Defense take over responsibility for the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense, which have also been under the Department of State.

When I say "take over responsibility," these are very fragile institutions. They don't have a history there of strong ministries that are democratic and representative of all the elements in the society. The problem we have in the country is that you could have security forces, but unless the security forces on the military side work well with the police side, unless they have a chain of command that's clear, unless the ministries are able to support them and see that they can provide the kinds of combat support and combat service support and logistics that hare needed, unless they are properly connected to the Intelligence Community, they don't do as well as they otherwise would do. General Casey, who could respond to this, has recommended, I believe—and it's now being considered in Washington—that the Department of Defense, which has a major interest in seeing that those two ministries, alone—not the reconstruction ministries or the infrastructure ministries, but just those two ministries—work very closely with the train-and-equip activity, both ours and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) activity, and that we assume responsibility for strengthening the competence in those ministries.

One of the problems we face is a real one. If you think about it, we've gone in Iraq from the governing council to the interim government, now a transitional government, and we have an election in December for a permanent government. Every time you change governments, there's a lot of turbulence. Those ministries have not had the stability that would be desirable.

We look forward with a great deal of hope to the time when the Iraqis will have a 4-year government, and those ministries will have some stability and less turbulence, and that we will be able to assist them in developing the kinds of systems and procedures and approaches that will make them more effective.

Chairman WARNER. Mr. Secretary, when we were there, we learned—and I'll address this to General Casey—that the Minister of Defense didn't have the money to pay his troops in some instances. Is that correct, General Casey? I mean, to me, that is an egregious breakdown of responsibility.

General CASEY. That's exactly the type of ministerial capacity that we intend—or try to help them build. He had the money, Senator. He didn't have a system in place that got the money to the right place at the right time. That's something that is symptomatic of both the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense.

What we tried to do with this proposed shift is to have one person responsible for the ministries, from the foot-soldier all the way up to the ministers, so that we can generate the institutional systems that you all look at here, with all of our Armed Forces, that will sustain the Iraqi security forces so they can accomplish their mission.

Chairman WARNER. Can you give us your own views with regard to the forthcoming referendum on the constitution, and the likelihood of its being adopted?

General CASEY. I can, Senator. My personal views are—and this is backed up by my intelligence analysts—is that it will likely pass, that there will be a sizeable no-vote by the Sunni minority—but we don't think right now that they have the capability of getting a

two-thirds majority in the three provinces they need for this to pass.

That said, there's a lot that could happen here in 2 weeks, and we'll really just have to wait and see what the outcome is.

Chairman WARNER. Fine.

Colleagues, I've just been handed my card. I'm going to stop my questioning promptly, because I'm hopeful we can get as many Senators in before the 11:15 termination.

Senator Levin?

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

General Casey, you indicated that you were going to comment about previous statements of yours about prospects for reductions in American forces next spring. You laid out all of the factors that go into that kind of a decision. Are you projecting now, based on any assumptions you want to make, that there will be a drawdown of American forces, starting next spring? Are you making that projection at this time?

General CASEY. As I said, Senator, reductions in coalition forces—conditioned-based reductions of coalition forces is a critical element of our strategy——

Senator LEVIN. Right.

General CASEY.—and we certainly do look to do that over the course of next year.

Senator LEVIN. Are you projecting that those conditions would exist next spring, as of this time?

General CASEY. Senator, the next 75 days are going to be critical in what happens after that. I'd like to wait until we get through this political process here to give you a better assessment of that.

Senator LEVIN. Do you have milestones, a timeline, which would reflect how we would reduce our forces? When Iraqi forces gain certain strength, how many Iraqi battalions would have to be assessed at a particular level in order for a U.S. battalion to withdraw? Do you have that kind of a timeline and that kind of a milestone?

General CASEY. We do not have a timeline or milestones that directly tie the drawdown of coalition units to numbers of Iraqi battalions. As this happens, it will happen in a phased way around the country. So, it's not something that lends itself—that when—for example, when you have 20 Iraqi brigades, you'll be able to downsize four U.S. brigades—it's not quite that simple.

Senator LEVIN. All right.

General, I want to just reinforce something the chairman said about the Iraqis not having funds to pay their troops. When we met with President Talibani here a few weeks ago, he confirmed reports that they did not have the funds to pay their troops. It wasn't a matter of not getting the money to the right place at the right time; he said they did not have the funds to pay their troops. Are you saying that's not accurate?

General CASEY. I know that was true for the Ministry of Interior. I do not recall that being true for the Ministry of Defense.

Senator LEVIN. All right, but the Minister of Interior handles the police.

General CASEY. That's correct.

Senator LEVIN. How many of the 190,000 are police?

General CASEY. About 84,000.

Senator LEVIN. So half, roughly, of the so-called security forces were not being paid, because the money wasn't there. Now, that represents more than incompetence. I'm afraid that may represent corruption, and worse. But how can we tolerate that situation? Was there corruption involved in that, in your judgment?

General CASEY. I have no knowledge or evidence that corruption was directly involved in that.

The other thing, Senator, my knowledge of this situation is it wasn't that half of the people couldn't get paid; there were spots, like Fallujah and like different places, that could not be paid.

Senator LEVIN. Some of the 84,000—I overstated that—but some of the 84,000 in the police. Do we have any idea what percentage were not paid?

General CASEY. I don't. I don't, Senator.

Senator LEVIN. Well, it's totally intolerable. I would hope that you'd give the committee a report on that.

General Abizaid, let me ask you the——

General CASEY. Senator, if I could, the Secretary just showed me. It's about 67,000, on the local police.

Senator LEVIN. Who were not paid, or a part of that——

General CASEY. No, that's the total number——

Senator LEVIN. Total.

General CASEY.—of that 84,000.

Senator LEVIN. Total. Okay, thank you.

General Abizaid, in your judgment, what is the importance of a genuine broad-based political coming-together among the Iraqis as being vital to defeat the insurgency? How important is that, that there be a political coming-together among the Iraqi factions?

General ABIZAID. Senator Levin, I think it's absolutely vital.

Senator LEVIN. Do we know whether or not, if the constitution passes, but with a strong majority of Sunnis opposing that passage, whether or not the passage, under that circumstance, would represent a plus or a minus, in terms of their coming together politically? Do we have a prediction on that, a feeling about that?

General ABIZAID. I would defer to General Casey on that, Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. General Casey, do you have a feeling about that? If there's a strong majority of Sunnis—which is very possible—that vote against that constitution, could that not possibly lead to a worsening political situation, rather than a better one?

General CASEY. I think that's entirely possible, Senator. I mean, as we've looked at this, we've looked for the constitution to be a national compact. The perception now is that it's not, particularly among the Sunni.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Current indication, Senator, is that a majority of the Sunnis will vote against it. That's the impression you get from the polls and the conversation.

Senator LEVIN. Right.

Secretary RUMSFELD. On the other hand, the positive side of it is they do plan to participate fully in the election.

Senator LEVIN. Right. But I think General Casey's answer, that if a vast majority vote against the constitution, and that that could, indeed, worsen the political situation, I would hope the administration would not just simply continue to say, "We're there as long as

you need us. We're there as long as you need us." I mean, we're doing our part, and the Iraqis, it seems to me, must be told that they have to settle their political differences and come together politically. If that constitution is adopted, and that adoption does not represent the coming-together, as, I think, is very possible—and, indeed, likely—I would hope the administration, Secretary Rumsfeld, would let the Iraqis know they have work to do politically to pull together their house, their political home, even if the constitution's adopted, that that isn't enough, if there's going to be a faction which is seriously opposed to that constitution, even if they do participate in the elections. Can that message be delivered to the Iraqis so they don't think they have us there for some unlimited period and it doesn't make any difference if they work out their political differences?

Secretary RUMSFELD. General Casey, you're in the meeting with the Ambassador and the Iraqis on a continuing basis. I would say that that message does get communicated, wouldn't you?

General CASEY. I would not say it's necessarily as forceful as Senator Levin just put it.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you. My time is up.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator LEVIN. I would hope it would be forcefully delivered.

General CASEY. If I could——

Chairman WARNER. Yes, go ahead, General.

General CASEY.—just respond. Senator, you asked me, "Could it have an adverse effect?" I said yes. But it could also have a positive effect. If you look at what has been kicked into the next assembly in the constitution, which are really the major building blocks of federalism and other things, it could drive the Sunni to participate even greater in the elections in December, to get into the assembly. They then could get into an alliance with other secular parties, and this process could move forward. So, it can work both ways.

Senator LEVIN. Either way.

General CASEY. It's not necessary bad.

Senator LEVIN. It could work either way.

General CASEY. Yes.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. When we commenced the hearing today, I advised the committee that we would have a closed session. We are continuing to do that, but we've shifted it from SH–219 to the Armed Services hearing room, room SR–222.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Myers, thank you again for all your great service to this Nation. We'll miss you, and we appreciate everything that you have done in service to our Nation.

General Abizaid, there was a report sent over, I think, last June that three of the hundred Iraqi battalions were fully trained and equipped, capable of operating independently. What is that number now?

General ABIZAID. The number now is, if you're talking about level-one trained——

Senator MCCAIN. Yes.

General ABIZAID.—it's one.

Senator MCCAIN. They have one battalion.

General CASEY. Senator, if I might, could I take that? Because I think I'm more familiar with it than General Abizaid.

Senator MCCAIN. Sure.

General CASEY. I mentioned, in my opening testimony, that what we were focused on is putting Iraqis in the lead as soon as they are capable. We fully recognize that Iraqi armed forces will not have an independent capability for some time, because they don't have the institutional base to support them. So, level one, as you'll recall from the slide, is—that's what's got one battalion. It's going to be a long time——

Senator MCCAIN. It used to be three. Now we've gone from three to one?

General CASEY. Pardon me?

Senator MCCAIN. It was three before.

General CASEY. Right.

Senator MCCAIN. Previous report was we had three battalions. Now we're down to one battalion.

General CASEY. Right, and things changed in the battalions. I mean, we're making assessments on personnel, on leadership, on training. There are a lot of variables that are involved here, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. Your response to Senator Levin was that you are not planning on troop withdrawals, because you want to see what happens in the next 75 days. Is that—was that a correct——

General CASEY. Senator, that's not how I'd characterize——

Senator MCCAIN. Okay.

General CASEY.—my response. I said that we're—conditioned-based reductions of coalition forces remains an integral part of our overall strategy. I believe I did say to the Senator that that still remains possible in 2006.

Senator MCCAIN. Are you planning on troop withdrawals for next year?

General CASEY. I just said that, Senator, yes.

Senator MCCAIN. Yes or no.

General CASEY. Yes, Senator, I do believe that the possibility for conditioned-based reductions of coalition forces still exists in 2006.

Senator MCCAIN. The Camp al Qaim, senior U.S. Marine commander said, "Insurgents loyal to Abu Zarqawi have taken over at least five key western Iraqi towns on the border with Syria." How many times are we going to read about another offensive in Fallujah, Mosul, Ramadi, al Qaim, where we go in, we take control, and we leave, and the bad guys come back again? How often are we going to read that, General Casey?

General CASEY. Hopefully not too frequently, Senator. In the last 90 days, we've pushed five Iraqi brigades and about four coalition battalions into Anbar Province. The issue has always been the availability of Iraqi security forces to remain and retain control.

Senator MCCAIN. Some would argue that maybe it was the availability of American forces. There's 1,000 marines stationed in the desert, populated by 100,000 Sunni Arabs. The border between Syria and Iraq, obviously, is not under our control. Do you agree with that? Is the border between Syria and Iraq under our control?

General CASEY. No, Senator, it's not. Since April, we have had an objective of restoring Iraqi control to that Syrian border before the elections. The operation you saw in Tal Afar is a part of that strategy, and you will see operations along the Euphrates Valley here in the near term.

Senator MCCAIN. I was interested in your comment, "The longer we carry the brunt of the insurgency fight, the longer we will carry the brunt." Does that mean that the Iraqis are able to carry the brunt?

General CASEY. That means, the longer that we lead, Senator, the longer we'll continue to lead. That's why we have a conscious strategy of passing that off—the lead off——

Senator MCCAIN. That assumes——

General CASEY.—to the Iraqi——

Senator MCCAIN.—that assumes that the Iraqis are capable of assuming that leadership, General Casey. Most people that I talk to say, by most measures, they're not ready to do that. So, what we're doing here—I'd refer to General—David Ignatius' column, from what they—the military described a military approach that's different, at least in tone, from what the public perceives for their commanders. Iraq is in an endless tunnel. They're planning to reduce U.S. troop levels over the next year to a force that will focus on training and advising the military—Iraqi military.

Nobody could argue with that, but there's one fundamental problem with it, and that is whether the Iraqis are capable of carrying out their own military responsibilities. The President, yesterday—you might understand that the American people are a little confused—says, "Bush warns of upsurge of violence in Iraq before next month's voting." So, Americans are seeing, on the crawl on their television set, "American marines killed, soldiers killed, more people killed, hundreds—a couple of hundred in 1 day," and yet we are now planning on troop withdrawals.

General Casey, I'm not worried too much about the impact on American military morale, because I have great faith in them. I'm worried about the impact on the insurgents. You're planning on troop withdrawals—you and General Abizaid—without any criteria being met, that I can see. We're certainly broadcasting that in very loud and clear tones, as you did several months ago, when the President said, "We are going to do whatever is necessary," it stopped for a while, and now it's there again.

We're making—you're taking a very big gamble here. I hope you're correct. I don't see the indicators yet that we are ready to plan or begin troop withdrawals, given the overall security situation, and that just isn't my opinion alone.

General Abizaid would like to respond, Mr. Chairman. My time is expired.

General ABIZAID. Thanks, Senator McCain. If I may, I'd like to point out a couple of things.

First of all, the war has moved to the west, which is a good scene, a good indicator that Iraqi and U.S. forces are having an effect elsewhere. The amount of infiltration across the Syrian border remains a concern, but it's down—not so much because of Syrian activity, but because of U.S. and Iraqi activity.

Iraqi casualties are probably taking place at around four times the level of our own, which indicates a willingness to fight for their own country. Their organizational capability is pretty good, as well.

But I can assure you, Senator McCain, General Casey and I want to win this war. If we need to ask for more U.S. troops, in the short term or in the long term, we will.

Senator MCCAIN. General, there is no expert that I know that doesn't attest that we needed more troops at the time a lot of us said we needed them.

My time's expired, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. General Casey, do you wish to add anything to this very important question by Senator McCain?

General CASEY. If I could, to the Senator's point that we don't have any way of measuring the progress of these forces. That's exactly what the purpose of putting the transition teams with these forces and producing these monthly readiness reports is. We are fighting with them side-by-side on a daily basis, improving their capabilities day-by-day. Our sense is that when we get them in the lead, they'll learn faster and they'll improve faster, rather than following us around and watching us do what we do. We're measuring this very carefully, and we're not going forward with this capriciously. As I said, this is an integrated strategy, and the reductions will come when the conditions are met, as an overall part of the strategy.

Chairman WARNER. General Myers.

General MYERS. Thank you, Chairman.

Just a comment on Senator McCain's comment that experts have said we've always needed more troops. We've all heard those calls. I respect the people—some of the people who have made those calls. But the facts, as I know them, that there's not been anybody in a position of responsibility for carrying out the mission in Iraq—that has said that or believes that—it's a complex situation that is not well understood by folks who fought in Vietnam, for instance, or fought in the World Wars. This is a much more complex situation. The task is very hard. I think General Casey established it in his opening remarks, when he said that if we're viewed as occupiers, we draw fire just by being occupiers.

I think the thing we have to do, Senator McCain, is convince people this is not a cut-and-run strategy, this is a win strategy. It's trying to walk that very fine line between being seen as an occupier and being effective in winning this war and helping the Iraqis stand up on their feet and take the fight to the enemy. I just keep hearing, "More troops," but I can tell you that the people we talk to, the academics that we bring in, the ex-military experts—and we'll talk to anybody that will write about this or talk about it; we're happy to talk about it—and this strategy has been reviewed—George, I don't know how many times we've picked at your strategy, but—by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and we certainly don't think that more American forces is the answer.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Chairman, I felt compelled to just make one comment.

General Myers seems to assume that things have gone well in Iraq. General Myers seems to assume that the American people—the support for our conflict there is not eroding. General Myers

seems to assume that everything has gone fine and our declarations of victory, of which there have been many, have not had an impact on American public opinion.

Things have not gone as we had planned or expected, nor as we were told by you, General Myers. That's why I'm very worried, because I think we have to win this conflict. So, you've been bringing in the wrong experts, in my view, because the conflict has not gone as it was testified to before this committee by this group of witnesses.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. The record will remain open for purposes—I will allow you to rebut that—the record is open on this very important question. Any of the witnesses may supplement.

One last comment.

General MYERS. I don't think this committee or the American public has ever heard me say that things are going very well in Iraq. This is a hard struggle. We are trying to do in Iraq what has never been done before. This is historic. It's historic, in terms of our security, because it's part of the global war that General Abizaid talked about. This is, for al Qaeda, a center of gravity. Whether we like it or not, those are the facts. We have the al Qaeda leader in Iraq that's been charged to continue the fight, not only in Iraq, but in Europe and the United States. That's a fact. That's what he's been charged to do by the leader of al Qaeda.

I don't know how you characterize what goes on in Iraq, but we set out milestones way back at the end of major combat. The first remarkable thing that happened in Iraq was, our troops took Baghdad just weeks after many critics said, "You're in a quagmire"—maybe some of the same experts that think we need more troops—that, "You're in a quagmire." Then, a few weeks later, Baghdad falls.

It is not easy to do what we're trying to do in Iraq. It's not easy for the U.S. Government or our coalition friends to do it. We've made lots of mistakes along the way, Senator McCain—no doubt about it—because it's never been done before. It's never been attempted before. But the outcome is so potentially stabilizing for the region and for our country.

So here we are, we've had several transitional governments. We said the Iraqis would develop a constitution and have a vote in October. That's going to happen. We're going to have elections in December. I think that in a sense, things are going well. It's not easy. The people that understand that are the people that volunteer to go over there. If you talk to the men and women, they understand what's at stake, and they're willing to go out on patrol, on raids, to protect infrastructure, to protect individuals, and put their lives in harm's way, because they understand what's at stake.

So, I'm not going to be Pollyannaish about this—this is tough—and I don't think I ever have been. But I think I've been a realist, and I think I trust the judgment of people on the ground and people on the Joint Staff that have just come back from Iraq, the battalion commanders, the brigade commanders, the general officers. I respect their opinion. They've been over there in the crucible with the blood and the dust and the gore, and those are the people that I trust their opinion. I particularly trust the opinion of General

George Casey and General John Abizaid. They've been at this a long time, and they know what they're doing. We should trust them.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of you for the continued service to the country.

I'm concerned, Mr. Secretary, by the continuing reports that the Iraqi police and security forces we're training are substantially infiltrated by the insurgents. Earlier this month, I received a shocking letter from a retired military officer, whose nephew is a marine recently sent to Iraq, and his letter says that, "My nephew was briefed by just-returned marines that 100 percent of the Iraqi police and army have now been compromised by insurgents. He and his fellow marines were warned that any and all operations that involve the Iraqi police or army units would result in ambush. Not all Iraqi police or army are members of the insurgency, but he was briefed that all units were infested with hostile collaborators, to the point of being dysfunctional as a part of security forces."

We've had warning signs before about infiltration. A year ago, the New York Times reported that an advisor to Prime Minister Allawi said that as many as 5 percent of the Iraqi Government troops are insurgents who have infiltrated the ranks or they're sympathizers. At the time, we had Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Sinclair, the 1st Division, said, "The police and military forces all have insurgents in them. You don't have a pure force."

Then in February, Major Don McArdle, who is the deputy commandant of the 4th Iraqi Division Training Academy, said, "After a recent battle in Mosul, some insurgents' bodies were found wearing identification tags from the academy."

In February, Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic International Studies said, "Penetration of the Iraqi security and military forces may be the rule, not the exception.

Then on July 25, the Inspectors General of the State Department and Defense Department released a joint report saying this, "Even more troubling is infiltration by intending terrorists or insurgents. There is sufficient evidence to conclude that such persons are, indeed, among the ranks of the Iraqi Police Service (IPS)."

The report also says, "A nettlesome issue has been the fact that some graduates do not enter the Iraqi police service after completing training. Even tracking of the numbers trained, but not assigned, is an elusive problem. Some U.S. sources assert that the number might be as high as a third or more of those who have gone through basic training." A third or more.

The report went on to say that the questions of accountability for controlled equipment is particularly critical. The specter of weapons issued to members of the Iraqi police service but falling in the wrong hands is a concern. As we all know, President Bush has said that our forces will stand down as the Iraqis stand up. The question is, Who are we helping to stand up? Are the insurgents benefitting from the military training and the equipment and using inside knowledge to ambush and kill our soldiers?

Can you assure us, Mr. Secretary, and the American people, that we're not training the insurgents in the Iraqi security forces?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, there's no question but that the vetting issue is a difficult one, and an imperfect one. The people who are volunteering undoubtedly have among them individuals who are attempting to infiltrate. The percentages you have cited, I've not heard from anyone in any kind of authority, the 100 percent or 30 percent or those kinds of things.

It's a problem that's faced by police forces in every major city in our country, that criminals infiltrate and sign up to join the police force. We know that this is a difficulty. They do have a vetting process. They also, today, have a better insight into it, as General Casey said, because they have embedded Americans in the Iraqi forces, so they're better able to see how the leadership is, where the weaknesses are, and where the possible infiltrations might have occurred.

General Casey may want to comment on it.

Senator KENNEDY. Yes, perhaps, General Casey, tell us the extent—I mean, through your—how much of a problem. We have the IG's report, as of July. It's quite extensive on this, the other kinds of comments and statements that have been made that it is a problem, and that it's not getting any better. I would want your response.

General CASEY. Senator, my assessment is that it is more problematic with the police than it is with the army, because the police are primarily recruited locally, and the army is broadly recruited nationally. As the Secretary suggested, there is a vetting process, but it's a very difficult process, and it's not a failsafe process for sure.

Numbers like 100 percent are not numbers that I know. We certainly do expect that there is some infiltration of the police, and, to some extent, the military forces, but we don't see it in a way that would render these forces incapable.

Now, if I could just add one last thing?

Senator KENNEDY. Yes.

General CASEY. We saw something down in Basra that is also troubling, and that is the presence of people in the police departments whose loyalty are more to their militia leaders than they are to the chief of police. That was part of the situation down there.

Senator KENNEDY. In your report that you're coming out in October with can you expand on this, give us a fuller kind of report?

Just in the last moments that I have, I'm deeply concerned by the grisly photos, American soldiers near the dead and mutilated bodies that have been posted on the Internet. There's a story in the Washington Post today, and it's reminding us of the pictures that were there after Abu Ghraib. It's against the background of that excellent letter by that extraordinary young captain—it was in the Post yesterday—Ian Fishback. It said, "Despite my efforts, I've been unable to get clear, consistent answers from my leadership about what constitutes lawful and humane treatment of detainees." What in the world is going on when we see, in the Internet, the American servicemen posed against mutilated bodies? What does it say about our respect, for those that we are fighting certainly, but our respect for the dead, and particularly the dead of other countries and other traditions? What are we doing about it?

General CASEY. Senator, those photos are not something that we condone, and we're taking appropriate action to ensure that that practice, such as it exists, is halted.

Senator KENNEDY. My time is up.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, for clarification purposes, there was an article in one of yesterday's papers talking about how the suicide bomber had penetrated the Green Zone. Then it was retracted today. Did it not happen?

General CASEY. Senator, I don't have specific knowledge on that particular article that you're talking about.

Senator INHOFE. Oh.

General CASEY. But I have no knowledge of a suicide bomber penetrating the Green Zone.

Senator INHOFE. That's very good. Very good.

The chairman talked a little bit about some of the things, in terms of infrastructure, and when—on quite a number of trips that I've been over there, and I have—and on, in particular, I remember General Petraeus talking about the effectiveness, Mr. Chairman, of the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP), and how significant that is. For a very small amount of money they're in a position to see what needs to be done immediately in certain areas. I'd like to have you comment—perhaps General Casey, you'd be the best one—on that program.

General CASEY. It's probably our most effective program, Senator. Last year we spent over $700 million, dispensed out through the commanders—small, high-impact projects that affected the local communities. This is one of the best programs we have, and that our commanders have, to influence things economically within their areas.

Senator INHOFE. In other words, the money spent there is far greater than going through a process where something might be done 6 months from now.

General CASEY. Certainly, it has greater local impact.

Senator INHOFE. Yes.

General CASEY. But the country still needs big projects and long-term——

Senator INHOFE. Yes, I understand that. Thank you very much.

Yesterday in the closed briefing—and I can say it now, since you repeated it in this open briefing—you talked about the average insurgency, and it takes about 9 years to put down. Consequently, one of the participants, or one of the Senators in the audience—said, in a rather loud voice, right after that, where several people were listening, "Well, we've signed up for 9 years." I'd like to—my interpretation of that statement, that you repeated today is, yes, that's true, and this could take 9 years, but it doesn't mean that we are going to be doing it for 9 years. Would you clarify that?

General CASEY. That's exactly right, Senator, and that's the thrust of the strategy. The strategy is to put the Iraqis in a position to deal with the insurgency while we bring it down to a level——

Senator INHOFE. Very good. That clarification, I think, is very important.

I think, if you're—we all remember the prophets of doom before the January election. We found them to be wrong. Those same prophets are out there right now. I have every reason to believe—quite frankly, I take the oversight responsibilities of this committee very seriously. I've been over there many times, and I will be over again next week. But, you did an excellent job, General Casey, of outlining those good things that have taken place and you put it in a very good light.

I would suggest any of those who are here—the Senator from Massachusetts, in my understanding, has not been there personally—if you rely on reports, and if you rely on the media, and the distorted way in which the media is reporting what's going on there, you're not going to get a very good idea of what's really going on. I can remember so well spending one whole trip in the Sunni Triangle, in Fallujah, just talked to the troops there. You used that quote, "September 11 won't happen again, because we'll defeat them here." I heard that same thing said by a Marine sergeant over there in Fallujah. The former brigade commander that is—hated Americans—he was a brigade commander for Saddam Hussein—now, after having experienced embedded training with our marines over there, has totally changed his mind. He loves them. He actually cried when the rotation came. I mean, these things are actually happening over there. He renamed the Fallujah security forces the "Fallujah Marines."

I was there right after, in Tikrit, when the explosion took place. Forty people, Iraqis in training for security forces, were either killed or were injured. In that case, the families of those who were killed or injured actually replaced, with another member of the family, each one who went down.

Now, that's very significant that we talk about that, because these things are happening, and anyone who's been over there will tell you, the first thing you get from the young troops that are there is, "Why is it the media doesn't understand what we're doing, what our commitment is, the threat that our Nation is facing?"

Now, last June, we had a hearing on the Improvised Exploding Devices (IEDs) by General Votel. I'd like to know, since that time, is there any update on that particular progress—any progress that's being made in terms of the threat of the IEDs?

General ABIZAID. Senator, with your permission, I'd like to hold the IED discussion for the closed hearing.

Senator INHOFE. That's perfectly reasonable.

Since my time is rapidly going by, let me get one last question in here.

General Abizaid, I'm reading a quote from you, "The Afghans and Iraqis on this trip kept saying to me over and over again, 'Are you going to stick with us?' I kept telling them over and over again, 'Yes, we will. I ask the American people not to make a liar out of me.'"

That was a great statement. I've thought the cut-and-run caucus is alive and well here in Washington. I'd just like to have you make any comment you can make. If we should surrender, if we should cut-and-run at this time, what would be the result?

General ABIZAID. It would be a disaster for the region, it would be a disaster for the United States, it would be a disaster for the

people in the region. Senator Inhofe, I look at this region—I've been around this region most of my professional life—there are good things happening in the region that aren't measured by what soldiers do. People are debating the future of governments. People are participating in electoral sorts of organizations and activities that were unheard of years ago. People are standing up for their rights. People are coming forward and debating their future in a way that I've just never seen before. I don't believe any of that would have happened were it not for the American soldier, sailor, airman, and marine.

In the long run, there's nothing to be afraid of. We can win the fight. It's difficult. It's costly. But the implications of allowing the region to become dominated by the ideology of al Qaeda are the same as the implication, in the years previous to World War II, of allowing fascism to become the ideology of Germany. It will lead to a big war that none of us can stand.

We have to fight. We have to win. We can't walk away from this enemy. Nor can we walk away from the good people of the region. We're fighting their enemy side-by-side, and over time, more and more people will realize that.

It's easy to wring our hands and say, "Oh, woe is us." But those of us that are in the field don't say that. We say, "We're winning." But it's not going to be easy.

General MYERS. Senator Inhofe, if I may, just let me add a comment to that. If we were to lose in Iraq, whatever that means—pulling out, or whatever—that is a battle in this longer war that we've talked about, the war on terrorism. My view is that as soon as we pull out, that would embolden this al Qaeda organization, their violent extremist techniques, and that surely the next September 11 would be right around the corner. It would embolden them beyond belief if we were to cut-and-run, as some have said, and we can't afford to do that.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, General. By the way, let me associate myself with the remarks and the compliments about you, General Myers. Thank you so much for your service.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, General Abizaid and General Myers, for those very powerful statements.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. First, General Myers, let me too, compliment you on 40 years of honorable service to the Nation in the uniform of our country. That's something we all can agree upon, it's something to be very proud of. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Secretary, last September General Kern came before the committee and, in response to a question from Chairman Warner, indicated that the Inspector General of the Department of Defense and the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had taken upon the task, in his words, "of investigating the ghost-detainee policy." Can you give us an update on those investigations, when they are to conclude and when we might get the results?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I have no information about the CIA investigation. I certainly can get you an answer as to when the IG in the Department estimates that they'll complete it.

Senator REED. Thank you.
[The information referred to follows:]

UNCLASSIFIED

INFO MEMO

December 20, 2005, 12:30 P.M.

FOR: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

FROM: Daniel R. Stanley, Assistant Secretary of Defense
for Legislative Affairs, 697- 6210

SUBJECT: Snowflake Response -- Inspector General Reports on "Ghost Detainees," #093005-11 and # 100305-24 (Tabs A and B)

- Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) inquired about the status of reported CIA and DoD Inspector General investigations of "ghost detainee policy."
- Senator Reed's inquiry stems from the attached testimony of General Paul Kern, *et. al.,* on September 9, 2004 to the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on investigation into abuses at the Abu Ghraib theater internment facility. He states, "the Department of Defense Inspector General and the CIA Inspector General ..... have agreed that they will take on that task of investigating this *ghost detainee policy.*" (Tab C)
- To date, the DoD Inspector General has not undertaken an investigation on this matter, and none is planned. DoD IG is conducting a review of the major detainee investigations, and the "ghost detainee" issue is part of that review.
    - Regarding any CIA OIG investigations," the DoD OIG cannot attest to the work being done by the CIA OIG. Therefore, the Senator or his staff would need to pose any questions concerning CIA OIG completed, ongoing, and planned work to CIA.
- As stated in your memorandum of September 20, 2005, it is the policy of the Department of Defense to assign all detainees in its control an internment serial number as soon as possible, normally within 14 days of capture. The Department maintains full accountability for all DoD detainees.
- My staff contacted Senator Reed's office on December , 2005 and provided this information to the Senator's Military Legislative Assistant.

Attachments:
Snowflake #093005-11 (TAB A)
Snowflake #100305-24 (TAB B)
SASC September 9, 2004, Question from Senator Reed (TAB C)

COORDINATION: OGC, Detainee Affairs

Prepared by: Christian P. Marrone, Special Assistant, OASD (LA), 693-0305

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, one other thing. In response to Senator Kennedy's question, you—and I might have misheard you, but you seemed to imply that every police department is infiltrated by criminals?

Secretary RUMSFELD. No. I think what I said was, if you look around our country and other nations, and look at big-city police departments, they do have a problem of vetting to see that they are not infiltrated by criminals. We do know, from time-to-time, that there are scandals in police departments in major cities in the United States—certainly in my lifetime, I've seen it—where individuals did end up inside the police department. But I didn't make any blanket statements——

Senator REED. I just wanted to clarify that, Mr. Secretary.

General Abizaid, I agree with your analysis of the threat we face. It's a distributed network threat, entrepreneurial, ideologically driven, and committed, regardless of what we do in Iraq to attack us here in the United States again. The question you raised, I think, is the primary question before us, How does Iraq fit into that overall threat?

Many Americans today are suggesting it doesn't fit very well. That because of our presence there, because of the activities there, because of the events there, we are not winning the allegiance, support, and cooperation of allies. You have the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, who has said recently that he sees the country disintegrating, and that disintegration could lead to a regional conflict between Sunni and Shia. Just yesterday, Secretary Hughes was assailed by a Turkish women's rights activist about our policy in Iraq; the very good people that we would expect would be with us and be supportive. On the tactical level, evidence suggests that there are numerous recruits going to Iraq from other countries in order to fight us, to keep this insurgency going.

An issue that I find very troubling is that, in some respects, all of our activities there might be of marginal relevance to those other cells in other places, particularly Europe, who might be much more capable of mounting an attack against our homeland because of language skills and ability to move quickly through airports. I think the American's idea of a terrorist is someone dressed like an insurgent in Iraq, with—not someone with a British accent or a European accent.

So, the question is, how much does Iraq complement and help our strategy overall, which I agree with you, is a long-term battle?

General ABIZAID. I think, in the long-term strategy, Senator, we certainly have to stabilize Iraq. I believe we have to stabilize Iraq. We haven't made the terrorists that have come our way; al Qaeda has made the terrorists that have come our way. We didn't ask for this war; it was thrust upon us. The entire region plays in different ways in the overall battle. The most important thing is that Iraq stabilizes, Afghanistan stabilizes. I believe, when that happens, it starts to be the beginning of the end for the extremist movement.

Senator REED. But General, just in response, we did not ask to be attacked on September 11, but we certainly made a conscious decision to attack Iraq, on evidence which some people debate. Now many people—not just myself, but many others—are questioning whether that commitment of resource, commitment of effort, is really going to defeat this, overall, on a much more lethal threat, which you described very well, which is located in London, in Hamburg, in Manila, in Jakarta. We're engaged there. I agree with you,

we can't leave it unstable. But that might be just because of the fact we at least prompted the instability by our actions.

General ABIZAID. Senator, I don't know that I would say it's our actions at all. I'd say that the main theater of military activity is Iraq. The main effort is George Casey. We have to stabilize Iraq in order to fight the broader al Qaeda threat. The foreign-fighter network is not just focused on Iraq. It moves worldwide. It's global. The fact that it happens to manifest itself by a large number of suicide bombers in Iraq gives us an opportunity to attack it, gives us an opportunity to understand the network. This suicide bombing network that exists in Iraq exists in other places all around the world.

So, al Qaeda, as I said in my presentation Senator, is not the main enemy in Iraq; it is the most dangerous enemy in Iraq, and it feeds on the instability of Iraq. We have to stabilize Iraq in order to fight the broader enemy, and the broader enemy's going to be with us for a long time. But we can't walk away from al Qaeda. They won't let us.

Senator REED. My time is up.

Senator INHOFE [presiding]. Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Myers, let me begin my comments today by echoing the thanks of my colleagues for your extraordinary service. We very much appreciate your strong commitment to your country, and we wish you well.

General Casey, for the past year, this committee has received regular briefings on the status of the training of the Iraqi security forces. The training and equipping of those forces are a key part of our strategy, as you've outlined again today. It is, therefore, discouraging to hear today that there is only one Iraqi battalion that is fully capable. As Senator McCain has pointed out, that number is fewer than just a few months ago when we were briefed on the status of the training efforts. That contributes to a loss of public confidence in how the war is going and whether the strategy is the appropriate one and it's being executed properly, whether or not we're making progress. It doesn't feel like progress when we hear today that we have only one Iraqi battalion that is fully capable.

I have two questions for you. One, have we lost ground in the training of the Iraqi security forces? Two, how many fully trained Iraqi forces do we need in order for American troops to withdraw from the country without plunging it into chaos, an outcome that none of us wishes to see?

General CASEY. Thank you, Senator. I'm struggling here a little bit with this "fully capable," because when—and it may be something that we put on ourselves because of our military ethic. But when we say a unit is "fully capable," that means something to us. It means that they are capable of going out and conducting operations without any other support. That's a high standard, and we recognize that.

We also recognized that it was going to take the Iraqis—one, because of recruiting and training issues, but also because of ministerial support along the lines of what the Senators were talking about earlier, in terms of pay systems—that it was going to be a while before the institutions of Iraq could support a military. So,

we didn't want to wait until everybody was 100 percent fully capable. We adopted a strategy that says, "Give them the transition teams, get them to a level two, where they can lead, and get them into the lead with our transition teams and enablers." That's the one we're focused on and there's over 30 battalions already in that category.

So, I understand what you're saying, how it could be perceived as disappointing, but really, at level two and level three, all of those units are operating with us. In level two, they have the capability to lead.

So, have we lost ground? Absolutely not. In fact, as I mentioned in my opening statement, the transitions that we placed with the Iraqi security forces have enhanced what these organizations and these units have been able to do.

I will tell you, there's a lot of intangibles with unit readiness. For example, if a battalion commander gets dismissed and he goes off, that unit takes a couple of steps backwards, and then you have to rebuild that. So I mean, this is a constant battle and challenge, but the transition teams have given us the insight and the visibility into the real capabilities of these units. So we see it, warts and all. That's the only way we're going to get it fixed.

How many fully-trained Iraqis does it take before we can start drawing down coalition forces? As I mentioned to somebody else earlier, it—we are not tied to a specific number. This will take place regionally, as regional—as the forces within those regions reach appropriate levels. Then we will gradually start pulling coalition forces out. So, it's not: we have to get to some number and then we can start. We'll be able to start gradually, as these Iraqi security forces become capable of taking the lead, with our support.

Secretary RUMSFELD. If I might add, Senator Collins—if one thinks about it, out of 194,000 Iraqi security forces, the army is 75,000. There are any number of other elements included in that number that are able to do what they are designed to do. A police unit's able to do what it's designed to do. The border enforcement, the highway patrol, the special police commandos, dignitary protection, these people are out doing what it is they are trained and equipped to do. What we've done is to look at a grading system that we use here in the United States and try to determine for the Iraqi Army how they would fit. That's where you get that one unit.

On the other hand, if you think about it, we don't judge our other alliances that way. We have NATO activities that don't have the enablers that they need to operate independently, and we have to participate with them, with intelligence or with command and control or with airlift or special reconnaissance activities. If you think about it, our alliance with Korea is one where we're together, and a good deal of what they do, we do with them in assisting them.

So, it's not clear to me that this ability to operate independently is necessarily the determinative metric. It needs to vary for each of the various elements as to what we ought to set as a standard. I think reality is, these folks are not going to end up at a level of U.S. forces, period. There isn't a military in the Middle East that's anywhere near U.S. levels.

General MYERS. Senator, as a way to measure progress—and, George, help me on this—but I think we have 86 Iraqi army battal-

ions today that are operating with us. How many did we have a year ago, of those 86?

General CASEY. Probably no more than a handful, Chairman.

General MYERS. I think that bespeaks the progress as we move forward. Those are 86 battalions that are out there operating with our folks.

The people I've talked to, in my recent trip over there—talked to this great army major—sorry, captain——

Chairman WARNER [presiding]. General, I regret to——

General MYERS. Okay.

Chairman WARNER.—say that we—I've been informed by our respective leadership that we're asked to take our seats for a very important vote of the Senate. So, we will now stand in recess, but before I do so, until the hour of 12:15—Secretary Rumsfeld, I had a very interesting telephone call last night from a Paul Steiger, managing editor of the Wall Street Journal. He represents, in his capacity, a large group of people. They're experiencing—he was speaking on behalf of the entire media, which is his responsibility in his group—that they're encountering some difficulties. I'm going to leave with you, as I depart now, the copies of the correspondence that I have received from him, which I understand has also been forwarded to your office. Perhaps when we resume, you might have some comment on that. I think it will require a period of time for you to fully assess the problem that he described, and in all probability, to put in place such corrective measures as you desire.

So, I'll leave that with you, in hopes that maybe you can make some brief comment when we return.

We stand in recess until 12:15. [Recess.]

Chairman WARNER. The hearing will resume.

Mr. Secretary, as we concluded, I gave you correspondence—which has been forwarded to your office, but through other channels—from various individuals who have responsibility regarding the press that are, I think, serving the interests of our country as well as they can under difficult circumstances. My understanding is that you'll take this under consideration. Perhaps General Casey, who has the action responsibility, has a comment or two. Am I correct in that?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Yes, indeed, thank you.

General CASEY. Senator, I haven't had a chance to go through the whole letter, but I understand the issue. It's an issue that we take very seriously. What I will do when I get back to Baghdad is, I'll get a few of the local journalists together and work through some of their concerns with them. I'll also take a look at this letter here and get some responses back.

[The information referred to follows:]

My impression is Multi-National Force-Iraq's practice of holding periodic forums between coalition public affairs personnel and western media representatives is an effective tool. Representatives gather, voice concerns and, where possible, we endeavor to resolve issues. We meet quarterly in Baghdad with western media bureau chiefs. Reuters, along with other major news organizations, participates in these meetings. These meetings provide Multi-National Force-Iraq and the media an effective forum for sharing information and addressing issues and concerns and strengthening the relationships between the media and Multi-National Force-Iraq. My staff and subordinate commanders are sensitive to the significance of journalist detentions and continue to explore additional methods and processes for tracking the status of detained journalists.

Chairman WARNER. Yes. If I might suggest, I would, on behalf of CENTCOM—because it relates, I'm sure, to the journalists in Afghanistan, as well—make a direct communication with the two principals that have forwarded the letters to myself, other Members of Congress, and to the Secretary of Defense, as well as convening, in country, a representative group to try and get their views. Then once we gather the facts, I'm sure we can hopefully address this matter.

Now, I also suggested during the interim that it was my concern that listening very carefully to testimony this morning, we need to have a clarifying and condensed set of facts to give the American public—and, indeed Congress—a more exact status of our efforts, together with coalition partners, NATO, and others, to train the Iraqi security forces. I think you're prepared to give that, General Casey?

General CASEY. Thank you for the opportunity, Senator, because I don't think I did Senator Collins' question justice in trying to explain the way we rate these forces. I would not want people to think, because, in the first category, we've gone from three to one, that we're actually taking a step backwards with the Iraqi security forces, because that's just not the case.

A couple of points:

First of all, this "fully capable." I mentioned in my testimony that one of the driving forces behind all of the strategy is that we need the Iraqis to be able to sustain the capability that they have as we progressively draw down and after we're gone. So, we wanted to set a very high standard, and that became category one.

Now, we recognize that it was a standard that they were not going to achieve for some time. That's why we focused on the second level, and that's the level where they take the lead and we put them in charge.

I'll give you an example of the capabilities of those units that are in that second category. Just recently, the 3rd Iraqi Infantry Division conducted a three-brigade operation into the town of Tal Afar with coalition forces. I mentioned in my testimony that that was the first major operation which the Iraqi security forces outnumbered the coalition forces. All those brigades and all the battalions in those brigades were level-two/level-three, yet they fought with us into a major urban area, into an urban defense, and conducted the toughest type of ground combat very successfully. You'll recall, about 500 insurgents and terrorists killed or captured as a result of that whole operation.

So that's the kind of capabilities these units that are categorized as level-two and level-three have, because they're able to do it with our enabling support. If they had been able to do it all by themselves, without any of our support, they would have been in level-one, and that's some time in coming.

So, I don't know if that gives it a little bit more granularity, but as I mentioned, we are making great progress.

Chairman WARNER. Yes. Bottom line, you are making progress, and the progress can be documented, and you see it every day with the performance, which is, every day increasing in the professional capabilities of these forces.

General CASEY. Thank you, Senator. I couldn't have said it better.

Chairman WARNER. Well, I thank you very much.

Senator Ben Nelson, you——

Senator LEVIN. If Senator Nelson would just yield for 1 minute—just for 30 seconds.

Senator BEN NELSON. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LEVIN. It would be helpful to your point if you gave us how many level-two there were 4 months ago or a year ago, and how many there are now, how many level-three a year ago, how many there are now.

General CASEY. Yes.

Senator LEVIN. Talk about granularity, it would help the point you're making, and I think you should just do it very clearly. But I'd just suggest that to you, and I don't want to take any more of Senator Nelson's time.

General CASEY. I'm sorry, if I could just respond to that? We didn't start this until May.

Senator LEVIN. Fine, give us May and now.

General CASEY. Okay. May was just a trial, too, so—I got it.

Chairman WARNER. All right.

Senator LEVIN. Excuse me.

Chairman WARNER. The Chairman has indicated that you wish to address——

General MYERS. If I could tag onto General Casey's point for just a minute, some of the things that we measure, I think, are interesting. The task forces that conduct raids in Baghdad, 26 percent of those are either Iraqi-led or Iraqi-only. So, over a quarter of the major activities take place in Baghdad are Iraqi-only or Iraqi-led. Just 3 or 4 months ago, George, that was probably zero.

Task Force Baghdad Combat Patrols—this is the last week of July, basically—43 percent of the combat patrols in Baghdad are Iraqi-only or Iraqi-led. Forty-three percent.

Task Force Baghdad Checkpoints, in the last week of July—it's 22 to 28 July, actually—Iraqi-only/Iraqi-led, 72 percent. Seventy-two percent of the Task Force Baghdad Checkpoints, 72 percent, are Iraqi-only/Iraqi-led.

If you go to multinational operations in North Central, we can compare the period 3-to-9 June to 2-to-8 September. In June, Iraqi-only/Iraqi-led checkpoint operations in North Central Iraq, 77 percent to 92 percent in September.

So, everything you measure, the Iraqis are more and more involved, and those aren't just, obviously, the level-one battalion; those are all Iraqis in the fight.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator Ben Nelson?

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me extend my appreciation to General Myers for your outstanding service and best wishes for a long and happy future.

As we look back, our mission in going to Iraq was to remove Saddam and, ultimately, democratize, through the workings with the Iraqi forces and people, the country of Iraq. Now, we've removed Saddam from power, and historic elections have been held to elect the National Assembly and Prime Minister, and, of course, a con-

stitution has been approved by the Assembly. Hopefully, the Iraqi people will vote it up or—well, vote it up, but we'll soon know whether they're going to vote it up or down.

So, really what we're working at, it seems to me, is helping the Iraqi people do two things—one is govern themselves; and, two, defend themselves, because if they can't defend themselves, it's going to be very difficult—mostly likely impossible—to govern themselves.

We have measurable benchmarks and events that work toward self-governance. One of the frustrations that I keep picking up from people when I'm talking to them back home is, we don't have similar measurable guideposts or measurable results to be able to determine what is happening. So, you have some people saying we're winning the war and others saying we're losing the war, when the truth of the matter is, we need to find out what kind of progress we're making. Many of the questions today were based on trying to determine progress. I don't think there's anybody that's going to raise question about whether or not we're making progress, but there probably will be some questions about: How much progress do we need to make and—maybe, Have we made?—and, more important, maybe, How much progress do we need to make, to be able to satisfy both self-governance and self-defense?

Now, I understand the importance of capability and readiness of the Iraqi forces to be able to do what is necessary to defend themselves. I understand condition-based reductions.

My first question is, what are our goals to achieve—to train, equip, and I suspect, get experience for sufficient troops to be able to defend themselves in Iraq?

General CASEY. As I mentioned earlier in this, Senator, we have said that we were going to train and equip a total number of around 350,000 Iraqi security forces. That process will go on for some time, and particularly because the police training is a 10-week program——

Senator BEN NELSON. It's obviously important to have the entire security forces in place, because of other things, but what kind of numbers do we look at or what percentage have we achieved with Iraqi forces, equivalent of Special Operations Forces, capable and ready to fight the insurgency to a standstill and defeat it?

General CASEY. There are 10 Iraqi divisions, and they have been placed around Iraq and partnered with coalition divisions. The Iraqis have placed two divisions in the most—each—in the most difficult areas.

Senator BEN NELSON. Are these part of the level-one force?

General CASEY. They are a part of the force that is progressing from level-three to level-two to level-one, and will progress there over time.

But we don't need to have that whole force at level-one, or even that whole force at level-two, before we can begin considering coalition reductions, because regionally, there will be units that achieve capability faster than other units. We're not waiting to get all 10 of these divisions all across Iraq level-two before we start drawing down forces. We'll actually start drawing them down by smaller-sized units as Iraqi brigades take over places around Iraq.

Senator BEN NELSON. Do we know, in our own minds—and this is probably something that needs to be handled in a secure setting—what the number is that is really going to be required of those 10 units to be able to defeat the insurgency? We talk about it in 10 years, so is the variable 10 years? Can we defeat them faster if we have more? Are we faced with 10 if we have less? Or how does this equation work?

General CASEY. Last year—or, actually, around this time—we went through a very thorough analysis of what security forces the Iraqis needed, and—both on the military side and on the police side—and that is the force we are building to now.

I just instructed General Dempsey, who just replaced General Petraeus now, that I thought it was time to conduct a similar review to go back and look at what we have programmed, where we are, and decide if those forces are in fact, still the forces that we need to do what you say, to be able to defeat this insurgency over the long haul. We will continue to assess and evaluate this as we go forward.

Senator BEN NELSON. The American people understand the checkpoints for self-governance. Is it possible to put together, whether we're 20 percent capable at the present time, 30 percent—in 6 months, will we be at 50 percent capability and readiness to defeat—"they" with our embedded help—when I say "we," I'm talking about Iraq and our embedded help—will we be at a point, in 6 months, at 50 percent capability, to defeat the insurgency?

General CASEY. As has been suggested here, from a military—in a police capability, we're not going to defeat the insurgency. Then, as you mentioned, the political side also has benchmarks and milestones.

So, it's really the interaction of all of the different elements—political, economic, military—that has to come together over the next period of months and years if we're going to ultimately defeat this insurgency.

Senator BEN NELSON. But most of the people want to know whether it's months or years. I'm not trying to pin you down in an unfair way, but I hear this constantly about those who are trying to push for a timetable. I'm less interested in pushing for a timetable than I am in knowing what percentages we are at the level of reaching our ultimate goal. That is also a factor that's variable for time, as well—as you say, for the political capabilities, as well as military capabilities, and perhaps as well as governing capabilities. I understand it's all tied together.

General CASEY. Right, and your question's a fair one. We have now good visibility on the military units. We also are starting to get better visibility on the ministries, because those are the institutions that provide the logistical and the pay and all the other support that these military units and police units need, to exist.

Now—and it's all—again, the military and police side of this is all interrelated, as well. I do not have an overall metric that ties all that together and say, okay, we're 60 percent there, in terms of security capability toward our broad objective.

Senator BEN NELSON. But don't you think the——

Secretary RUMSFELD. May I make a comment?

Senator BEN NELSON. Sure.

Secretary RUMSFELD. First of all, I think you mentioned 10 years——

Senator BEN NELSON. Well, I—9 years.

Secretary RUMSFELD.—for an insurgency, and I would like to make sure that everyone understands——

Senator BEN NELSON. Yes.

Secretary RUMSFELD.—that that is not General Casey's prediction.

Senator BEN NELSON. I understand.

Secretary RUMSFELD. That's the average length——

Senator BEN NELSON. I understand.

Secretary RUMSFELD.—of insurgencies. Insurgencies ultimately are defeated by the indigenous people in that country, not by outside forces, because outside forces can, in fact, contribute to the growth of an insurgency if they are seen as an occupation force.

With respect to your question, the answer is, it seems to me, in two parts. First, the political and the economic and the security all have to go forward together. To the extent there's a failure on the economic or the political side, it makes the security situation in an insurgency environment more difficult. Now, that means that there isn't an answer to your question, where you could say 10 percent, 20 percent, or 30 percent, I don't believe.

Second, we've looked at the things that are easy to count—numbers of divisions, readiness levels, and the like. The reality is that the soft stuff that you can't count is every bit as, and possibly even more, important than the hard stuff. What do I mean by the "soft stuff"? The relationship between the police and the military, the relationship between those entities and the Intelligence Community, the noncommissioned officers and the ribcage of a military or a police organization, the strength of the ministry and the effectiveness of the chain of command, the turbulence in the ministry. All of those things are going to either favorably or unfavorably affect the progress on the security side, and it seems to me that——

I'm going to give you one example. Let's say that we have an election—the constitution passes, which I believe it will, and there's an election December 15, and a new government comes in. Let's say it takes 30 days to form the new government. There's a new Minister of Defense, and he's effective, and he decides not to change everything for the sake of change, and he immediately takes advantage of the outside assistance and forms an effective ministry. That's one scenario.

The other is, the election takes place, there isn't a new government in 1 month; it takes 4 months or 5 months to form the new government. The Minister comes in, and he decides he's going to swing the wheel this way or that way and change everybody, and there's turbulence.

Now, all of that's going to affect the effectiveness of the security forces every bit as much as the numbers.

Senator BEN NELSON. Would that be part of the equation that you're working on for condition-based reduction?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Exactly.

Senator BEN NELSON. So, it's pretty hard to decide whether you're going to do anything in the next 6 months, isn't it, if you don't know all these variables?

Secretary RUMSFELD. You can't know the variables. You can't know how—what Syria's behavior's going to be. Are they going to be helpful or harmful? You can't know what Iran's going to be doing. Are they going to be helpful or harmful? That's why you have to use the phrase "condition-based." It is not possible to look out there.

But the progress that's being made politically is real. They did draft a constitution, they are going to vote on it, there is going to be an election. That's good stuff. That's historic. By the same token, the progress on the security forces—every single week that goes by, the numbers of security forces go up. Total. Even if we were to come down, even if the coalition were to go down, because of the growth in the Iraqi security forces, the total forces are going up. That's a good thing. We believe that, over this period of time, there will be opportunities to transfer, as the General says, pieces of responsibility, pieces of real estate, over to Iraqi security forces and that's a good thing.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Rumsfeld, I think that was a honest and direct answer to our questions. It's just a difficult thing to build from scratch a military and police force capable of operating on its own.

General Myers, it's an honor to have served with you, in a way, to think that you've testified before 64 committee hearings is a stunning and ominous thought, really. You have done so and won the constant respect and admiration of the Members of Congress. None of them have ever doubted your integrity, your commitment to our men and women in uniform, your commitment to victory, and your willingness to take any effort possible. You've been honest with us time and time again. If that had not been so, you would have felt the sting in complaint. You've not felt it. It's a remarkable achievement. Your 40 years of service is something you can take pride in, and all Americans do.

General MYERS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator SESSIONS. General Abizaid, you gave us a great briefing yesterday, that was a closed briefing, and a part of that—and some of the same things you've said today. I thought it was comprehensive. I thought it was wise. I thought it was good advice for America. No less than Ted Stevens, who's the President pro tempore of the Senate, who chairs the Defense Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and who's been a champion of defense, said it was an extraordinary briefing, one of the best he'd heard in years. I felt the same way.

So, I was a bit taken aback when the assistant Democratic leader came out of the meeting—I'm not sure he stayed to the end—and said no plan had been presented. I think you felt you gave a plan. I did. Perhaps I won't ask you to comment on that. But that's the way I felt about it.

As with regard to the American people and our concern over the progress, the American people want to see progress. There have been ups and downs, we'll always have. But I have no doubt that

they are committed to seeing this through. There's no movement out there to abandon our soldiers, and what I hear from families who have lost loved ones is that they want us to succeed and to affirm the sacrifice their family members made.

General Myers, let me start off with you. If others would like to comment on this, I'd like to pursue it with some interest. That is the military's role. Many of the questions that have been given to you today have dealt with infrastructure, they have dealt with political issues, they have dealt with relations with foreign countries, they have dealt with electricity and water and sewage, and the mood of the people in Iraq, and communications to the people in Iraq. We have a lot of questions about that, and in the Armed Services Committee, it's you, in uniform, that are here answering all those questions. But isn't it a fact that the political process, the economic program, the education and health program, the infrastructure, electric and water, dealing with matters like corruption and political efficiency, that is not the Defense Department—Defense Department is not the lead agency for that, but it is now the State Department?

General MYERS. Senator Sessions, you make a very good point. Insurgencies we've talked about aren't defeated just militarily. There's always a political component, an economic component, educational opportunities, an information component, both internally and externally. What we've tried to do is harness all instruments of our national power, and all the instruments of national power for our international friends and partners in this—is to bring those instruments of national power, of which the military is just one, to bear on the problem.

I think that our military has done a terrific job, being first on the ground, to fill a lot of those roles. We had 21-year-old soldiers advising town councils on how to organize, relying on their high school civics lessons, of course, and their own good common sense and judgment. But that has to transition at some point to where we have seasoned individuals that are steeped in these kind of matters to be mentoring the Iraqi folks, and that is certainly not the role—not the sole role of the Department of Defense. Most of those areas you mentioned are the responsibilities of other departments and agencies in this government, to include the State Department, as you said.

Senator SESSIONS. You might advise in that, and you may even support them, but as the decisionmaking authority and responsibility would be those agencies and not the Department of Defense that's responsible.

General MYERS. That's correct. As we do with our troops that are in Iraq, and as we've done with our commander in Iraq, General Casey is going to serve, as far as we know now, about 2 years in Iraq. Our troops serve about a year. We need other departments and agencies to put their people over there with that same dedication and that same commitment of time to do the sort of work they need to do to finish the job.

Senator SESSIONS. I think we have to make sure that State—we all—we've been asking, "Is the military adequately prepared, staff committed, got an adequate program?" We also need to be asking whether the other agencies of government are—who, in recent

months, assumed primary responsibility for these ideas, whether they're making adequate progress.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator, I agree with you. It seems to me, Mr. Secretary, that's been brought up by, first, General Abizaid, in his opening comments, now General Myers, the fact that the military is doing its job, but we need greater support from other departments and agencies of the Federal Government. Do you have a comment on how we can bring to bear—what could the Congress do to help you?

Secretary RUMSFELD. It is a fact. Another fact is that the United States Government, in the domestic areas, is not organized, trained, and equipped to do those things. We're not structured in a way that they can readily deploy people of certain competence levels, the way the Department of Defense can. It is a reality that, to the extent our country's going to be called upon to be engaged in these types of things, that we do need to look at roles and missions in the executive branch of the Federal Government, and the mirrored relationship in Congress. I mentioned one of the things earlier today, and that's the authority to help train and equip other countries. To the extent we can build partnership capacity in other countries, we relieve ourselves of that burden. To the extent we can do things like getting coalition countries to help us, we relieve ourselves of that burden.

The NATO train-and-equip in Iraq is a perfect example, where we are getting—all of the NATO countries are, in one way or another, now assisting in Iraq. So, too, in Afghanistan, where the NATO has taken over the north, it's now taken over the west, it's going to be taking over the southern sector of Afghanistan, as well as the original Kabul ISAF activity, and that's good progress. It's important that—as General Myers says—we recognize.

I'll just make a comment about Afghanistan. The bond process produced an arrangement whereby lead countries would take responsibilities for certain things. The British took responsibility for the drug problem in Afghanistan. The Italians, as I recall, took the civil justice system and the criminal justice system. The Germans took the border patrol and various things. The reality is that the progress in those areas in Afghanistan has been slow, because it's hard stuff. It isn't easy to do. Those countries don't have a background in developing that kind of competence. They're used to functioning in dictatorships.

So, partly it's just because it's hard stuff, partly because it's—the other countries and other elements of our government haven't fully arranged themselves to do as good a job as might be necessary.

Chairman WARNER. Let's just take a minute on our government. We have to put that as the highest priority, because we are, daily, taking casualties. To the extent that infrastructure is not being brought together contributes to that casualty rate.

Secretary RUMSFELD. The executive branch has created a new entity inside the Department of State on—what's it called?—Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization—they have selected a new individual to assist in that—Ambassador Pascual, as I recall, who is a very capable person. The Department is focusing on that. The Department of State also has assigned Karen Hughes to be involved.

Chairman WARNER. All right.

Secretary RUMSFELD. So, there are steps being taken.

Chairman WARNER. All right. Thank you.

General Abizaid, do you——

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman, if I could just add something to this.

I want to make sure we make it clear here that we don't regard the other agencies of the U.S. Government as not doing their jobs. We want to make clear to everybody that we need them with us out in the field, because they add so much, especially in the counterinsurgency environment. A young State Department officer that can work the politics in an Afghan province is worth a battalion. A USAID person that can help move a road project forward is worth a company. It's just so important for us to understand that it's these young people that can come forward, stay with us long enough to learn the area—I believe there's absolutely no shortage of volunteers, but we need to make sure the priorities are right—in the field, not in Washington.

Chairman WARNER. All right. I'll address this further, because I witnessed a superb job being done, on my last trip, by the State Department people that are implanted with our forces.

Senator Dayton, you're next.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Myers, I want to join with my colleagues in thanking you for your extraordinary service to our country.

General Abizaid, you define the war in Iraq as a war against al Qaeda. If so, I think you're describing the failure of U.S. policy there, which is not a military failure at all, but it's a failure caused by strategic miscalculations by policymakers and the operational disasters that have plagued the last 2½ years. Whether they were avoidable or not, I guess hindsight will see. But Iraq was not a haven for al Qaeda before the U.S. invasion. Iraq was not, as it's been called, the front line of the international war against terrorism before the war began.

I agree you, what you've all said, that we are there, and that we must be successful. I think, as you've defined it, I would read "success" as when the Iraqis can prevail there, so that we don't have to. I don't question the absence of a plan, but I think what people are asking here today the progress, or lack thereof, toward the goal, and what the anticipated timetable is.

It's been now, almost, I believe, 2 years since the training of the Iraqi forces has begun—began in earnest. General Petraeus and others undertaking that, extremely well-qualified U.S. leaders in that regard. As I talked to Minnesotans, particularly those whose husbands and wives and fathers and mothers are serving over there, they keep asking, "Why is it that we have to—their loved ones—why do we have to keep doing what the Iraqis seemingly can't, or won't, do for themselves?"

I'd like to read just a brief excerpt from the recent Time magazine—describes the situation recently—September 6 in Tal Afar—and just ask you your response. It said, "The 2-day grace for civilians to evacuate stretches to a 4-day standstill as the Iraqi Prime Minister orders a tactical pause. He insists on assurances from his military commanders that the battle will be a decisive success. The

wait leaves U.S. troops embittered, their momentum lost to what they see as political calculations." "This is turning into a goat blank," bemoans angry Green Beret. "By the time the Prime Minister approves the assault into al Qaeda's heartland, it fizzles. Not a hostile shot is fired, not a single enemy fighter is found. Safehouses and weapons caches are empty, cleansed like an operating room."

It sounds to me, if that's an accurate portrayal of—description by somebody who was onsite, that this is—as Senator Levin said, an indication of a government or a military—Iraqi military command that believes they have all the time in the world and that we're going to be there with them, or for them, for as long as the 9 years, or whatever it's going to be.

I guess I echo what others have said, but the absence of their demonstrated willingness or ability, or combination of the two, to stand up and take responsibility for their own country against insurgents from within their own country, or outside the country—but I gather, the insurgent force—the military insurgent is primarily in—from within the country—I mean, at what point are they going to be responsible? Why won't—if they won't take responsibility after 2 years of training, how do we believe that they will in the next 6 months, 12 months, or whenever?

General CASEY. Let me take that, Senator.

First of all, I haven't read that article, but what you read is not an accurate portrayal of the Prime Minister's role in the sequence of operations in Tal Afar. I was personally involved with that.

Senator DAYTON. I've known the media to be wrong, myself.

General CASEY. Right. But that was not the case.

Senator DAYTON. Okay.

General CASEY. In fact, the government was working quite closely with us to set the conditions that made the military success there possible. They sent a team up to Tal Afar and negotiated with the sheikhs, got all the sheikhs from the different tribes together, and got them to invite the military force in. That was a huge plus for our soldiers. They put in place emergency measures—curfews, vehicle bans, closed the border, put an exclusion zone on the border, again—to make the job easier for our troops. They pulled together a $50 million reconstruction package and compensation package for Tal Afar. Those were some of the conditions that were being set as we went between the 6th and the 10th of September. So the Prime Minister wasn't pulling the string on that, but they were actively helping us.

On your question of, "Why do we have to keep doing things for the Iraqis?"—and, as I mentioned in my opening statement, we recognize that we need to empower the Iraqis and to get them in the lead as soon as they are capable. They want that. The leaders want it. The Iraqi people want it. It's a matter of us assisting them with their training and equipping and making them better faster. They're embracing that. We are making progress on that, and we're really at a different level now than we were 2 years ago.

Senator DAYTON. General, how long does basic training for basic American soldier take?

General CASEY. I think it's about 9 weeks, and then advanced training after that is added on.

Senator DAYTON. So, again, I just—I cannot understand how almost 2 years now after we've begun the training—and I don't question the capability of General Petraeus and others who have led the training—but almost 2 years later, we don't have Iraqis that are trained to do what I guess our soldiers are trained to do after 9 weeks, or whatever advanced training thereafter.

General CASEY. It's—basic training, they've done, and they are—most of the Iraqi soldiers that have been through the basic training are—not as capable as ours, certainly, but they can do basic tasks. But it's taking those soldiers, putting them in units, training them as units at progressively higher levels. Until Iraqi commanders at the colonel and general-officer level can direct and plan Iraqi forces in conducting Iraqi operations, they're not going to be able to take over, and that's the whole strategy.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RUMSFELD. May I make a brief comment?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I'd like to make a comment, if I may. It has to do with the Iraqis. You ought to read David McCullough's book, "1776," about the——

Senator DAYTON. I've read it.

General ABIZAID. —the birth of our own Army. It's amazing.

You ought to consider, in most of the 33 years I've been serving in the United States Army, we've struggled to make ourselves better. We just do that all the time. So, I have great respect for the Iraqis and what they're trying to do. Sometimes we give the impression that they're not organized, they're not trained, they're infiltrated. More Iraqis have died fighting for Iraq against this insurgency than have Americans, and that deserves our respect and thanks. We're fighting with them, not against them. It's just, time and time again, that we have to understand that this war in the Middle East is as much about respect for the people that are fighting with us as it is anything else.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator Graham?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Mr. Chairman, may I make a quick comment on that?

Chairman WARNER. Yes, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary RUMSFELD. This is an important subject.

First of all, just historically, we ought to refresh ourselves that Zarqawi was already in Iraq before the war ever started. Zarqawi was running terrorists out of Iraq in several countries before the war ever started. Saddam Hussein was listed as a terrorist state before the war ever started. Saddam Hussein was giving $25,000 to the families of suicide bombers before the war ever started.

With respect to the Iraqis taking hold, General Abizaid's right, the Iraqi security forces have lost more people than the coalition have since a year ago September. They've lost twice as many. The people who are running for office are threatened. Their lives are threatened. The people who are voting, their lives are threatened by the people who are trying to prevent democracy from occurring in that country. There is a lot of Iraqi courage that's being demonstrated in that country every day.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. I think it's helpful that we get the full picture on this very important issue.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you. You just stole my first question. My first question was going to be to say that I think the casualty figures for us is 1,922. That may be wrong, but it's over 1,900. Is that correct?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I was using the killed-in-action. Ours are currently 1,475, I believe. The Iraqis have had roughly double since—I think it's a year ago September.

Senator GRAHAM. That was the point I was going to make. If there's a reason to be optimistic in all of this, I think the reason to be optimistic is, this is the only place in the Mid-East, or anywhere in the world I know, where people are taking up arms against the Zarqawis of the world.

Mr. Secretary, I would suggest to you, you give us a complete number if you can later on. How many Iraqis have died fighting the insurgency? How many Iraqis have been killed trying to run for office? How many Iraqis have been killed joining the army? I think the numbers are large, and it gives me a sense of optimism because, at the end of the day, all you can ask of anyone is to be willing to fight and die for your freedom. So, I think that's the most optimistic thing that's available to us, something for us all to hang onto is that the Iraqis whatever problems they have, they are still fighting and dying for their own freedom, and it makes me proud to be their partner.

Now we need to know a number because I think the American people need to know a number too.

But the one thing I've found about this hearing, the tone has changed as there's certainly a political component of whether we should have went into Iraq to begin with, and it's being replaced with some pretty good questions on both sides of the aisle.

You mentioned trust, General Myers, about the officers serving with you on the panel and the people in the field. It's not a question of trust, but I think we're in a position now of "trust, but verify." Because I've heard things from panels before. I'm no military expert. I'm a military lawyer, so I certainly know my limitations. But I do have common sense, General Casey, and you said the last time we were here the insurgency was one-tenth of 1 percent. I was amazed at how you could pick a number so accurately. I was skeptical if anybody really knows the number of insurgents over there to the point that it's one-tenth of 1 percent. When you say that, it bothers me. Do you still believe that?

General CASEY. Senator, what I said was, "Even by our most pessimistic estimates of the insurgency, we estimate it to be less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the overall population of Iraq." I think that's still about right.

Senator GRAHAM. My comment to you is that you have no way of knowing, and no one does. I don't have any confidence in that number. I know you're on the ground. I know you're risking your life. But the point we've learned about Iraq is that it's fluid and it changes. Getting your hands on this is very difficult. The insurgency changes. Its makeup is changed to where the foreign fighters are now the biggest threat. The Sunnis are beginning to join. So I'd just caution you, just—okay to say we don't know how many,

but we're going to go after all the ones we can find. There are a lot of Iraqis who are fighting them in addition to us.

Zarqawi has lasted a long time in Iraq—who said he was there before—was that you, Mr. Secretary? He was there before, but he survived a long time. Common sense tells me there must be a support network over there, fairly sophisticated, for this guy to have survived this long, and that's just common sense.

My question, fairly simply put: In hindsight, looking back, has there ever been a point in time, to anyone in this panel, where it was clear looking backward, that we did not have enough troops to secure the country?

General MYERS. I guess I'll start. It's been clear to me from the beginning—from the beginning—that we've had the right number of troops, given the balance that we're trying to balance, given the balance between being occupiers—seen as occupiers or seen as liberators. It's a tough balance.

Now, things have changed. So, in hindsight—I don't know in hindsight that I would change my opinion. There are some things we'd do different in hindsight, there is no question, but I don't think it has to do with the number of troops.

Senator GRAHAM. I don't mean to cut you off, but I've only have 5 minutes.

General MYERS. Okay.

Senator GRAHAM. I would suggest that one of the lessons of Abu Ghraib is that we had an ill-prepared force for the mission assigned to them, that the people in that prison weren't really well trained to run a prison. They were overwhelmed, because in August you had 600 prisoners, by October you had 6,000 prisoners, and it's clear to me that the people at Abu Ghraib weren't equipped and trained to handle the mission, and they got overwhelmed. That would be an example. It was clear to me that the looting was rampant right after the fall of Baghdad.

I'm not blaming you. I'll take blame. I thought it would be a lot easier than it has been. I thought the Iraqi people would step up to the plate. I missed it a mile. If you want somebody to blame, I went home and said, once the statue fell, "Good times are ahead." I misunderstood.

The point I'm trying to make, it's clear to me there have been times in the past where we didn't have enough troops. If you don't see that, that bothers me and please, anyone else, join in in answering.

General CASEY. I'd just note, Senator Graham, that the—on two occasions—last year's elections and this year's elections—I didn't have enough troops to do what I needed to do, and I asked for more, and I received them.

If I could go back to your original comment, Senator, my comment on the one-tenth of 1 percent was more a comment about the 99.9 percent of the Iraqi population that wants something better, rather than a comment on the size of the insurgency, which we all know is very difficult to calibrate.

General MYERS. It is difficult to calculate, even though we've been pressed, right here in this hearing room, by the way. I've been pressed, personally been talked to very strongly, "Give us the number. Give the American people the number." As you've just stated,

Senator Graham, when you're dealing with an insurgency, you can't come up with a number. I think we've done exactly the right thing there. I think the way General Casey puts it is about right. I mean, we do have ideas and numbers, but in insurgencies, you always have people that on one day, are insurgents; on the next day, are businesspeople, and depending on how the political process is going and their economic fortunes are going, will have different views.

Whether or not we had the right training and the right number of folks in Abu Ghraib is one issue. Whether or not, in the broader sense, which I thought you were talking about, that we had the right number of troops, generally in Iraq, is another issue. I'll stand by the commanders' requests for those troops. Of course, right after major combat there were proposals to go way down in troop strength, and it was others that prevailed and said no, we should not do that. We've made adjustments from the day major combat was over, and we had the flexibility to do that, because we brought the 4th Infantry Division (ID) in after major combat for the very purpose of trying to work through the stability and reconstruction that would follow.

So, I think we've called our audibles. I agree that the folks at Abu Ghraib obviously could have been better trained, and perhaps they needed more. Now, it turns out there are resources in country that could have been redistributed, but unfortunately, commanders on the ground that were involved in Abu Ghraib, and responsible for it, didn't make those requests.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

General ABIZAID. Senator, if I could say a word or two.

Chairman WARNER. Go ahead.

General ABIZAID. Obviously there's a certain amount of frustration where we're obviously not getting through. At one point, I think it was in—during the presidential election period, we were very close to 200,000 U.S. troops in Iraq, which was more than we had at any time during the ground campaign, by a substantial amount. So our numbers have gone up, and they've gone down, and they have responded to what we think we need. But at the same time, we've always been mindful of saying, "Look, you Iraqis need to understand that you have to step up to the plate." So, there's a tension and there's an art in all of this that's difficult.

But I would like to say something. I don't believe that we're fools. We have made mistakes. Abu Ghraib was a huge mistake that we've tried to recover from in a lot of different ways. We made probably a clear mistake in the way that we originally resourced our headquarters right after the movement phase of the ground war, and we corrected that. As I look out now, I'll take responsibility for that. There are a lot of mistakes in war. The key is whether or not you can learn from your mistakes. I think in balance, we've done pretty damn good.

Senator GRAHAM. See, that's the ultimate question. Mr. Chairman, I don't mean to belabor this. Because there's some of us who believe that a larger military footprint, particularly in the support area, would have advanced the cause quicker. When you see a city cleaned up with a major military action, to be reoccupied, whether it's a lack of Iraqi troops or American troops, that dynamic needs

to stop. So, we've seen several instances of where the insurgencies have been defeated by Iraqi and American troops fighting very bravely, only to reappear in the same areas and that confuses us.

General ABIZAID. But Senator, if I may, there is no straight line in counterinsurgency business. There's an awful lot of learning that has to go on. For example, you take the first battle of Fallujah—obviously, if you had just taken away the military component and isolated it and said, "Do this," and then not added into it the governance component, you might have had a different conclusion, but you might have, overall, destroyed your ability to accomplish the mission in the long term.

Getting back to Senator Nelson's point, this issue of governance and military indigenous forces being built together in a synchronized fashion, it's the key to success. But there are so many outside influences that move around it and flurry around it, that make it difficult for commanders on the ground to sense, the most important sensing is whether or not the Iraqis are willing to fight for their own country. So far, General Casey and I can say to you and to our Secretary, yes, they are. The day they're not, by the way, we'll come forward and we'll tell you. But give them a chance.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Before we proceed—Mr. Secretary, you quite accurately reported that the total number of deaths associated with combat-related activities is around 1,450. But when you add those that have lost their lives in a noncombatant, nonrelated status, it's about 1,922. That's the figure that so often is reported, and I want those following this hearing to be able to reconcile the two different figures.

I think it's always imperative, when we talk about our casualties of the wounded, and that is over 12,000 who have suffered, in one degree or another, the combat wounds.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Just for the record, you're quite right. I said killed in action, and there have been an additional 450 to 500 that have been killed in noncombat environment. The wounded—the actual killed-in-action thus far is 1,480, and—I don't know what the date of this is, but the U.S. wounded is roughly in the 14,700——

Chairman WARNER. I think it's very important that we——

General MYERS. Another important number there, Mr. Chairman, is that of the wounded, of which we see many of them back here in the two major hospitals here in town, of the 14,752—is the number I have as of yesterday—about 50 percent were returned to duty in just several days, which is—which I think is a tribute to the commanders and NCOs, their tactics, techniques, and procedures, and the gear that has been——

Chairman WARNER. Good.

General MYERS. —provided, and equipment that's been provided——

Chairman WARNER. Protection gear.

General MYERS. —protection gear, and so forth, which is a remarkable number, unlike any other time in our history, in terms of combat. I mean, it's just absolutely remarkable.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

General Myers, let me join the chorus of thanks to you for your extraordinary service. I was thinking, as the hearing was going on, that it's a measure of the respect that this committee has for you that, on the day before you end your remarkable career in the military, we're still asking you tough questions, and you're answering them.

General MYERS. I appreciate the opportunity and thank you for the comments, Senator.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

I thank all of you for being here. I particularly thank General Abizaid and General Casey for coming back. I think you know, and you've testified to it, that in a conflict of this kind there's a battlefield at home, as well as a battlefield over there. Support for the war is eroding here. We can feel it at home, when we go home. We can see it in the public opinion polls. It's very critical that you, in the uniformed military, be part of two things—two questions we have to answer. One, is it worth it for us to be in Iraq? Two, is what we're doing working? I think you've fanned out across Capitol Hill this week in a very effective way. Tough questions. But those are the kinds of exchanges from which progress occurs. I think we have to figure out a way that you do the same with the—more of the American people, that they get to see you, hear you, and maybe even have opportunities to question you.

I appreciate General Abizaid's introduction. The global war against Islamist terrorism is critical to our future security. I don't think you'd get anybody on this panel, or most anybody in this country, who would disagree with that.

Senator Reed raised an important question, which is—there are a lot of people out there who don't get it, exactly how Iraq fits into that. I think we have to begin to describe what would happen if we failed in Iraq, which is that there—and one of you said it, and we have to say it over and over again—would undoubtedly be a civil war, there would undoubtedly be destabilization in the entire region. If any of us were the terrorists, you'd say, "Well, how about that? We have a method that works here, so—we did it in Iraq, now let's take it to Saudi Arabia or Egypt or the Gulf States." You just think about the implications for them and for us. So, I think maybe people need to be reminded, in a very personal way, why this is important.

But the second part of it is, is it working? Here, we have a real challenge, because what the people see every night on the television is suicide bombing. In the classified briefing you gave yesterday, you gave a measure of how successful we've been at not losing battles, if you will, or platoons, or any platoon. But as the people see those suicide bombings going off, they interpret them as defeat. I think we have to convince them, one, that we've—I think you've convinced us that you have a plan. I think the question is, is the plan working? The second part of that, I would appeal to you—I think you said it to Senator McCain when he talked about people arguing for more troops there; I'm sympathetic to that point of view, myself—I hope you'll—I said to John afterward, "We ought to give you a list of names of people who tell us we need more troops there, we'd be better off," and urge you to hear them out and respond to them.

But here's my question, and this is the difficulty. How do we defeat an enemy of this kind, where it is a fraction of the overall Iraqi population, but it's—they're prepared, in unbelievable numbers, to blow themselves up? They hate—as somebody—Tom Friedman said they hate us, or they believe in their cause more than they love their own lives and they keep coming back. I think, by one standard, it would be hard to say that there were fewer of the enemy today than there were 6 months or a year ago.

So, as I look at Iraq—and I think a lot of people are just following with less support of what we're doing there than I do say, "Wow, the economic reconstruction isn't going very well." Maybe that's because of the security problems. Remarkably, the political situation is going a lot better than most people had a right to expect. People came out and voted in January, constitution formed. It's not perfect—overall, real progress. Hopefully, it'll be adopted in the referendum and then the election.

But I think so long as the suicide bombers go on, and we don't show the progress better than you've reported today, in the training of the Iraqi security forces, we have a problem with American public opinion.

So, see if I can focus that in the question. How do we defeat an enemy like this, where they're not fighting fair, they're just going to vulnerable targets and blowing themselves up? That creates a certain amount of havoc, both on the battlefield and particularly here at home.

General CASEY. Why don't I take a swing at that first? Because that's precisely the challenge that we're working to deal with. I may go into a little more detail in—if you're there for the closed session. But in general terms, first you have to stop them from coming into the country. That was the discussion we were having earlier about restoring Iraqi control to their borders. We've had success up in the north, and we'll continue to work that. We're working on the Euphrates River Valley, which is where most of these guys are coming in now. We'll restore Iraqi control over that border.

Then you have to disrupt the facilitation networks all throughout the country. Then you have to go after the leaders and the facilitators who are actually instructing these folks where to go, and to linking them up with the car bomb, and then the last part is the guy who makes the car bomb.

There are all these pieces of this network that have to be attacked, and are being attacked, simultaneously. But trying to kill and capture someone who's willing to kill himself is not an easy task.

General ABIZAID. Senator, I would just add a point that I have tried to make on other occasions. We have to expose the enemy. No culture will respect itself when it understands that its young people are killing themselves by killing innocent women and children that are minding their own business. I don't believe any culture anywhere can stand for that. Ultimately, there are antibodies within the true Islamic community that will prevent this from happening, and we have to help those people help themselves against this phenomenon. We see the Saudis, in particular, working very hard now to fight against this phenomenon. They've dropped down the

number of people that are infiltrating into Iraq, because they're pushing it, they're attacking the sickness within the extremist groups. But it's incumbent upon everybody in this part of the world to not use extremists to further their ends, but to stamp it out before it becomes their worst enemy, as well.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate the answers, particularly the part, which I wish we had begun earlier, to try to block the borders across which those foreign fighters are coming.

My time is up. I just want to say—and I'm not going to ask another question—there's a confusion—I think we have to—I urge you to try to work up a better explanation of the progress we're making in the training of the Iraqi security forces, because I know it—Senator McCain said there were three at the top level. I heard, in an earlier briefing, that there was one. So, it's one-to-one. Now, we still might ask, "Why hasn't it improved?" But at least it hasn't gone down.

The second is—in that second category, where they can stand up and fight, but they need our logistics support, there's been an increase there, and I think we have to give people a sense of—as I said, "It's worth it, and it's working." Part of the "working" is that we're making progress. I thank you for your testimony, look forward to working with you toward that progress.

General MYERS. Senator Lieberman, if I—could I just—let me just tag onto——

Senator LIEBERMAN. Sure.

General MYERS. —what General Abizaid said on how you confront the long war. He had a chart up—I think it was his last chart—and it had a big circle, and it talked about the virtual and the real elements that—an insurgency—that attracts people to commit suicide for their extremist's beliefs—needs to function. On that chart, perhaps the most important element is getting the voice of moderation, of moderates, heard.

I think, on the good-news front, if you check in the Middle East, and around the world, for that matter—that the moderates are speaking out more and more. The al Qaeda and these violent extremists, I think have way overplayed their card, and the moderates are now understanding that what they represent is outside any religion that anybody believes in, and it's certainly outside civilization. This is uncivilized behavior, and that is something nobody wants to tolerate.

So, there are parts of this that are working, but it needs a broader strategy. If you look at that chart—the financing, the rest of that—there are lots of parts of that that have to be addressed, that has to be addressed with all instruments of national power, both here and internationally, and that's how you eventually get to the point where people aren't willing to come forward and do that, where it's just so abhorrent.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks. My time is up. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I join in thanking General Myers for your many years of service and wish you well as you head into retirement.

One of the challenges for those of us sitting on this side of the table is that the strategy which you have described—and I think, earlier, was characterized as a strategy with great clarity—has neither benchmarks nor results that we can see, which lead us to believe it's a strategy that is working. So, even if it's a strategy with clarity, it may not be a strategy with success. I think that's the challenge for us, to try to understand where we are in this situation.

Secretary Rumsfeld, when you were actually a Member of Congress years ago, you said, about a previous war—namely, Vietnam—"The people of the United States must know not only how their country became involved, but where we are heading."

So, to that end, I'd like to ask, first, General Casey, a recent article in Foreign Affairs by Andrew Krepinevich asserts that the United States lacks a coherent strategy for defeating the insurgency and winning in Iraq. He argues that the President's statement that, "As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down," describes a withdrawal plan rather than a strategy.

Mr. Krepinevich lays out a strategy for countering the insurgency by shifting U.S. military efforts from focusing on chasing and killing insurgents to seeking to provide security and opportunity to the Iraqi people by ensuring the safety of key areas, and gradually expanding those secure areas over time—sometimes referred to as the "oil spot theory"—thereby denying the insurgency the popular support it needs.

Now, the article concludes that in order for this strategy to succeed, it will require at least a decade of commitment and hundreds of billions of dollars, and will result in longer U.S. casualty rolls.

General Casey, do you have an opinion of Mr. Krepinevich's assessment that we need to focus in Iraq away from hunting down insurgents and toward an emphasis on providing secure areas that deny popular support to the insurgency?

General CASEY. I read the article, and a couple of general impressions. I think he has a very good view of history, and he has a very good feel for counterinsurgency doctrine. But my sense is, he has misapplied this strategy in Iraq. I read it as is a sequential strategy for a rural insurgency, rather than an urban insurgency that we're dealing with in Iraq.

These cities, like Tal Afar for example, have a quarter-million people, so they're not hamlets. They're fairly substantial cities.

The other piece is the sequential piece. While it is a well-accepted piece of counterinsurgency doctrine that you need to protect the population and you need to isolate them from the insurgents—and we are doing that across Iraq—I think there is a misperception that all we're doing is running around chasing people and trying to kill them, that our soldiers and leaders are not out there every day gathering intelligence, protecting the population, assisting the population, and things—as was mentioned earlier, the CERP program, where they invest in the communities.

So, our soldiers have a very good feel for counterinsurgency doctrine. I recently sent a team out there to see how they were applying it, and the team came back and said that they generally have it about right. Sure, there are things we can do better, but we're

applying counterinsurgency doctrine to the situation in Iraq, and doing it fairly well.

So broadly, good thoughts on how to deal with things, but I think a sequential strategy like he suggests in Iraq, I think we're past that. We had to do it in Fallujah and those places last year, when we didn't have enough Iraqi security forces. Now we're getting to the point where we do.

Senator CLINTON. General, the problem, of course—again, from this side of the table—is that we can't even secure a 6-mile road from the airport into Baghdad. It's very hard to get whatever the metrics are that we are asked to judge success by. I think there is a—at least—again, based on people with whom we speak and who reach out to us—an acceptance of the fact that the insurgency has gotten more organized, more deadly, and larger.

The London Times quoted an American intelligence officer in Baghdad, who said, "We have reason to believe that Zarqawi has now given tactical command in the city over to groups that have had to merge under him for the sake of their survival."

This week, the Washington Post quoted the top U.S. military intelligence officer in Iraq, Major General Zahner, as saying, "I think what you really have here is an insurgency that's been hijacked by a terrorist campaign."

What is troubling to many of us is that the numbers that are reported to us of the insurgents continues, if not to grow, at least not to decrease. A recent Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) study concluded that there was an unsettling realization that the vast majority of Saudi militants who have entered Iraq were not terrorist sympathizers before the war, and were radicalized almost exclusively by our invasion and what happened next.

So it is difficult for us. On this committee, you have people who have spent a lot of time trying to understand this. If we can't understand what the metrics of success are, if we don't see the results of this strategy with clarity, I think it is hard to expect the American people, who tune in and out of this as the information comes to them, to understand exactly where we are headed. So, I guess I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in expressing concern and frustration that we just don't see the success of the strategy that you have described and that you have very eloquently defended in the course of this hearing and on other occasions.

General CASEY. Senator, I take your point on the metrics. I would say that the rude Irish myth is a little dated. There has not been a casualty there since June. Iraqi security forces have gone out there with our coalition forces, and we are able to use that route without great danger of casualty.

Your comments on the insurgency, on the levels of violence, I recognize that that is what it appears, but that is what the terrorists and insurgents are trying to convey. They're trying to convey that they are winning. They're doing it by murdering innocent Iraqis and by putting car bombs and improvised explosive devices against us and our Iraqi colleagues and against civilians. It's a tough situation, but that's what a terror campaign is all about. This is about political will and, as I said in my opening statement, they are at-

tacking ours and the will of the Iraqi people. They're not winning in Iraq, and they will only win here if we lose our will.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General MYERS. A couple of extra points, Mr. Chairman.

We have Andy Krepinevich—he's either been in or he will be in—we've asked him to come in and talk to us on the Joint Staff and talk about his theory, because as this has been from the beginning, we're happy to have folks that think there's a better way of doing this come talk about their particular strategies.

Then back to Senator Lieberman just for a minute—but it ties into this as well, about winning. Every time a terrorist blows himself up or injures civilians, the violent-extremist cause loses. Now that might not have been true early on, but it's certainly true today. If you remember, after the London bombings, there was a fatwah issued by moderate Muslim clerics in Europe, in Asia, and in the United States. Those bombings have dropped Osama bin Ladin's rating, which was—at some point, he was favored in Iraq by over 70 percent. Seventy percent said "pretty good guy." Now it's around 20 percent.

So their strategy is not working, they have no offer of hope, and I would say our strategy is. But as George says, it is the test of wills. In Iraq, they get it. We have to make sure we stay stalwart too, at the same time being flexible enough to adjust strategies as required. I think that you have a team here that's willing to do that.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

For the benefit of all present, recognizing we have two members that have yet had their question opportunity—both members will be accommodated—at the conclusion of their questioning period, this hearing will be completed.

Mr. Secretary, we will ask that the record remain open, such that we can place into the record certain classified material which General Casey was anxious to provide. Now, we have to close the hearing, in recognition that you have to appear before the other body at 2 o'clock. We want to, in every way, accommodate that schedule. Am I not correct in that?

Secretary RUMSFELD. That's correct, yes, sir.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you. I appreciate that we've had a very good hearing, and we've been able to accommodate all Senators.

You're next, Senator Chambliss, for a period of 6 minutes, followed by Senator Nelson.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief.

Gentlemen, first of all, let me once again thank you for great service that each of you provide to our country. We can't tell you enough how much we appreciate you, and particularly those brave men and women that serve under you.

General Myers, I don't know how many more times we will see you, but just know how much we appreciate your great service to America, as well as to the United States Air Force.

General MYERS. Sir, it's been a privilege.

Senator CHAMBLISS. You have been a great trooper in every single way.

I just want to make a comment, because I take a little bit of a different take than some of my other colleagues do about what's happening over there now. General Casey and General Abizaid, I had the privilege of meeting with you—I didn't see you the last trip, General Abizaid, but did see General Casey once again—I was there in Thanksgiving last year, was back last month, and, gentlemen, I don't have to tell you that the difference in what I saw between November last year and August this year was amazing.

When General Petraeus laid out for us the chart which showed the dynamics of what we have done under his leadership in transforming the Iraqi Army, it's truly amazing what's been done in a short period of time. We've argued within this committee about how many troops were trained. There have been a lot of numbers that were thrown out there. We all have ultimately agreed that it doesn't make any difference what the numbers are, it's how many are ready to go to battle. What General Petraeus has done with your help is to take whatever number—and it's probably 170,000 that have been trained; they may not be ready to go into battle, but there is 170,000—and he's taken individuals who had never held a gun before, in hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of instances, and trained those individuals to be, not just infantrymen, but to drive tanks, to be medical corpsmen, to be engineers, to do all the things that people have to do at every level of a trusted and competent military, and that has not been an easy task.

The one thing that General Petraeus, or any other person who is responsible for training the military can do, is to train somebody how to be a leader. Leadership has to come from within. Anybody who is a member of the Iraqi Army now who exhibited leadership before would have probably been in opposition to Saddam and he'd have been killed, or his family would have been raped and tortured. So, these are individuals who have never exhibited leadership before, because they've been afraid to.

As you have gone through this process of training those individuals, the leadership within the Iraqi Army is starting to surface. General Casey, I know you talked to us about the fact that we have three Iraqi patrols now. I don't remember whether they—what, really, the size of them were, but they have taken over segments of Baghdad, and they are patrolling Baghdad on their own. Sure, we'll continue to advise them, but they're doing it. The leadership has surfaced within those groups of soldiers, and it's spreading. It's going to take some more time for that to happen, but it is happening.

The other thing I will say, in closing, is—and we have expressed this to the White House, and I'm pleased to see that you're here today talking about the good things that are happening over there, and that you're going to be doing more of this, because the American people have to hear it. They have to hear about the good things that are happening over there, in addition to what they're going to read in the paper tomorrow about the IED that exploded today and took some more American lives. The people who need to be talking about that to the American people are you.

I told General Petraeus if he could go on the Sunday talk shows, or in whatever forum, to talk about what he's doing it would have a much greater impact than any of us talking about it, and cer-

tainly the individuals who are critics of what's going on over there are not talking about the good things that are happening.

So, I'm pleased to see you here. I will have to say, General Casey, the morale of your troops was unbelievable. My National Guard unit, which has 3,500 people over there today, had lost 16 soldiers when I was there. I talked to General Rodeheaver when I got out of the vehicle. He came to me, and I said, "How's the morale of your troops? What's going on?" He said, "You won't believe it." He said, "We're still grieving for our lost comrades, but morale is extremely high. These are very professional men and women." What he told me is exactly what I saw when I had a chance to look those national guardsmen and women in the eye.

So, in spite of all the negative press and the negative comments that are ongoing, I walked away from there with the feeling that it's tough—and, General Myers, you're right—it's not a pretty picture to paint—but those men and women are doing a hell of a job of winning this war. We may not be winning the political war right now, but if we don't win the military side of it—and we're doing that—we'll never win the other side of it.

So, I appreciate the great job you're doing, and I know we have to stay the course, and we have to continue to do the things that each of you, and the folks under you, are doing every single day over there. So, thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm going to shift to another subject about Iraq, Captain Scott Speicher.

But, before I do, General Myers, thank you for your public service. You've been at this for 40 years. I too was commissioned 40 years ago, but my public service took a different path. On the occasion of your retirement, Grace and I look forward to seeing you and Mrs. Myers socially.

General MYERS. I hope so, too, Senator. Thank you.

Senator BILL NELSON. Yes, sir.

Also, before we get to Captain Speicher, Mr. Secretary, it needs to come to your attention—as I spoke with one of your Assistant Secretaries, Mr. Grone, you are about to have the threat of taking away the entire Gulf of Mexico off of Florida as one of the most significant training areas that you have, where you're not only training the F–22 and the F–35 pilots, but also you're shooting a lot of your more exotic warfare that you need plenty of airspace. What Mr. Grone did not understand was, he thought he had the luxury of several years to work this out with the Minerals Management Service in the Department of the Interior on the expansion of oil and gas leasing on the surface of the Gulf below, when in fact, you have a matter of days, or at least weeks, to register how this would impair the training capability for the United States military if you are denied that area. Because yesterday a bill was marked up in a House committee that, in fact takes all of the area, except for 25 miles from shore, and opens it to oil and gas leasing. I've been the one that has been raising this, trying to protect the interests of the United States military. I think the Department has had the idea, "Well, we can work this out with the Department of the Interior."

Well, there is a freight train that is starting to move in the aftermath of Katrina and the fear of the shortage. In this atmosphere, I don't want your United States military preparedness to get hurt by you being denied all of that area, because you can't be shooting things down there on the surface of the water if they have oil and gas rigs all over there. So, I bring that to your attention.

Now, I want to get to Captain Speicher. There was the review board. They concluded there was no evidence that he was dead, and that there was sufficient evidence that he probably survived being shot down, and that there may be Iraqis who know of his fate. Both the review board and Secretary England agree that the search must continue.

So, General Casey, can you describe the effort to continue to try to determine the fate of Captain Scott Speicher?

General CASEY. Senator, I have not had an update on Captain Speicher since the review board has met, so I cannot give you that. But, as soon as I get back to Iraq, I will get right back with you and let you know what that is.

[The information referred to follows:]

The recovery and return of Captain Michael Scott Speicher to friendly control remains an operational priority for MNF–I. To that end, intelligence collection and operational efforts are continuously planned and, where actionable intelligence exists, recovery missions are executed. In addition, all necessary and appropriate follow-up actions are taken, to include the testing and analysis of all remains uncovered during any exploitation of a reported burial site, to determine if the remains are those of Captain Speicher.

In November 2005, a suspected burial site in the Baghdad area [Deleted.]

The most recent [Deleted.]

[Deleted.]

The Defense Intelligence Agency's exploitation of captured regime documents continues in Iraq, Qatar, and the United States, providing new insight into Iraq's prisoner handling procedures. A thorough review of those documents is ongoing and any leads derived from the exploitation will be vetted and developed with the goal being the production of actionable information to locate and repatriate Captain Speicher.

Senator BILL NELSON. Does anybody else on the panel want to comment on that?

Secretary RUMSFELD. We do know that Captain Speicher remains on the priority list for gathering of intelligence and information. There's data-searching taking place in Iraq, there's data-searching taking place outside of Iraq, in another Gulf location. The interest that we have is the same as your interest.

General MYERS. We're doing the same thing for Sergeant Maupin, as well.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

I ask the witnesses if they could indulge just a few minutes. We've been joined by the Senator from Missouri.

Senator TALENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. This panel must get to the House of Representatives.

Senator TALENT. Then other than to say thank you, General Myers, for your service in particular, and all of you, two very brief questions. Number one: Are we, in your judgment, doing enough to empower local commanders to do smaller projects that are appealing to the population in their particular area? I saw a lot of this in Sadr City when I was there last—almost, if I can say it, a kind of a petty-cash fund to go out and do some local work. Evidently,

that's been very successful in helping to recruit the population in our behalf.

What, if anything, can we do when we go into places like Tal Afar, to help ensure a longer-term, more secure type situation? Because I know we've been going in, search-and-destroying, and then having to—what, in your judgment, can we do there? Maybe to General Abizaid and General Casey?

General CASEY. I'll take first on the CERP. We have something we call bulk-CERP, which does exactly what you said, almost a petty-cash thing that the local commanders use to get that out there. I don't think you were here when I said we've spent over $700 million in CERP this year, and it has been the best assistance for the local commanders.

Senator TALENT. I'm really glad you recognize that, and I hope we make as much available as they think they can need.

General CASEY. Thank you. Now, on Tal Afar—and this is a great question, because it speaks to a strategy that we have used in Najaf, Fallujah, Samara, and we applied with this new government in Tal Afar. Before we go in—and this gets to the question—we sit down with the government and say, "Okay, what are you going to do politically here to make it easier for our troops? What are you going to do economically to ensure there's humanitarian assistance available, that there's reconstruction money available, that there's compensation available? Then what are you going to do to ensure that there are police programs and the police training program is put in place there so that you generate the Iraqi local security forces that will make this a long-term success?"

As I said, we've done it—we started it in Najaf, did it in Samara, we haven't been as successful in Samara because, largely, the Iraqis could never put together a local political leadership that wanted to make this succeed. I told the Deputy Governor up there the other day, I said, "Look, we can't want this more than you do."

Fallujah is coming up on the first anniversary of the battle. I think what you're going to see is the great success that's gone on there inside Fallujah. Almost 70 percent of the people in Fallujah have electricity and running water. This is something that—those of you who were there shortly after the battle, I was there last week—it's amazing.

So, we applied the same things in Tal Afar. Again, it's a holistic package done in advance, and then followed up with steady pressure to ensure that people don't take their eye off the ball after the battle is over, which is hard.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator TALENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your indulgence.

Chairman WARNER. The subject of IEDs—that's the explosive devices which have taken such a heavy toll—we were going to largely cover in the classified session, but I think you can give us an assurance publicly that everything that can be brought to bear in the way of technology, equipment, people, and otherwise, are being devoted to try and contain that type of threat to our forces. Am I not correct, General Casey?

General CASEY. Senator, you are. I met with General Votel, head if the IED Defeat Task Force yesterday, and I will tell you that we

continually try to find new things as the enemy adapts his tactics, and we continue to work on improving our capabilities to deal with these.

Chairman WARNER. Our committee regularly meets with the General.

Gentlemen, thank you very much. We have had a very good hearing.

The hearing stands adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE

IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

1. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, there continues to be a great deal of media coverage with regard to improvised explosive devices (IEDs). It is apparent from our casualties that the biggest danger our military faces in Iraq results from IEDs. Coalition forces, Iraqi security forces, and Iraqi civilians face these same threats. General Joseph Votel, the director of the IED Defeat Task Force, briefed this committee in June that IED incidents, the discovery or detonation of a bomb, had surged recently and were currently running at about 30 per day. I applaud all the fine work that is being done by this Task Force in a very time critical environment to diminish any further escalation of these devices. Like my colleagues and all Americans, I remain concerned about what more we can do to keep the insurgency from continuing to make and adapt these devices, seemingly combating whatever offensive or defensive measures we put in place. This greatly concerns me. Without getting into any classified areas, what trends are we actually seeing since our committee had this briefing in June with regard to IED incidents?

General ABIZAID. The volume of IED attacks has continued to rise steadily and IED makers have refined their techniques and are focusing their energies in certain areas like explosive formed projectiles (EFPs) which are capable of penetrating some types of armored vehicles. There is also a growing trend towards under-vehicle attacks, the use of command-wired detonations, and the use of actuators which are triggered by the intended victims.

While the number of attacks has risen, the rate of U.S. servicemembers killed or wounded in IED attacks has actually declined when compared to this same time period in last year. This can be credited to the improved tactics, techniques, and procedures being used by U.S., coalition, and Iraqi forces along with new technologies being developed by the Joint IED Defeat Task Force. In addition to new technologies and techniques, U.S., coalition, and Iraqi forces are improving ways to gain the support of local Iraqis in preventing IED incidents.

General CASEY. [Deleted.]

2. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, what assurance can you offer that initiatives are in the pipeline to defeat the insurgency's successful use of IEDs, especially of the vehicle borne IEDs?

General ABIZAID. To facilitate the efforts of the Joint IED Defeat Task Force, Central Command has also established its own Counter-IED Task Force. Functioning as a team, these two task forces identify enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures; evaluate the latest IED trends; identify operational needs and requirements of U.S. forces; and identify areas in which training can be improved to defeat IEDs. The teamwork of these two task forces has already succeeded in getting many new technologies fielded to attack the IED problem. Those initiatives have already placed into the hands of U.S. forces new means of conducting surveillance, locating buried or hidden IEDs, disrupting the functioning of IEDs, and identifying and locating individuals who make or emplace IEDs. These technologies continue to be refined, and resources are being allocated to develop those showing the most promise. In addition to receiving new technologies, U.S., coalition, and Iraqi forces are learning ways to gain the support of local populations in preventing IED incidents.

General CASEY. The Multi-National Force implemented an array of measures, both technical and operational, to defeat IEDs and vehicle-borne IEDs throughout Iraq. Initiatives include establishing a Joint Task Force dedicated to countering IEDs, fielding electronic warfare equipment to counter radio controlled IEDs, improving armor for our inventory of vehicles, introducing new vehicles designed specifically for mined environments and improving tactics, techniques, and procedures.

3. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, the IED Defeat Task Force identified human intelligence (HUMINT) as critical in tracking and capturing the makers of these IEDs. What advances are we making in this arena?

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

General CASEY. We continue to improve our capability to exploit human intelligence. Recent initiatives include the establishment of a single, centrally located, interagency strategic debriefing center to facilitate more timely and effective debriefings to gain vital human intelligence information from foreign fighters and those who enable them. Another initiative is the formation of an intelligence-based development team designed to accelerate data base research and provide feedback on captured detainee documents and other media to forward maneuver elements for on-site exploitation and follow on operations.

4. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, are there any blockers to continuing to build our HUMINT capability as rapidly as we need to and what are we doing to overcome any such blockers?

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

General CASEY. We do face a challenge acquiring sources with sustained access to IED cells. To overcome that challenge, the Multi-National Force in company with the Iraqi Transitional Government instituted telephone "tips lines" that provide not only effective and actionable IED leads from Iraqi citizens but also individuals willing to serve as sources.

5. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, I believe we all agree that the success of a new Iraq depends on Iraq being able to secure itself. We are making great progress in this area. I have seen some very positive changes in my two visits to Iraq this year. I commend the people of Iraq as they prepare to go to the voting booths in a few weeks to vote on the proposed constitution. The Iraqi population must continue to become ever more responsible for itself. In this vein, this is what I'd like to know. With the increasing casualties among the Iraqi security forces and civilians, are you seeing the Iraqi populace and the new Iraqi government providing critical information or taking definitive actions to "help us, help them" be a free people and defeat this insurgency by pinpointing where the insurgent is hiding, and where the IEDs are being manufactured?

General ABIZAID. The Iraqi populace and Government of Iraq are indeed providing critical information to U.S. forces. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) has instituted a very successful national tips hotline which allows concerned Iraqi citizens to call in information. During the month of October alone, there were 718 calls which provided actionable intelligence one of which resulted in the defusing of an IED. Between 1 May and 28 Oct 2005, there were 4,592 tips processed through the national tips hotline program. Additionally, there were over 40 reports in the month of October from sources who were motivated by their "love of country."

General CASEY. [Deleted.]

TROOP LEVELS AND END STRENGTH

6. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, recently, some in Congress have been pressing the DOD and the administration to reduce the number of troops in Iraq. They have a mission, a critical mission: to defeat the insurgency, train the Iraqi security forces to protect themselves, and enable a free Iraq. I strongly agree with the President in the belief that we base any withdrawal timeline on the mission, and only on the mission. There has been significant progress in Iraq. I have seen it. We expect continued progress there. Based on the results of their constitutional referendum on October 15, the Iraqis are then scheduled at the end of the year to hold their first election under their new constitution. Along with our Active-Duty Forces, we have relied heavily on our Reserve and Guard Forces, all of who have done an exemplary job. However, we have had some recruiting challenges, particularly in the Army and the Marine Corps. I am concerned about our maintaining an adequate end strength in our military forces to meet the rotational needs of the Iraqi freedom mission. Is this a concern you share?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Thanks to you and the other members of this committee and the support of Congress, we have adequate strength levels to successfully meet present rotational needs in prosecuting the war on terrorism. Through the flexibilities allowed in law, the ongoing efforts to realign and conserve military manpower (e.g., by converting certain billets to civilian or contractor when not essential to rotation needs), continued prudent and judicious use of our Reserve Forces, and ag-

gressive recruiting and retention programs, we have enough troops to meet current needs.

Military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have required prolonged use of some of our military capabilities, particularly our ground support forces. To minimize the strain on the individuals in these high-demand skill areas, we have used individuals from our air and naval forces with similar skill sets to meet theater mission needs. These forces have been well-prepared for their mission and have performed superbly. The flexibility afforded by this approach to force management has not only allowed us to provide qualified, effective forces for this operation, it has also increased our ability to effectively respond to future unforeseen crises.

General MYERS. Thanks to you and the other members of this committee and the support of Congress, we have adequate end strength to meet the needs of the Nation. However, current stresses on the force are significant and will remain so for the near-term. Accordingly, the Services are actively working to rebalance within and between Active and Reserve components to increase warfighting capability and improve responsiveness, to ease stress on our units, troops, and their families. Some of the initiatives include the Army's transition to 43 "modular" brigade combat teams, shifting billets across the Services' critical skills, and capitalizing on military to civilian conversions. Additionally, end strength is a significant focus item for the Quadrennial Defense Review. If at the end of the review it appears that our other efforts fall short of the projected force level requirements, I will not hesitate to recommend additional end strength.

General ABIZAID. Recruiting and retention remain a concern to everyone in uniform but this question is better answered by the Services since they are responsible for recruiting. Central Command's force requirements continue to be filled with properly trained and equipped units and individuals for our efforts throughout the Central Command Area of Responsibility but especially in Iraq and Afghanistan.

General CASEY. Recruiting and retention continue to be a concern to all of us in uniform but this question is better answered by the Services since they have responsibility for recruiting.

7. Senator INHOFE. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, what do you see on the horizon with regard to the negative recruiting trend, particularly in the Army and the Marine Corps, and what plans are there to address this concern?

Secretary RUMSFELD. A strong economy and low unemployment, while good for America, present challenges we already are working to overcome. Each component of the Army, for example, has expanded its number of recruiters, as well as the age constraints that had limited the pool of eligibles.

The Department will continue to be attentive to the recruiting environment and actively seek the assistance of Congress with new and creative initiatives. Increased flexibility in the types of recruitment incentives the Department may employ, as well as an upward adjustment in the discretionary cap constraining those incentives, will be key to our success. We solicit your support of those initiatives.

General MYERS. We expect fiscal year 2006 to be a very challenging year for both Active and Reserve component recruiting and are particularly concerned with active Army, Army Reserve, and Army Guard. To mitigate the challenges, we have increased the numbers of recruiters, enhanced enlistment bonuses, and have focused our marketing strategy not only on potential recruits, but also on the influencers (parents, teachers, etc.) who play an important role in our overall effort.

General ABIZAID. Recruiting and retention continue to be a concern to all of us in uniform but this question is better answered by the Services since they have responsibility for recruiting. It should be noted that the Services continue to provide forces to meet the needs within Central Command's Area of Responsibility and the troops remain fully capable of completing the mission.

General CASEY. Recruiting and retention continue to be a concern to all of us in uniform but this question is better answered by the Services since they have responsibility for recruiting.

MEDIA COVERAGE

8. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid and General Casey, during my last two trips to Iraq I met many soldiers and marines who believe the media coverage is unbalanced. They want to know why the media is not sharing the many success stories that are occurring in Iraq. The soldiers and marines tell me that what they read does not fully reflect what they see happening on the ground. They tell me the successes achieved by our forces seem to not be newsworthy, with the media at every

opportunity touting the insurgents' successes. With the exception of the coverage of the election in January, I must agree. It will be interesting to see what kind of coverage occurs after what I expect to be a successful constitutional referendum in mid-October. If it comes to believing what I read in the paper or see on television versus listening to what someone on ground is actually seeing, I think it's our young men and women there in Iraq who have it right.

Take for example, these protesters here in Washington this past weekend who want to pull our troops out of Iraq. Many were probably there because they don't think we are being successful in Iraq due to what they are reading and seeing in the media. These protesters have a very simplified view of the result of pulling our troops out of Iraq. Either that or they are willing to toss away the opportunity to make a lasting and needed change in that region of the world.

What will pulling out our troops mean? It means the country would dissolve into civil war because it does not yet have the necessary level of stability of the country to fend off these insurgents alone. It means these insurgents would then begin to export the very terror we have been fighting in Iraq. That's what these protesters would end up getting if we were to pull out our troops.

What is your perception of the media coverage, how does that affect your mission, and what can we do to get a more balanced story?

General ABIZAID. The media trends towards reporting on the negative and/or sensational issues; that is the nature of the news business. To some extent, the events in Iraq and Afghanistan are viewed through a soda straw. The 24-hour news cycle compresses the allotted time for coverage of the issues which results in not every story being reported.

As a result, the most unreported story in Iraq and Afghanistan is the true nature of the enemy. This is a despicable enemy that we need to understand. They are killing civilians, they are killing Muslims, and they are destroying Iraq's national infrastructure. We need to know what their motivations are, what their vision of the future is and what they are willing to do to accomplish their goals.

General CASEY. Media reports are, for the most part, accurate and unbiased, but they are also incomplete with respect to the accomplishments of the Iraqi and coalition forces. The Multi-National Force is rebuilding a nation with its Iraqi partners. Our day-to-day work and accomplishments contribute to that end. Coalition and Iraqi forces perform superbly under challenging conditions. I have no doubt that the trend of their performance will continue.

I can tell you that American servicemembers deserve the full support of the American people and that the American public deserves to know the full story of their military's success in Iraq. I would appreciate anything that you, Senator, and your colleagues, can do to assist in that area.

9. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid, in an article earlier this year you stated, "Politics will assure the defeat of the insurgency, provided the politics are open, transparent, and legitimate. It is clear we are moving in that direction." It seems to me that this same strategy has started to work in Lebanon, Libya, Afghanistan, and maybe someday in Egypt and Saudi Arabia to name just a few countries in the region. What do you see as the major obstacle to achieving an open, transparent, legitimate political environment in Iraq, what is your assessment of the changes we see taking place in the region, and are they sustainable?

General ABIZAID. The main obstacle to achieving an open, transparent, legitimate political environment in Iraq is providing inclusiveness in the political process for the diversity of religious, ethnic, and tribal influences throughout the country. Eventual success in Iraq will not be won by military operations on the ground, but by the formation of a central government that is representative of the people, and therefore fully supported by the people. This inclusiveness must be protected by a constitutional structure that guarantees the minority rights. If the Iraqi people truly believe that their voice is fairly represented in governmental decisions and that the government represents stability and a better future for them and their children, the insurgency will no longer have a place to hide. The need for inclusiveness during the political process is well-recognized at all levels of the political spectrum and continues to be a priority of all concerned.

The recent political events observed throughout the region in Lebanon, Libya, and Afghanistan are indeed encouraging. These events also lend credibility to the concept that an open, transparent, and legitimate political process can significantly alter the direction in which a country is moving. The sustainability of these events throughout the region is difficult to predict, but our eventual success in Iraq and Afghanistan will certainly play a role in the continuation of future change throughout the region.

10. Senator INHOFE. General Abizaid, in the same article you stated, "The Afghans and Iraqis on this trip kept saying to me over and over again, 'Are you going to stick with us?' I kept telling them over and over again, 'Yes we will.' I ask the American people not to make a liar of me." What will happen in the region if we don't stick with them?

General ABIZAID. While it is hard to predict the unknown, it is possible to foresee certain possible outcomes. Leaving Iraq before the security forces and government are ready to take on the challenges of an evolving democratic state could have far reaching consequences for Iraq and the region as a whole. The greatest concern would be that the fledgling government would collapse and Iraq would devolve into civil war, with the country eventually splitting into autonomous regions. If this were to happen, Iraq could become a major terrorist sanctuary and a destabilizing influence for Iraq's surrounding neighbors, resulting in a regression from the gains in regional democratization that has been recently witnessed.

With regard to Afghanistan, the effect of abandonment would be slower to evolve than in Iraq due to the more advanced progress of the political process and the greater degree of governmental control there. Yet, while greater maturity exists, the political, economic, and security infrastructure simply is not in place to guarantee the continued success of democracy in Afghanistan. The country could begin a gradual degeneration into a narco-terrorist state dominated by warlords and terrorist activities due to the presence of a substantial narcotics influence.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR SUSAN COLLINS

NATIONAL GUARD

11. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Rumsfeld, just over 2 months ago, my State's Adjutant General stated that Maine had only approximately 30 percent of the State's National Guard soldiers available for mobilization for Federal missions. He said that Maine's National Guard is "building very quickly toward a crisis if, in the next two or three rotations, we still have 135,000 troops on the ground in Iraq." Eventually, we will run out of Guard members with time left on their mobilization clocks, particularly those serving in high-demand specialties such as intelligence, civil affairs, and military police. What are your plans to deal with this imminent problem?

Secretary RUMSFELD. First, I must applaud the important contribution our Reserve components have made and continue to make in support of our global war on terrorism. We could not have provided all of the required capabilities to our commanders without their continued and steadfast support. To ensure we manage this support properly, we have maintained a judicious and prudent approach all along to ensure their utilization remained fair and appropriate.

We have restricted the total aggregate time a reservist may be placed on active duty involuntarily to 24 months. We have insisted that our commanders request capabilities instead of units when requesting resources for Iraq and Afghanistan to ensure all Services have the most opportunities to support our efforts there, not just the traditional ground force providers. We have expanded the use of volunteerism. We constantly seek alternate manpower options, opening up additional opportunities for DOD civilian personnel, coalition forces, civilian contractors, and technological solutions. Though we are strained in some specific capabilities, these and other mitigation strategies have enabled us to preserve a significant portion of the Reserve component force.

With respect to the Maine National Guard, over the course of four rotations, there are over 1,500 Maine guardsmen—or 49 percent of the currently assigned Maine Guard—who still have 24 months remaining on their mobilization clock (see table below).

Further, the Department is now in its fourth year of rebalancing to relieve the specific stresses on the force that you mentioned in your question. From fiscal year 2003 to fiscal year 2005, the Services have rebalanced about 70,000 spaces of low demand structure into capability areas that are in high demand such as Intelligence, Civil Affairs, and Military Police. Rebalancing is also a continuous and iterative process. The Services have already planned about 55,000 spaces of additional rebalancing from fiscal year 2006 through fiscal year 2011. For example, the Army has plans to add about 25,000 Military Police spaces, about 3,000 Intelligence spaces, and about 1,000 Civil Affairs spaces.

In addition to rebalancing, the Army's transition to modular brigades is increasing the number of Active brigades available, thus reducing the requirement to use Army National Guard brigades.

	National Guard (All)			National Guard (Maine)		
	Army	Air	Total	Army	Air	Total
Total Currently Assigned:	333,177	106,246	439,423	1,937	1,262	3,199
Total Assigned, Previously Activated ISO ONE/OIF/OEF:	99,794 30 percent	47,283 45 percent	147,077	970 50 percent	660 52 percent	1,630 51 percent
24 Months Remaining on clock (not yet activated):	160,075 48 percent	58,963 55 percent	219,038 50 percent	967 50 percent	602 48 percent	1,569 49 percent
12 Months Remaining on Clock (activated previously):	36,022 11 percent	33,020 31 percent	69,042	86 4 percent	381 30 percent	467
Currently Mobilized (SELRES):	76,102 23 percent	7,970 8 percent	84,072 19 percent	202 10 percent	262 21 percent	464 15 percent
Total Available for at least a 12 month rotation:	196,097 59 percent	91,983 87 percent	288,080 66 percent	1,053 54 percent	983 78 percent	2,036 64 percent

Table is as of September 30,2005.

12. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Rumsfeld, are there any plans, draft or otherwise, to alter the 24-month maximum call-up policy?

Secretary RUMSFELD. No. We understand the intent of the law and are complying with it. Furthermore, changes to our policy would tend to generate long-term problems for our Reserve Forces.

13. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers, is the Department of Defense studying the possibility of creating new battalions within the National Guard that would focus only on homeland defense missions, where units would solely train with State and local authorities?

Secretary RUMSFELD. No. There has been no national strategy change to justify the need to establish a separate role for the National Guard, under which it only performs homeland security related missions. There are already sufficient legal mechanisms in place that enable State and territorial governors to employ their National Guard forces in support of local authorities to meet a wide range of existing homeland security missions.

General MYERS. Although the Quadrennial Defense Review of 2005 is examining a variety of possible alternatives in meeting homeland defense requirements, to include potentially dedicating some National Guard structure to that mission, there are no plans at this time to create additional units solely for homeland defense. The Army and National Guard Bureau position is to maintain units which have full-spectrum utility across the range of military operations, including major combat operations, stability and support operations, as well as homeland defense, with the exception of selected niche capabilities for homeland defense, such as the National Guard's Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Teams and Northern Command's Joint Task Force Civil Support. In essence, in order to provide the optimum level of capability to the Nation in meeting needs identified in the National Defense and Military Strategies, units are best structured to provide full-spectrum capabilities across a range of missions, versus single utility units with limited applicability.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN THUNE

PROPOSED IRAQ CONSTRUCTION

14. Senator THUNE. Secretary Rumsfeld, there is evidence that Sunnis are mobilizing to vote down the proposed Iraqi constitution during the December referendum. If they are successful, what effect will that have on the duration that American troops will remain in Iraq?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The December elections will be democracy in action as the Iraqi people express their will at the ballot box. The December 15 election will determine the composition of the Iraqi National Assembly and set the stage for nego-

tiations over remaining constitutional issues. That the Sunnis are preparing to participate in the elections should be taken as a positive sign of Iraq's continuing political development.

American troops remain in Iraq in support of our goal of achieving a peaceful, free, and democratic Iraq and at the request of the Iraqi government. Decisions about the presence of American troops in Iraq after the December election will be made according to the conditions faced at that time, particularly the growth in the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces.

15. Senator THUNE. Secretary Rumsfeld, are you committed to staying in Iraq until a constitution is accepted?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Iraqis turned out in large numbers to pass the constitution in a referendum on October 15. The adoption of a constitution is an important step in Iraq's political development. The constitution, however, does not signal the end of the process. Iraqis continue to negotiate several major political and legal questions, and Iraq's National Assembly must pass a number of laws in support of the constitution. We remain committed to providing support for Iraq's political transition in support of our goal to achieve a peaceful, free, and democratic Iraq.

16. Senator THUNE. Secretary Rumsfeld, several news outlets are reporting that the December referendum could likely push Iraq into civil war between rival Shia factions and the Sunnis. I do not vouch for the veracity of those reports nor do I endorse the conclusion. However, suppose for a moment that this worst case scenario comes true, what role will our armed services play?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Our armed services work to support two overarching strategic goals: the creation of strong Iraqi security forces and the simultaneous development of a free and open Iraqi political process. Achieving these goals provides a powerful incentive for Iraqis to reject violence and settle their differences at the ballot box and remain the best hope of achieving a peaceful, free, and democratic Iraq.

Coalition forces have altered deployments and tactics on a daily basis as the Iraqi security forces assume new responsibilities as well as in response to changes in the threats posed by the insurgents. We will continue to work with the Iraqi security forces in support of the political process, adapting tactics to the conditions we face.

17. Senator THUNE. Secretary Rumsfeld, would the Department's experience in Somalia provide any lessons learned?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The Department is relying on a variety of sources to inform its strategy, operations, and tactics in Iraq. While I will leave specific details about lessons of urban fighting and counterinsurgency to our military planners, I can say with certainty that we consider historical lessons when we discuss operations in Iraq.

SERVICE LIMITATIONS

18. Senator THUNE. Secretary Rumsfeld, many National Guard and Reserve soldiers are getting close to fulfilling their 24-month service limitation. What is the Department's plan for conducting operations in Iraq if the pool of Reserve and National Guard soldiers begins to dwindle because they have met their deployment requirements?

Secretary RUMSFELD. There are 829,000 members of the Selective Reserve assigned, of which, approximately 455,000 have never been mobilized. After future reductions in Army National Guard combat formations, the Reserve components will provide approximately 30,000 to 35,000 personnel per rotation. The pool of Reserve component forces appears to be sufficient at this time. The Services are continuing efforts to rebalance forces, including those in the Reserve components, to ensure the correct mix of forces.

MOBILIZATION SITE DEFICIENCIES

19. Senator THUNE. General Myers, soldiers deploying from South Dakota to the Iraq theater are using Fort Dix, New Jersey, as a mobilization site. My office has been contacted by some South Dakota guardsmen with reports of unsatisfactory conditions at Fort Dix such as overflowing dumpsters, unsanitary conditions in portable toilets, and backed up plumbing which required some soldiers to bath from a drinking water trailer or a "water buffalo." Would the Department review these complaints and keep my office apprised of findings and any actions taken to correct these alleged deficiencies?

General MYERS. In this specific case, the Army's Installation Management Agency, U.S. Army Forces Command, and its subordinate continental First U.S. Army are jointly responsible for operations and facilities at Fort Dix, New Jersey. In order to best answer your question, the Joint Staff is formally asking the Department of the Army to respond directly to your office in this matter. Quality of life standards for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and their families are of the utmost concern across the Department.

SECURITY ROLE DURING REFERENDUM

20. Senator THUNE. General Casey, it is possible that tensions may arise in Iraq as the December referendum moves closer. What role are American troops going to play in providing security for Iraqis during the referendum?

General CASEY. As a point of clarification, Iraq's constitutional referendum took place on 15 October 2005. The political process that will take place in December will be an election of a new national government.

American troops, as part of the coalition force, will have three broad roles during the election. They will advise Iraqi security force leadership, provide rapid response in support of the Iraqi election security plan, and perform counterinsurgency operations throughout the area of operations.

21. Senator THUNE. General Casey, will this role be defined by the Iraqi government or American policy makers?

General CASEY. The role of American troops, as part of the Multi-National Force, is jointly agreed upon between the United Nations, the Independent Election Council Iraq, and the coalition forces.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

IRAQI INSURGENCY

22. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, is the insurgency in Iraq weaker now than it was a year ago?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The insurgency is failing at the strategic level. While insurgents still possess the resources to conduct operations, they have failed to prevent or derail the democratic political process in Iraq, which is the strategic process. Lacking any positive vision of the future, they have failed to win the hearts and minds of the overwhelming majority of Iraqis. Nevertheless, the insurgency continues to pose a potent tactical threat to coalition forces as well as the Iraqi people. Our strategy of fighting the insurgents while building the Iraqi security forces will be crucial to ending the insurgents' tactical capabilities.

23. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, is the Zarqawi network in Iraq weaker now than it was prior to the fall of Baghdad to coalition forces?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Zarqawi can no longer rely on Iraqi territory as a safe haven from which he can plot regional terrorist operations. Coalition forces and in particular, the Iraqi security forces bring the battle to the insurgents, taking the Zarqawi network further and further from any hope of strategic success. The network does remain capable of potent tactical strikes increasingly directed against Iraqi civilians. These strikes, while very lethal, have isolated his network from the developing political process, limiting the network's viability.

24. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, at the hearing you said "Zarqawi was already in Iraq before the war ever started. Zarqawi was running terrorists out of Iraq in several countries before the war ever started." It sounded like you were suggesting that Zarqawi was running terrorist operations from Iraq with the knowledge and consent of the Government of Iraq. What was the view of the Intelligence Community at the time on whether Zarqawi was running terrorist operations in other nations from Iraq before the war, and whether the Government of Iraq knew of and permitted Zarqawi to run terrorist operations from Iraq?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I do not wish to speak authoritatively on behalf of the Intelligence Community. However, I believe that the statement you cited above is consistent with my understanding of the Intelligence Community's position prior to the war. To the best of my knowledge, in the spring of 2003, the Intelligence Community believed Saddam Hussein regime elements were providing sanctuary to Zarqawi, Ansar al-Islam, and other terrorists.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

CONFLICT IN IRAQ—POLICY AND STRATEGY

25. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, the International Crisis Group (ICG) just released a report titled: "Unmaking Iraq: A Constitutional Process Gone Awry" in which they conclude that "the situation appears to be heading toward de facto partition and full-scale civil war." Assuming for a moment that the ICG prediction is correct, do you believe that the United States would have to alter its current military deployments and tactics? If you do not concur with the ICG prediction, wouldn't it be a prudent policy to prepare for that possible contingency and if so, what is being done?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Coalition forces frequently alter their deployments as the Iraqi security forces (ISF) assume new responsibilities, as well as in response to changes in insurgent tactics. The insurgents, for example, appear to be directing new attacks against the Iraqi people, and the ISF are developing the ability to protect their own citizens.

Our strategic goals continue to be the creation of strong ISF and the simultaneous development of a free and open political process. Achieving these goals provides a powerful incentive for Iraqis to reject violence and settle their differences at the ballot box as they have already done twice. The ISF also remain the best hope of a peaceful, free, and democratic Iraq. We will continue to work with the ISF to achieve these goals, adapting our tactics to the conditions we face.

General MYERS. While there has been much speculation over the future of Iraq, I believe it is much more useful to deal with the facts when addressing Iraq's future. After 2½ years of insurgent warfare, Iraq is still a unified state. Terrorists like Zarqawi have tried to incite sectarian violence, but the Iraqi people have not divided. I believe the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people and Iraqi leaders do not want a partitioned country. We do not need to alter our current military deployments and tactics. The Iraqis are developing a representative constitutional democracy with our assistance. They are doing this and are making tremendous progress despite the factional political environment. We are helping them mend their fissures. Our current military efforts at establishing a secure and stable environment do not need to be changed.

General ABIZAID. If that prediction is correct, and I do not believe it is, it would require a reevaluation of our national goals and objectives for Iraq at the very highest levels. Our involvement in a full-scale civil war would require a different mix of capabilities and personnel than we currently have on the ground because the mission, once defined, would be completely different. Our planners continually assess, with our coalition partners, emerging situations and "what-ifs" to develop plans for those possibilities. A civil war would take our involvement to a different national policy level that would need to be clarified before the military planners make any specific plans for involvement.

General CASEY. Civil war is not a foregone conclusion in Iraq, but I would agree that it is prudent to plan for possible contingencies. We are constantly assessing our deployment plans and tactics as situations change.

The Multi-National Force strategy works to prevent civil war by closing deep, preexisting ethno-centric divisions and building capacity for the Sunni, Shia, and Kurds to participate in the political process and collectively govern a united country. Iraq's constitution, though not a perfect document, provides a basis for political resolution to the nation's most contentious issues and the conditions most likely to foment civil war.

It is certainly prudent to prepare for contingencies. As part of the military planning process, we prepare for contingencies we identify as risks. We have identified actions to mitigate sectarian tension and we have prepared a contingency plan.

26. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, Major General Richard Zahner recently stated that "if you don't take off the terrorist element, the political process can't mature." I certainly agree with that assessment. However, a report by Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies concludes that Iraq has become one of the global centers for recruiting and training terrorists—the war seems to be creating more terrorists, not fewer. If there is an almost inexhaustible supply of terrorists being created in the Middle East and being attracted to Iraq, how do we "take off the terrorist element?" The situation is similar to water flowing over a broken dam or dike: it stops flowing once the water level on both sides even out—in the case of Iraq, that would leave our troops surrounded by terrorists.

Secretary RUMSFELD. The terrorists understand that a free and open Iraq represents a strategic defeat for their cause and join the insurgency for this reason. Likewise, a free and open Iraq is a strategic victory for the United States and our partner nations in the global war on terrorism.

This strategic victory can be achieved by denying the terrorists what they need to operate and survive, particularly support from inside Iraq. We are working to draw support away from the insurgency and toward the new Iraq. While the terrorists promise only hatred and violence, we support the vision of a free and democratic Iraq. Broad-based participation in the political process, evidenced most recently by the constitutional referendum, shows the Iraqi people choosing the democratic process and rejecting terrorist extremism. Support from the Iraqi people means better intelligence for coalition forces, fewer recruits for the terrorists, and fewer places for the terrorists to hide. Iraq's political progress therefore remains a key part of our strategy to defeat the terrorists in Iraq.

General MYERS. I disagree with your assertion that there is "an almost inexhaustible supply of terrorists being created in the Middle East." Hard core terrorists are not being created in Iraq, they are massing there for what they believe is a decisive battle. Some terrorists are exploiting the unstable areas in Iraq. However, unlike other global terrorist sanctuaries, we are actively pursuing them with Iraqi and coalition security forces and denying them safe areas from which to operate. The key to reducing the supply of terrorists is to create conditions, which are inhospitable to terrorism, much as a healthy body rejects the onslaught of disease. We must harness all the elements of national power to create good governance, economic opportunity, and the rule of law.

General ABIZAID. Although it is likely our presence there has drawn foreign terrorists to the country, it is also probable that it has significantly decreased the opportunity for terrorists to openly and freely recruit and train. USCENTCOM has had some successes in stemming the flow of foreign fighters coming into the country, especially in the Syrian border region and we are working with the Iraqi government on how they can provide long-term security in this region. We have also had many successes in eliminating numerous terrorist leaders. There is also evidence that the actions by foreign terrorists are not resonating with the average Iraqi and in some cases are being resented. This increases the chances that average Iraqis will report on these elements and in turn, increase the coalition's capability to neutralize them.

Coalition forces will continue to train Iraqi security forces and along with the Iraqi government, will continue aggressive pursuit of terrorists. This multi-faceted approach to decrease the terrorist threat will provide an environment where the political process can mature allowing the U.S. to reduce the size of its footprint which should help reduce the attraction of foreign fighters to Iraq.

General CASEY. We employ two broad methods to "take off the terrorist element" in Iraq. First, the Multi-National Force, in partnership with the Iraqi security forces, conducts operations, such as the recent missions in Tal Afar and the Western Euphrates Valley, to defeat terrorists, foreign fighters, and those Iraqis who support them. Second, we are reestablishing Iraqi control of its national borders to stem the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq. Those two objectives will reduce the operational capability of the terrorists in the country and prevent others from entering.

Simultaneously, we work in partnership with the Iraqi Transitional Government to enable the democratic political process. A strong, democratic government is the long-term solution to the insurgency in Iraq.

27. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, General Abizaid, and General Casey, a few hearings or briefings ago, we were told that the situation in southern Iraq around the city of Basra was peaceful. That seems to have changed. British troops stormed a police station looking for two captured British soldiers. An American journalist was murdered. Other Iraqis have been murdered on an almost daily basis. There are news reports that Islamic fundamentalists representing several different factions have taken control of the city, including police forces. Basra sits astride one of our critical lines of communication to the ports and to Kuwait. Now it appears that this strategically vital rear area may be in jeopardy. If this is the case, what went wrong with our strategy?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The recent incidents in Basra are troubling, and they deserve our careful attention. However, it is important to keep these incidents in their proper perspective. The Department's recent report to Congress on measuring security and stability in Iraq noted that 50 percent of Iraq's people experience only 6 percent of insurgent attacks. Basra is located in an area that has been peaceful relative to the rest of Iraq but by no means completely free of violence.

It is possible that additional incidents in Basra and in the southern part of Iraq will occur in the future, and given the relative quiet of that region, these incidents will tend to stand out from incidents occurring in locations experiencing more consistent violence. But these kinds of incidents do not represent a strategic threat. Our supply lines and lines of communication remain safe and open, our strategy in the south of Iraq remains an appropriate one. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and safeguard our communication and supply lines as necessary.

General MYERS. Because it is a city with many different political, religious, and tribal groups, Basra experiences periods of instability and crisis. The incidents you describe are examples of group loyalties or personal loyalties conflicting with the newly established democratic authorities. As the relationship between central, provincial, and municipal governments matures, these periodic incidents of instability will diminish.

General ABIZAID. The events to which you refer, while not insignificant, are isolated and not indicative of the overall situation in Basra and the surrounding Al Basra Province. Over the past 9 months violence in Basra has accounted for only 1.2 percent of all violence in Iraq, while Basra accounts for over 7 percent of the Iraqi population making Basra significantly more stable than a majority of the country. While attacks in the past 3 months leading to the successful constitutional referendum have increased slightly in Basra, they are not out of line with the expected increase in attacks across Iraq.

General CASEY. Basra remains one of our most peaceful and stable provinces averaging one attack per day. We will continue to maintain a coalition presence in this key province. Vetting of Iraqi security force recruits and continued professional development within their police forces will add to the region's stability and ensure long-term stability.

[Whereupon, at 1:45 p.m., the committee adjourned.]