AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

S. HRG. 109–885

IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, AND THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

AUGUST 3; NOVEMBER 15, 2006

Printed for the use of the Committee on Armed Services

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

35–223 PDF WASHINGTON : 2007

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402–0001

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

JOHN WARNER, Virginia, *Chairman*

JOHN McCAIN, Arizona
JAMES M. INHOFE, Oklahoma
PAT ROBERTS, Kansas
JEFF SESSIONS, Alabama
SUSAN M. COLLINS, Maine
JOHN ENSIGN, Nevada
JAMES M. TALENT, Missouri
SAXBY CHAMBLISS, Georgia
LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, South Carolina
ELIZABETH DOLE, North Carolina
JOHN CORNYN, Texas
JOHN THUNE, South Dakota

CARL LEVIN, Michigan
EDWARD M. KENNEDY, Massachusetts
ROBERT C. BYRD, West Virginia
JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, Connecticut
JACK REED, Rhode Island
DANIEL K. AKAKA, Hawaii
BILL NELSON, Florida
E. BENJAMIN NELSON, Nebraska
MARK DAYTON, Minnesota
EVAN BAYH, Indiana
HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, New York

CHARLES S. ABELL, *Staff Director*
RICHARD D. DEBOBES, *Democratic Staff Director*

CONTENTS

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WITNESSES

IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, AND THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

AUGUST 3, 2006

Page

Rumsfeld, Hon. Donald, United States Secretary of Defense; Accompanied by Gen. Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and GEN John Abizaid, USA, Commander, U.S. Central Command 6

TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE CURRENT SITUATION AND U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

NOVEMBER 15, 2006

Abizaid, GEN John P., USA, Commander, U.S. Central Command 98

Satterfield, Hon. David M., Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State and Coordinator for Iraq, Department of State 102

TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE CURRENT SITUATION AND U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

NOVEMBER 15, 2006

Hayden, Gen. Michael V., USAF, Director, Central Intelligence Agency 161

Maples, LTG Michael D., USA, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency 169

IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, AND THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2006

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:31 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, Chambliss, Graham, Cornyn, Thune, Levin, Kennedy, Byrd, Reed, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Dayton, Bayh, and Clinton.

Committee staff members present: Charles S. Abell, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: William M. Caniano, professional staff member; Gregory T. Kiley, professional staff member; Sandra E. Luff, professional staff member; Derek J. Maurer, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, counsel; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; and Kristine L. Svinicki, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Democratic staff director; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Creighton Greene, professional staff member; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; Michael J. McCord, professional staff member; William G.P. Monahan, minority counsel; and Michael J. Noblet, staff assistant.

Staff assistants present: Jessica L. Kingston, Benjamin L. Rubin, and Pendred K. Wilson.

Committee members' assistants present: Christopher J. Paul and Richard H. Fontaine, Jr., assistants to Senator McCain; John A. Bonsell and Jeremy Shull, assistants to Senator Inhofe; Arch Galloway II, assistant to Senator Sessions; Mackenzie M. Eaglen, assistant to Senator Collins; Matthew R. Rimkunas, assistant to Senator Graham; Greg Riels, assistant to Senator Dole; Russell J. Thomasson, assistant to Senator Cornyn; Stuart C. Mallory, assistant to Senator Thune; Sharon L. Waxman, assistant to Senator Kennedy; Christine Evans and Erik Raven, assistants to Senator Byrd; Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; William K. Sutey, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric Pierce, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Luke Ballman, assistant to Senator Dayton; Robert J. Ehrich, assistant to Senator Bayh; and Andrew Shapiro, assistant to Senator Clinton.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER, CHAIRMAN

Chairman WARNER. Good morning, everyone. The committee meets this morning to receive testimony from the distinguished Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld; General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and General John Abizaid, Commander of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), on progress in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the war on terrorism, and such other aspects as relative to your area of operations. The committee will also look in their insights on the ongoing crisis involving Israel, Hezbollah, Lebanon, and to some extent, Palestine.

Secretary Rumsfeld, the committee appreciates the changes you have made in your schedule that you have outlined to me very carefully and we welcome you this morning.

Last week, in an historic visit the prime minister of Iraq met with President Bush, addressed a joint session of Congress, and spoke with military personnel at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. I was privileged to be present at all of those events and I think it was an extremely important chapter in the ongoing developments in Iraq that he took that time to come over here. He demonstrated the resolve of the Iraqi people to build a free and stable country.

During the meeting with military personnel and their families—and I witnessed this in a very passionate and sincere way, he conveyed to those military people present at Fort Belvoir and for broadcast to military people all over the United States and the world the gratefulness in the hearts of the Iraqi people for their sacrifices of life and limb and that of their families in order to enable the people of Iraq to gain a measure of democracy, elect their government, and share in the freedom that we all have in this country.

In meetings with Prime Minister Maliki, President Bush reaffirmed America's commitment to support Iraq's constitutional democracy and to help Prime Minister Maliki's government succeed.

On July 25, President Bush said: "The Iraqi people want to succeed. They want to end this violence." The President also said that "America will not abandon the Iraqi people."

I am, however, gravely concerned by the recent spike in violence and sectarian attacks, and the instability in Baghdad and recent decisions to extend the deployment of 3,500 American troops in Iraq and to relocate additional American forces to reinforce Baghdad. Those were important decisions made by you, Mr. Secretary, General Abizaid, and you, Chairman Pace. I hope that you will share with us this morning the reasons for doing so. I do not question the seriousness of this situation, the need to do it, but we should have a very clear explanation, because we had, I regret to say, expectations, largely generated by certain reports of General Casey, about the hope to draw down our forces in the near future. That is a question I hope that we address this morning, because I do not like to see the hopes of the men and women of the Armed Forces raised and then have to be changed and the impact on their families and indeed the confusion that results here at home when those decisions have to be made.

But we recognize the President has said, as the Secretary has said, that ground conditions vary and they must be the determining factor.

Additionally, I have expressed concerns about the potential impact of events in Lebanon and Israel and their cascading effect on the wider Middle East region, and specifically on the United States and coalition forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. My concern is—and I have expressed this publicly—that Israel was wrongfully attacked by Hezbollah. No one disputes that whatsoever. They have an unequivocal right to defend themselves. No one disputes that. But as our Nation engages in this situation, and historically we have been an honest broker in that region, as our Nation engages in that conflict to try and resolve it, we must do so in a way to be mindful of the implications on our commitments in the Iraq theater.

The messages we send by virtue of our support to try and bring about a cessation of this conflict are transmitted throughout the Muslim world straight up into Iraq. It is my fervent hope that our men and women serving in uniform and others in Iraq will not be put at greater personal risk as a consequence of the rhetoric that flows, the decisions that are made, in trying to resolve that conflict. I will have further to say about that in the question period.

In the nearly 5 years since U.S. forces initiated operations to liberate Afghanistan from the brutal rule of the Taliban and to eliminate al Qaeda training bases and sanctuaries, there has been remarkable progress in Afghanistan on the political, economic, and security fronts. The Afghan people have spoken in favor of freedom and democracy and I am pleased that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is taking an increasing and very important role in Afghanistan, and you are to be commended, Mr. Secretary, for initiating that move together with General Jones, who has been a strong advocate of trying to achieve that goal.

However, recent reports from Afghanistan show that the violence is on the rise. We will learn from you, I hope, your concern as to that area of responsibility (AOR), General, and what the future holds in the face of a resurgence of the Taliban forces.

While some in the West take freedom and liberty for granted, Americans everywhere should remain so proud of the contributions of our service men and women deployed in harm's way. They are bringing the best hope for freedom and democracy to Iraq and Afghanistan after decades of cruel oppression and their sacrifices have enabled us here at home to fully enjoy the freedoms that we have.

As the current conflict in Lebanon and Israel proceeds, there is obvious concern that the crisis could spark a wider war. The firebrand Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr said, "We, the unified Iraqi people, will stand with the Lebanese people to end the ominous trio of the United States, Israel, and Britain, which is terrorizing Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and other occupied nations." He also said that he was ready to go to Lebanon to defend it.

Now, we all recognize that he is just a hothead and a firebrand, but he is a troublemaker and I hope, General Abizaid, you can give us some assessment of the courage and the will of the Iraqi people, under the leadership of the prime minister, to begin a step that

must be achieved, and that is the disbanding of these private militias, notably Sadr's.

Back to Osama bin Laden. His deputy issued a worldwide call for Muslims to rise up against Israel and join the fighting in Lebanon and Gaza, raising again the specter of an Islamic caliphate that I clearly remember General Abizaid discussed in testimony before the committee last year. We hope you will bring us up-to-date on the Osama bin Laden situation and the ongoing activities of our forces together with others trying to bring about this man being brought to justice or otherwise taken care of.

In light of all these developments, the mission in Iraq and Afghanistan is even more critical and your time with us today is critical.

General Pace and General Abizaid, I want to express our gratitude to both of you and the countless men and women that you represent, for your continued service and historic efforts of our Nation's military to bring freedom and liberty to Iraq, Afghanistan, and to preserve it here at home.

Secretary Rumsfeld, once again the committee welcomes you. Now, just before the committee meeting started General Abizaid offered to meet with Senator Levin and myself, for information of the members of the committee, and he outlined the progress being made with the various reports examining the activities of the chain of command relative to certain incidents in Iraq. It is our understanding, General Abizaid, that those reports will soon be given to you. There is a convergence of the criminal investigation together with the chain of command investigation under General Chiarelli. It is now in the overall commander of the Marine Forces, General Zilmer, and then it comes to you, and it is your hope and expectation that, working with the Secretary, those reports can be made available to this committee early on in September.

Senator Levin.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this very important hearing, and thank you to all of our witnesses for being here this morning.

The American service men and women in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other trouble spots around the world are performing their duties magnificently. We salute them and their families. We thank them for their unselfish service and devotion to our Nation.

Despite their heroic efforts, the security situation in Iraq continues to worsen. Sectarian violence is not only on the rise, it has eclipsed the Sunni insurgency and the terrorism of al Qaeda in Iraq in terms of the toll it has taken and the threats to Iraq's chances of stability.

Our military leadership has identified Baghdad as the key, what they call the center of gravity, to success or failure in Iraq. The highly vaunted recent plan to stabilize Baghdad has not worked, and we are going back to the drawing board and sending more U.S. troops to the Iraqi capital. We are having difficulty finding sufficient troops for that purpose. The fact that the Army's Stryker brigade that is being sent to Baghdad is being extended past its 12-month rotation date by another 3 to 4 months speaks volumes

about how our military is overextended and unable to find other units ready for immediate reinforcement in Iraq.

While there appears to be an immediate necessity for additional troops in Baghdad, more troops will not be the ultimate answer. Our military leadership has repeatedly said there is no military solution, that there must be a political solution in Iraq.

Iraqis reaching the political compromises now is more important and more critical to defusing the violence and conflict in Iraq. That is why we need to clearly tell the Iraqi political leaders that our commitment to Iraq is not open-ended, that we will begin the phased redeployment of our troops by the end of the year and that they must make the political compromises necessary to avoid all-out civil war and defeat the insurgency.

When General Casey was asked at a press conference recently whether he still believed that there would be fairly substantial troop reductions over the course of this year, he said, "I think so." Marine Corps General Conway testified before us last week at his confirmation hearing to be the next Commandant that, "I personally believe that you will have Iraqis who have started to look at us as occupiers and are resisting us in some instances, whereas they would not resist an Iraqi force doing precisely the same thing." He also testified that it is critical that the Iraqis understand that our presence is not open-ended and unlimited.

The President has assured the Nation that as Iraqi forces stand up we will stand down. General Dempsey, our senior general responsible for the training and equipping of Iraqi security forces, has said publicly that, "The Iraqi army will be built by the end of this calendar year" and that their army would be, "fully capable of recruiting, vetting, inducting, training, forming into units, putting them in barracks, and sending them out the gate to perform their missions." Congress has been told that over 70 percent of Iraqi combat battalions are capable of independent counterinsurgency operations or capable of taking the lead in those operations. The Iraqi security forces are standing up. We need to begin to stand down with a phased redeployment starting by the end of this year.

It is time for the Iraqis to take greater responsibility for the security of their own country. It is time to do what the President repeatedly said he would do. Now that the Iraqis have done a significant amount of standing up their troops, surely by the end of this year we should begin to stand down some of our troops.

Now, not only do the operations in the CENTCOM region have broad implications on the future of that region, they are also having a serious impact on our own military. Our ground forces—the Army and the Marine Corps—are under enormous strain due to several years of large-scale deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. This is because a large amount of equipment has been left in Iraq and because the remaining equipment has been subjected to large amounts of wear and tear, there is a lack of readiness for Army and Marine Corps units which have redeployed to their home bases.

It is argued that our units are more capable now because of organizational changes and the infusion of technology and better equipment. But that is only true if the units actually have the equipment on hand, and only if what they have on hand is in a high

state of maintenance so that they can train for their potential contingencies. Hypothetically, if 50 combat units could now do what 100 units could do in the past, that would be true only if those units are ready to do so. Over two-thirds of the Army's combat brigades are not in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Army's own statistics show that the vast majority of those are not in command, or in command and control—in other words, by the Army's own measurements are not ready to respond to those contingencies which they must be prepared to do by Department of Defense (DOD) war plans.

Mr. Chairman, again I thank you for calling this hearing and I thank our witnesses, all of them, for making the arrangements which they had to make in order to be with us this morning.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Levin.

Secretary Rumsfeld.

STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD RUMSFELD, UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENSE; ACCOMPANIED BY GEN. PETER PACE, USMC, CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF; AND GEN JOHN ABIZAID, USA, COMMANDER, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

Secretary RUMSFELD. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Thank you for the invitation to testify. Senator Clinton, thank you for seconding the motion. I know we all agree that the American people deserve a healthy, preferably constructive, exchange on matters that so directly affect the lives, their lives, their families' lives, and their country's security.

I am joined by General Peter Pace, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and General John Abizaid, the Combatant Commander of the U.S. Central Command. We will be providing an update on the global struggle against violent extremists and certainly we will welcome questions.

In the past few weeks, in terrorist attacks in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and now by Hezbollah, we have seen the face of the early part of the 21st century. In this period of asymmetric warfare, irregular warfare, one side puts their men and women at risk in uniform and obeys the laws of war, while the other side uses them against us. One side does all it can to avoid civilian casualties while the other side uses civilians as shields and then skillfully orchestrates a public outcry when the other side accidentally kills civilians in their midst. One side is held to exacting standards of near-perfection; the other side is held to no standards and no accountability at all.

This enemy has called Iraq the central front on the war on terrorism, while some on our side seem to argue that the outcome in Iraq is not part of that global war on terror. Sixteen years ago this week, Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait, killing civilians, unleashing environmental devastation, provoking a crisis that led to Iraqi attacks on Israel and threats to Saudi Arabia and others in the region. Last week, by contrast, as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, the new Iraqi prime minister, who was elected by the Iraqi people under a constitution the Iraqi people wrote and ratified, came to the United States to thank the American people for their assistance in building a new future for the people of Iraq. He had spent 25 years in opposition to the Saddam Hussein regime, and

before a joint session of Congress he noted that if terror were permitted to triumph in Iraq then the war on terror will never be won elsewhere.

The enemy understands this as well. They are waging a psychological war of attrition, planning attacks to gain the maximum media coverage and the maximum public outcry. They want us to believe that perseverance by us is futile rather than necessary. They want us to focus on our casualties and losses, not on the people causing the casualties and losses. They want us to think about what will happen if our forces stay in Iraq, as opposed to the consequences if our forces were to leave prematurely.

They want us to be divided because they know that when we are united they lose. They want us pointing fingers at each other rather than pointing fingers at them.

I know there are calls in some quarters for withdrawal or arbitrary timelines for withdrawals. The enemies hear those words as well. We need to be realistic about the consequences. If we left Iraq prematurely, as the terrorists demand, the enemy would tell us to leave Afghanistan and then withdraw from the Middle East, and if we left the Middle East they would order us and all those who do not share their militant ideology to leave what they call the occupied Muslim lands from Spain to the Philippines. Then we would face not only the evil ideology of these violent extremists, but an enemy that will have grown accustomed to succeeding in telling free people everywhere what to do.

We can persevere in Iraq or we can withdraw prematurely until they force us to make a stand nearer home. But make no mistake, they are not going to give up whether we acquiesce in their immediate demands or not.

Decisions about conditions for a drawdown of our forces in Iraq are best based on the recommendations of the commanders in the field and the recommendations of the gentlemen sitting beside me. We should strive to think through how our words can be interpreted by our troops, by the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, by our 42 allies in our coalition in Afghanistan, and our 34 allies in our coalition in Iraq. We should consider how our words can be used by our deadly enemy.

The war on terror is going to be a long struggle. It is not something we asked for, but neither is it something we can avoid. But I remain confident in our mission, in our commanders, in our troops, and in our cause. I remain confident in the good common sense of the American people. Americans did not cross oceans and settle the wilderness and build history's greatest democracy only to run away from a bunch of murderers and extremists who try to kill everyone that they cannot convert and to tear down what they could never build.

Over the past few years, I have had the honor of meeting countless young men and women in uniform, all volunteers, who have answered our country's call. I remember a serviceman outside of Afghanistan who looked me in the eye and said, "I cannot believe that we are being allowed to do something so important."

Our troops represent the finest and the most professional troops in history. I think of these remarkable people every day. I know

that everything we do in the DOD and what you do on this committee affects them and their wonderfully supportive families.

Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

General Pace.

General PACE. Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee: it truly is an honor to be before you today representing the incredible young men and women in your Armed Forces. Since September 11, 2001, over 1 million young men and women in uniform have served this country in the CENTCOM area of operations and they have done so with incredible bravery and sacrifice and performance that has made us all proud. Their families have served this Nation as well as anyone who has worn the uniform, especially those families today in the 172nd Stryker brigade whose loved ones are not coming home when they thought they would be coming home and who once again are sacrificing so that we might provide the strength needed on the battlefield.

It is now almost 5 years since September 11, 2001, and the number of young men and women in our Armed Forces who have sacrificed their lives that we might live in freedom is approaching the number of Americans who were murdered on September 11, 2001, in New York, in Washington, DC, and in Pennsylvania.

We have come a long way in Afghanistan. We have come a long way in Iraq and elsewhere in the war on terrorism. We have a long way to go. We are a Nation at war. Fortunately, most of our fellow citizens are not affected by this war every day. Some 2.4 million Americans—Active, National Guard, and Reserve—have the privilege of defending over 300 million of our fellow citizens and countless millions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere.

Our enemy knows they cannot defeat us in battle. They do believe, however, that they can wear down our will as a Nation. They are wrong. How do I know they are wrong? First, this committee and this Congress continue to provide the resources we need to defend this Nation, and I thank you for that.

Second, our service men and women are proud of what they are doing and they are reenlisting in record numbers to continue to have the privilege to do what we do for this Nation.

Third, as the Secretary mentioned in his comments, the American people have in the past, are now, and will in the future respond to attacks on our way of life. For 230 years we have met the challenges. This will not be easy, this will not be quick, and this will not be without sacrifice. But we will persist and we will prevail.

I look forward to answering your questions today and working together with you in the future to defend this Nation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, General.

General Abizaid.

General ABIZAID. Thank you, Chairman Warner, Senator Levin, members of the committee. Thanks for the opportunity to testify today.

A couple of days ago I returned from the Middle East. I have rarely seen it so unsettled or so volatile. There is an obvious struggle in the region between moderates and extremists that touches

every aspect of life. Such extremism, whether state-sponsored by Iran or ideologically motivated by al Qaeda and its associated movements, remains a serious danger to global peace and stability.

My duties took me to Iraq, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and elsewhere in the Arabian Gulf, where our troops continue to perform with great professional calm and determination under dangerous and difficult circumstances. Of course, over the past several weeks the media has been filled with images of war in Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine. Indeed, U.S. forces under CENTCOM helped evacuate nearly 15,000 Americans from Lebanon's war zone.

While the media's eye often directs public attention to Iraq and Afghanistan, it is important to remember that U.S. and coalition forces serve throughout Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Horn of Africa, increasing regional states' capacity to battle extremism and keeping open the vital air and sea links of the region.

In the broader struggle against extremism, we face complex and potentially intersecting problems. Our strategic imperatives are formidable. With the continuing help of our friends, we must focus on three strategic objectives: We must synchronize the appropriate diplomatic, economic, and military means to defeat al Qaeda and its associated movements; we must deter Iranian designs for regional hegemony, to include its sponsorship of terrorist organizations and its development of nuclear weapons; finally, we must find a comprehensive solution to the corrosive Arab-Israeli conflict.

I fully recognize that each of these tasks is filled with danger and enormous difficulties. I also realize that trying to solve any of these problems will take a considerable amount of time and effort. But failure to apply coordinated regional and international pressure against these three problems will further encourage extremism and could eventually lead to a broader, even more dangerous conflict.

The arming of independent militias and the subsequent undermining of state institutions by these militias is the curse of the region. In many ways, interconnectedness brought on by 21st century globalization has been turned to the advantage by non-state actors. Globalization brings with it great benefits, but it also accelerates the dissolution of sovereignty in weak or corroded states. If this century is to be dominated by non-state actors with no responsibility to the international community, we are in for even greater dangers.

It should not be lost on us, for example, that Hezbollah fields greater and longer-range weapons than most regional armed forces. If left unchecked, it is possible to imagine chemical, biological, or even nuclear weapons being transferred to militias or terrorist organizations by a state actor.

In the highly unsettled Middle East, the problem of extremist-sponsored terror and intimidation is complicated. But we must be willing to talk about al Qaeda's ideological designs and face the implications of revolutionary Iran's ambitions, so often and so clearly stated by its president.

There is no doubt that these are dangerous times for the world, but there should also be no doubt that, with concerted international action and the application of our own substantial power, these dangers can be overcome.

Iraq sits at the center of the broader regional problem. Al Qaeda and Shiite extremists form terrorist groups and death squads to challenge the new government and undermine confidence in a better future. Iran talks about stabilizing Iraq, but, just as in Lebanon, it arms, trains, and equips local extremist Shiite militias to do Iran's bidding. As the primary security problem in Iraq has shifted from a Sunni insurgency to sectarian violence, al Qaeda terrorists, insurgents, and Shiite militants compete to plunge the country into civil war.

Prime Minister Maliki and his new government know what must be done and in 3 short months in office are responsibly tackling the complex and difficult problems of security and governance. Iraqi security forces in conjunction with coalition forces must bring Baghdad, the center of sectarian violence, under control. Illegal militias must be disbanded. National reconciliation must proceed. Death squad leaders must be brought to justice.

It is a decisive time in Baghdad and it requires decisive Iraqi action with our clear support. Despite the many challenges, progress does continue to be made in Iraq and I am confident that there are still many more people in Iraq trying to hold that country together than there are trying to tear it apart. Our ongoing support of their efforts is essential for their success, especially as they assume more and more responsibility for their own security.

I know the committee wants to focus these hearings on Iraq, but I close with the reminder that Iraq is only one part of a broader regional struggle underway, one which requires the wise application of all our resources. Our own troops along with NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) continue to operate in Afghanistan. Pakistani and Saudi forces are fighting extremists daily. Insurgencies, secular violence, and terror sponsored by Sunni and Shiite religious extremist groups are pervasive throughout the region. Fortunately, as in our own society, the vast majority of the people in the region do not want extremists to win. Our challenge is to help these moderate forces help themselves in the struggle.

Afghanistan, Iraq, and the entire region remain dangerous and often deadly. Our continued involvement in shaping regional security forces and providing the framework for regional action against extremist groups is essential for our own safety and prosperity at home.

Finally, we must be ever mindful of the sacrifice of our young men and women in uniform. Out of the over 1.5 million service personnel who have rotated through the CENTCOM region since September 11, 2001, over 3,000 have given their lives. We owe them and their families an enormous debt of gratitude. Today nearly 200,000 of our troops serve in harm's way. These are incredibly dedicated and resourceful professionals. Thank you for your continued support to these great Americans, who willingly fight for all of us.

Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General, for a very incisive and important statement that you have just made.

We are going to depart from our normal rotation here. Senator Levin and I both serve on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. They are now having a meeting and the Senator from

Michigan has to go to that meeting. Therefore I will offer you the first opportunity to initiate questioning.

Senator LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your invariable courtesies.

General Abizaid, when General Casey was asked at a press conference recently whether he still believed what he said last year, when he predicted that there would be troop reductions over the course of this year, he said that he still believes there will be such reductions this year. Do you personally share that view?

General ABIZAID. Senator, since the time that General Casey made that statement it is clear that the operational and the tactical situation in Baghdad is such that it requires additional security forces, both U.S. and Iraqi. I think the most important thing ahead of us throughout the remainder of this year is ensuring that the Baghdad security situation be brought under control. It is possible to imagine some reductions in forces, but I think the most important thing to imagine is Baghdad coming under the control of the Iraqi government.

Senator LEVIN. When you say it is possible to imagine some reduction in forces, you mean this year?

General ABIZAID. It is possible, depending upon how things go in Baghdad and how Prime Minister Maliki and his government grab hold of the security situation.

Senator LEVIN. Is it important that the Iraqis understand that our commitment is not open-ended?

General ABIZAID. Sir, I think they fully understand it is not open-ended.

Senator LEVIN. Some of their statements have not reflected that full understanding. But in any event, would you agree that it is important that they do understand our commitment is not open-ended?

General ABIZAID. I believe they do understand it is not open-ended. They know our commitment and they know the necessity for over time to increase their capacity against the extremists.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary, the President has assured the Nation frequently that as Iraqi security forces stand up we will stand down. They have stood up. The majority of their combat battalions are capable now of independent counterinsurgency or capable of taking the lead in those operations. Should we not, at least by the end of this year, begin to do what the President said we would do? Since the security forces of Iraq have stood up in such significant measure, should we not begin to stand down as the President said we would?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, you are correct, the Iraqi security forces are now up to something like 275,000. They are headed towards 325,000 by the end of the year, unless the prime minister makes an adjustment in those numbers, which as a new government he has every right to do in a sovereign nation.

I guess the issue of drawdown depends on what you think your base is. We were up at 160,000. Today—we have gotten as low as I think 127,000. Today we are at 135,000 or 133,000, and certainly everyone from the Iraqis, the troops, and the President would hope that those troops could be drawn down as conditions permit. The question, the only difference between the way you phrase it and

the President phrases it as he ends by pointing out that he intends to succeed here and he believes that the determinant should be the conditions on the ground, as opposed to some timetable.

I do think the point you raise, the core of what you are asking, is important. That is the tension that exists between having too many troops and having it feed an insurgency. I believe, as indicated by General Conway, and having too few so that you do not have a sufficient number to allow the security situation to permit the political and the economic activities to go forward. That is a fair tension that exists there, and it is an art, not a science. There is no guidebook that says how to do that.

So clearly we would all hope that there could be drawdowns on those forces as the conditions permit.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

The press reported that Iraqi President Talabani said yesterday that the Iraqi government is confident that Iraqi troops will take over security duties for the entire country by the end of this year. Then he also reportedly said that the recent increase in violence by insurgents is "the last arrows in their quivers."

Now, that phrase is reminiscent of Vice President Cheney's claim a year ago that the insurgency was in its "last throes." General Abizaid, does our intelligence on the insurgency provide any basis for the assertion that the recent surge in violence represents the last arrows in the insurgents' quivers?

General ABIZAID. Senator Levin, I think it is clear that the insurgency has a lot of resiliency. It is probably going to last for some time, even after U.S. forces depart and hand over security control completely to the Iraqis. The question for President Talabani, as I have discussed with him before, whether or not over time the Iraqis can control it, and I believe they will be able to.

Senator LEVIN. You do not agree, then, that it is in its last throes or that they are shooting the last arrows?

General ABIZAID. I am making no comment about what he said about last arrows or last throes.

Senator LEVIN. Why?

General ABIZAID. I do not see any reason to dispute what the President says. I know that I think it is a long-term problem for Iraq that they will be able to work through over time.

Senator LEVIN. According to USA Today, the British Ambassador to Iraq, Mr. Patey, made the following assessment. Mr. Patey has warned that Iraq is descending towards civil war, and he said it is likely to split along ethnic lines. He is reported as predicting that Iraq's security situation could remain volatile for the next 10 years.

Do you agree, General, with the Ambassador from Britain to Iraq that Iraq is sliding toward civil war?

General ABIZAID. I believe that the sectarian violence is probably as bad as I have seen it, in Baghdad in particular, and that if not stopped it is possible that Iraq could move towards civil war.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, thank you. My time is up. Thank you again for allowing me to go ahead here.

Chairman WARNER. I want to go back to, Secretary Rumsfeld, the observations I made in the opening statement. On July 17 at

about 8 o'clock, I went to the floor of the Senate. The Senate was about to consider a resolution, an important resolution reaffirming our support for Israel. But I said the following. I said I was concerned that we should take into account America's broader interests in the region as we approach this resolution.

I said specifically: "America's operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have taken the lives of more than 2,500 American servicemen, over 20,000 still severely wounded, and over $436 billion of our taxpayers' money over these 3 years." That is an enormous investment of this country, and the credibility of our country in many respects rests on the conclusion of that conflict in such a way that the Iraqi government can exercise sovereignty and bring about a measure of freedom and democracy. We are committed to that and I stand strongly with our President to achieve that goal.

America's participation with other nations in achieving a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis, I can think of no problem of greater significance than our resolve to not let Iran possess nuclear weapons.

The stability of the Lebanese government, that must survive, that government, such that they can once again take an even stronger grip on that nation and govern it.

There is a lot at stake with our relationships with other nations. In a region in which our distinguished witness General Abizaid, who spent much of your lifetime in that region, just said, rarely have I seen it so volatile. It is subject to the corrosive relationships coming out of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

My concern is that as we go into this situation, and we have an obligation to try and work as an honest broker, I hope, in resolving the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, as we pursue that and as our actions are interpreted by the Muslim world—and I read some of the statements of the clerics recently, in the last few days—I do not want to see our forces put at greater personal risk, subject to greater intensity brought against them by the adversaries in Iraq.

So my question to you, Mr. Secretary, as we take up our role, hopefully as an honest broker in this, are we mindful of the broader picture and the enormity of our investment in Iraq as we try to do what we can to bring about a cessation of the fighting in the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Mr. Chairman, in the meetings that I have been in with the President and the Secretary of State and those that are intimately involved in the situation in Lebanon and Israel with respect to the Hezbollah, there is a sensitivity to the desire to not have our country or our interests or our forces put at greater risk as a result of what is taking place between Israel and Hezbollah.

I think I would suggest that it be phrased slightly differently because there are risks, as you point out, but it is a matter of relative risks. There are also risks, if one thinks about it, that Iran is the principal sponsor of Hezbollah. Iran is seeking nuclear weapons, as you posed. Iran is the supplier of weapons to Hezbollah. The rockets that are heading into Israel by Hezbollah tend to be in a number of cases Iranian rockets. Clearly, to the extent that Iran were to achieve weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and with a history

of a willingness to work intimately with a terrorist organization like Hezbollah, there is that risk as well.

So there are a variety of risks that we face in that region and it is a difficult and delicate situation. As I indicated in my opening remarks, I do believe what we are seeing is really the face of the 21st century. The wars we are engaged in and we see are not wars between militaries only; they are wars, they are clashes between systems, political, economic, and military. They are being fought with asymmetric and irregular warfare, which is very much to the advantage of the attackers.

Chairman WARNER. Mr. Secretary, that situation in Iraq is fragile. We need only look at the Baghdad situation. Baghdad could literally tilt this thing if we fail to bring about a measure of security for those people, tilt it in a way that we could slide toward a civil war that General Abizaid recalled.

General Pace, I go back to the resolution of October 16, 2002, which I participated in, and my good friend to the left, in drawing up that resolution for the Senate. It authorized the President of the United States to use the Armed Forces of the United States to: one, defend the national security of our country against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; two, enforce all relevant United Nations (U.N.) Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.

Many of those missions set out and envisioned by Congress when it gave this authority, namely the toppling of the Saddam Hussein regime, have been achieved. But in the words of General Abizaid, we are on the brink of a civil war. I do not have the exact words before me, but I was struck by General Chiarelli's statement the other day that in his 35 years of military training he had really never spent a day preparing for what faces him as our commander of forces in Iraq, sectarian violence, civil war.

What is the mission of the United States today under this resolution if that situation erupts into a civil war? What are the missions of our forces?

General PACE. Sir, I believe that we do have the possibility of that devolving to a civil war, but it does not have to be a fact. I believe that U.S. Armed Forces today can continue to do what we are doing, which is to help provide enough security inside of Iraq for the Iraqi government to provide governance and economic opportunity for their citizens.

The weight of that opportunity rests with the Iraqi people. We can provide support. We can help provide security. But they must now decide about their sectarian violence. Shiite and Sunni are going to have to love their children more than they hate each other. If they do that and seize the opportunity that the international community has provided to them, then this will be what we want it to be, which is a success for ourselves and the Iraqi people. But the weight of that shift must be on the Iraqi people and the Iraqi government.

Chairman WARNER. I think we have to examine very carefully what Congress authorized the President to do in the context of a situation if we are faced with an all-out civil war, and whether we have to come back to Congress to get further indication of support.

General Abizaid, I have had the privilege of knowing you for a long time and I really think you speak with remarkable candor and

draw on an extraordinary career of professionalism. You spent 1 year of your career in Lebanon. Lebanon is a part of your AOR as CENTCOM. Do you agree with the premise that in this current conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, recognizing that Hezbollah attacked Israel, recognizing that Israel has a perfect right to defend itself, but in so executing their military campaign it is essential in my judgment the Lebanese government not be toppled as a consequence of the infrastructure that is being destroyed in the course of this war, and can they achieve in this military operation such degradation of Hezbollah, its command and control, its inventory of weapons, as to result in a situation whereby a multinational force can eventually come in, subject to some form of a ceasefire, and begin to shore up, stabilize that government, and allow it to take firm control over the entirety of all aspects of sovereignty of the nation of Lebanon?

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman, U.N. Resolution 1559 clearly calls for the disarmament of Hezbollah and the extension of Lebanese sovereignty all the way from its northern border to its southern border. Had that resolution been implemented or started to move towards implementation, the current problem would be much less severe than it has become.

The Iranians who have armed Hezbollah with cruise missiles, antiship missiles, missiles that can reach as far as Haifa and beyond, have given Hezbollah a state-like existence and capacity that is unlike any other militia anywhere in the region. It is absolutely essential that the Lebanese government regain its sovereignty over its own territory. It will in my opinion need an international force to help it do that. There are ways that, in conjunction with the international community, Hezbollah can be disarmed over time and the Shiite people that participate in the political life of Hezbollah can be readily accommodated within the Lebanese body politic.

The question as to whether or not the Israelis can degrade Hezbollah over time, degradation can take place. I think it is also very clear to say that over time the consensus of holding Lebanon together under external pressure starts to break down. It is very important that Lebanon stay together as a sovereign country. It is key to stability in the Middle East and it is essential that that take place, and the international community needs to move in that direction.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

General, just to first of all thank you, General Abizaid, General Pace, thank you very much for your service. Welcome, Secretary Rumsfeld. I think you can understand why it is so important for your presence here, given these range of issues that are front and center for the American people.

Let me ask you, General Abizaid, if we have difficulty with 130,000 troops in Iraq trying to disarm the insurgency, how in the world do we think we are going to be able to get an international force that is going to disarm Hezbollah?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I think with the weight of the international community and the right rules of engagement and the

right participation of the various parties concerned, that over time Hezbollah can be disarmed.

Senator KENNEDY. Just to come back to a point that the chairman had mentioned about the costs in Iraq, the $400 billion total, 2,579 have been killed, 19,000 wounded, 54 casualties from my own State of Massachusetts, 70 percent of these from improvised explosive devices (IEDs). We have been in Iraq for 40 months and 13 days. The Korean War, 37 months. World War I, 19 months. The Persian Gulf War, 3 months. World War II, 42 months—VE Day, 42 months for VE Day, 45 months for VJ Day. The Civil War was 48 months.

We have been in there now for 40 months and 13 days, with the finest military that has ever been developed, in basically rather a third-rate military situation. How much more do we really expect our military can do? How much more can we demand of them when they are out there doing such a proud and noble job of serving our country? How much more can we demand? Why not is this demand for political accommodation, why is that not front and center, so that we can start to bring our Americans home with honor?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I think there is a demand for a combination of military, political, and diplomatic activity that moves towards a solution that brings Iraq toward stability. I think over time it becomes less military and more diplomatic and more political. I believe that this current government, that is a 4-year government, has that opportunity.

Senator KENNEDY. Mr. Secretary, just to continue, the exact words that General Chiarelli said just last week, "Quite frankly, in 33 years in the United States Army I have never trained to stop a sectarian fight. This is something new."

Now, we hear General Abizaid talk about the increase in sectarian violence. How are our troops trained to deal with sectarianism? We know that they were not trained as well as they should have been when they first went into Iraq. They were not trained at Abu Ghraib. How are they trained now with this new sectarianism? How are they trained not to take sides?

Is this new addition of troops in Baghdad the beginning? Are we going to have to have more troops to deal with this? What are our troops told in Baghdad now to quell the violence in this sectarianism? How are they going to not get drawn into one side or the other with the escalation of the sectarian violence? What is in their background, what is in their training, what has been in their leadership, that would give them the ability to not be involved in this, to quell the violence and to eventually help President Maliki disarm and dismantle the militias?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, I think your point is a valid one, that ultimately the sectarian violence is going to be dealt with by Iraqis and it is going to be dealt with by Iraqi security forces as a part of the solution, but it is going to be dealt with through a reconciliation process, a political process that Prime Minister Maliki and others in the country are trying to design in a way that it will pull together elements within the country and thereby reduce sectarian violence.

I would rather have either of the generals comment on the training, except to say that the situation in Iraq, with 18 provinces, is

really quite different in different provinces. We have forces in most provinces and the training is different for the different circumstances that they face.

One of the things that the DOD has done is have extensive lessons learned from what is taking place in Iraq and different parts of the country brought back to the Joint Forces Command, the National Training Center, and the troops are then being trained up carefully to assure that they have the best kind of training they can have for the circumstances that we believe at the time they are going to find in the areas they are going to be assigned to.

Senator KENNEDY. My time is just about up. General Abizaid, could you expand on this, are they getting in with the growth of the sectarian violence? How do our troops get in there, not get embroiled in the sectarian violence, whether your estimate—is this the beginning or is this the end of the increased numbers of troops that we are going to need over there?

How is their background and training actually going to quell that sectarian violence that you have identified as escalating at the present time?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General ABIZAID. Senator Kennedy, the first line against sectarian violence is the Iraqi armed forces. The Iraqi armed forces know where the problem is coming from. They know how to deal with the problem. They can recognize it easier than our troops can.

But I would also tell you that our forces do have the capability to precisely target the secular death squad structure that is responsible for this activity, and more and more over time we have become proficient at being able to attack the secular structure of al Qaeda and we intend to use that capability and intelligence activity that we have used before to target the militia death squads that we are seeing operate now in Baghdad with a certain degree of freedom.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

For the record, this is General Chiarelli's full statement. It is July 27, 2006. He said, "For the military, the plan is unchartered ground. Quite frankly, in 33 years in the United States Army I never trained to stop a sectarian fight," he said. "This is something new." That is the quote to which I referred to and Senator Kennedy referred to.

Senator McCain.

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

I thank the witnesses and I want to repeat at the outset my firm belief that we can and must win in Iraq and that the consequences of failure would be catastrophic.

General Pace, you said there is a possibility of the situation in Iraq evolving into civil war, is that correct?

General PACE. I did say that, yes, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. Did you anticipate this situation a year ago?

General PACE. No, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. Did you, General Abizaid?

General ABIZAID. I believe that a year ago it was clear to see that sectarian tensions were increasing. That they would be this high, no.

Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid, we are moving 7,500 troops into Baghdad, is that correct?

General ABIZAID. The number is closer to 3,500.

Senator MCCAIN. 3,500?

General ABIZAID. Plus military police that were going there for other duties, that are being used in the outer cordon areas, military policemen in particular.

Senator MCCAIN. Where are these troops coming from?

General ABIZAID. The troops, the Stryker brigade is coming down from Mosul.

Senator MCCAIN. From Mosul. Is the situation under control in Ramadi?

General ABIZAID. The situation in Ramadi is better than it was 2 months ago.

Senator MCCAIN. Is the situation under control in Ramadi?

General ABIZAID. I think the situation in Ramadi is workable.

Senator MCCAIN. The troops from Ramadi came from Fallujah, is that not correct?

General ABIZAID. I cannot say, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. That is my information. What I worry about is we are playing a game of whack-a-mole here. We move troops. It flares up, we move troops there. We all know that Fallujah was allowed to become a base of operations and insurgency, so we had to go into Fallujah and fight one of the great battles in Marine Corps-Army history. Then when I was back there not too long ago, they said, we have big problems in Ramadi. Everybody knows we have big problems in Ramadi. I said: Where are you going to get the troops? We are going to have to move them from Fallujah. Now we are going to have to move troops into Baghdad from someplace else.

It is very disturbing. If it is all up to the Iraqi military, General Abizaid, then I wonder why we have to move troops into Baghdad to intervene in what is clearly sectarian violence.

General ABIZAID. Senator, Iraqi troops are also being moved into Baghdad. The number of Iraqi troops in the Baghdad area are greater than our troops. We are in support with them in the main operational areas, and I believe that under the current circumstances that the Iraqi forces need to benefit from our command and control capabilities and the systems of a unit such as the Stryker brigade that has been moved to the south.

Senator MCCAIN. I would anticipate putting American troops into this very volatile situation means that American casualties will probably go up.

General ABIZAID. I think it is possible that in the period ahead of us in Baghdad that we will take increased casualties, it is possible.

Senator MCCAIN. The situation in southern Iraq. I was briefed by British military and others that there is a grave concern about Iranian penetration throughout southern Iraq. Is that a serious issue?

General ABIZAID. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Kudz force, intelligence agencies, arm, train, and equip what I would call rogue Shiite groups. Yes, it is a concern.

Senator MCCAIN. Is Basra in control of the militias?

General ABIZAID. I think that the militias have greater influence in Basra than they need to have, and that is why Prime Minister Maliki has appointed a military officer to go down there to get the security situation back under control.

Senator MCCAIN. Do you have confidence in the Iraqi Minister of Interior?

General ABIZAID. I do not know the Iraqi Minister of Interior the way I know the Defense Minister. I have no reason not to have confidence in him.

Senator MCCAIN. All the reports we have is that day after day, people are running around in police uniforms and army uniforms and they are actually militias and they are killing people. Story after story, they say when you see the people come in uniform it is an emergency, that people are going to be killed.

Which brings us obviously to the state of the training, not of the Iraqi military, but of Iraqi police and law enforcement. Can you comment on that situation?

General ABIZAID. During the period after the national election when no governance formed, the interior ministry in particular did not develop its forces in the way that we had anticipated that they would or should. Military forces, on the other hand, continued to develop well. They have continued to perform well. But there is no doubt that police units, especially local police units, were infiltrated in Basra in particular, but elsewhere as well, by local militias and they put their allegiance to the militias ahead of their allegiance to the state.

It is vital that we turn this around.

Senator MCCAIN. The cleric al-Sadr continues to be a major obstacle to progress in Iraq. I believe there is still an outstanding warrant for his arrest. Are we going to address that issue?

General ABIZAID. The issue will be addressed by the Iraqi government.

Senator MCCAIN. Not by us?

General ABIZAID. It will be addressed by the Iraqi government.

Senator MCCAIN. All of my colleagues are here, so I want to not take time. I just want to conclude. Secretary Rumsfeld, we passed an amendment on the National Defense Authorization Act, which I am confident will be accepted in conference, and that requires that operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, funding for it be included in the regular budgetary process.

We are hearing story after story about mismanagement of funds, corruption, et cetera. We must have sufficient congressional oversight. I hope you are making plans to include the expenses involved in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in the normal budgetary process and not as an "emergency supplemental." I think you should be able at this time, after this many years involved in this conflict, be able to predict what those costs might be.

I want to say again, we will have a showdown unless, both within this body and with the executive branch, we start going through the normal budgetary process to fund this conflict, which I think all of us agree we will be involved in for a long period of time.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. I would like to have you respond, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary RUMSFELD. We are aware of the amendment and needless to say we will comply with the law. From our standpoint, we can do it either way. It has been a matter that has been worked out generally over the years between the White House, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the leadership in Congress.

The reality is that what we would have to do, as you suggested, would be to provide the best estimates that we can and projections and then make adjustments for them as time actually passed, and we would be happy to do that.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General PACE. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Yes, Chairman.

General PACE. Can I make one clarification, so that the parents watching this do not believe that somehow their sons and daughters are not properly trained to handle the kind of violence that the sectarian violence is creating? What General Chiarelli said is exactly true, that we do not train to separate sectarian violence, and that is very much a responsibility of the politicians and, as we have talked about already, the Iraqi people need to do that.

With regard to Lieutenant Pace, who is on patrol in Baghdad with his platoon, and the kind of violence that he is going to come across, regardless of if it is Sunni, Shiite, or whoever, if it is an armed group our soldiers and marines certainly are well-trained to handle that. So there is a difference between the kind of violence they have to handle and what would prevent that violence, and preventing that violence is very much the role of the political leaders in Iraq to solve, sir.

Chairman WARNER. That is the purpose of this hearing, to allow you and other witnesses to clarify these bullet statements that come before us and the American public. Thank you, Chairman Pace.

Senator Reed.

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

General Abizaid, in your opinion is the Mahdi Army a terrorist organization with implicit at least support from the Iranian government?

General ABIZAID. In my opinion there are groups within the Mahdi Army that are under the pay of the Iranian government that are terrorist organizations. I am not sure I can say that is necessarily true about the entire organization.

Senator REED. As Senator McCain pointed out, there is an outstanding warrant for Muqtada al Sadr, who is the leader of the Mahdi Army. But his followers are prominent members of the Iraqi government; is that correct?

General ABIZAID. That is correct.

Senator REED. So when you say the Iraqi government will dispose of Sadr and the Mahdi Army, he in fact is part of that government.

General ABIZAID. I believe that the prime minister and his government will take the steps necessary to get the sectarian violence under control and do what has to be done against the death squads.

Senator REED. Do you have any sort of sense of the timing of this, particularly with respect to the Mahdi Army and to Sadr?

General ABIZAID. Again, I would not characterize the target as being either Sadr or the Mahdi Army. I would say there are elements within the Jesh-al-Mahdi that will be targeted because they are participating in death squad activities.

Senator REED. With the encouragement, the permission, the tolerance of Sadr?

General ABIZAID. I could not say whether there is a permission or tolerance or anything of Sadr. I can say that the prime minister knows and has been very forceful about saying that militias must be brought under control. He has a wide range of points that go all the way from direct military confrontation to agreement with various militias.

Senator REED. But we will not be involved in that process? It will be exclusively up to the prime minister and his security forces?

General ABIZAID. I would not say it would be exclusively the work of Iraqis. It is very clear that our forces in conjunction with the Iraqis will help target known death squad organizations.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, the Chief of Staff of the Army testified before the House Armed Services Committee on June 27 that $4.9 billion in funding that the Army requested for reset, which is the repair and replacement of equipment, was denied before the request was submitted to Congress. Did you deny this request or did the OMB deny the request?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, the normal process is that the Department is given a budget by the OMB, and we take that budget and work within the Department to try to fashion a budget that is balanced and makes sense. Then in the event there is from time to time a need to go back to the OMB or the President and request additional funds, we have done that.

I do not know precisely what $4.9 billion, I think you said.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, did you go back to the President and ask for more funds because of the critical needs of the Army and the Marine Corps for reset?

Secretary RUMSFELD. We have certainly gone to the President and the OMB and explained the need for reset and negotiated it extensively with the OMB. Regrettably, there have been cuts made by Congress every year in the defense budget. There have been not only reductions in our budget, there have been things that have been added in that we did not request that required us to take money from other things. Third, there have been things required of us that we were prevented from making savings.

The net effect of it, if you look just today in the authorization and appropriation bills between the House and the Senate, it runs somewhere between $10, $15, or $20 billion, depending on how you calculate it.

Senator REED. So the White House did turn down your request for additional money for reset, yes or no?

Secretary RUMSFELD. That would not be correct.

Senator REED. So you did not ask?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I cannot say that, because we went through an extensive discussion and negotiation and we ended up with the budget we ended up with, which was then reduced by Congress.

Senator REED. Last Tuesday evening the Senate passed an appropriation for $13 billion of additional funding for reset. Is that money appropriate or is it in some way a waste of resources?

Secretary RUMSFELD. It is clearly needed.

Senator REED. Why did you not ask the White House before they sent the request to Congress for that clearly needed money?

Secretary RUMSFELD. We did talk to the White House about it and that is where the number came from, was from the DOD.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, what you are saying, I think, is either you asked for the money and they said no or you accepted a limit despite the needs that you recognized for reset. It is one or the other?

Secretary RUMSFELD. You have lost me. At first you were talking about——

Senator REED. I think you have lost everyone with this dialogue.

Secretary RUMSFELD. First you were talking about $4.9 billion, I thought. Now you are talking about the $13 billion, $13.1 billion I think, and we have requested that of OMB and they have requested it of Congress and Congress has put it in the bill, as I understand it has.

Senator REED. When did you request the $13 billion, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Within the last period of months, weeks.

Senator REED. Weeks?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Yes, weeks.

Senator REED. Days. Why did you not request the $13 billion when the budget was being prepared to be sent to Congress?

Secretary RUMSFELD. When the budget was being prepared to be sent to Congress, it would have been January of last year for the budget that still has not been passed by Congress this year. For the supplemental it would have been late last year, not the beginning of last year but late last year, when those budgets are prepared.

We gain knowledge every month that goes by, and it is very clear the Army has a reset problem. It is also clear that the $13 billion is needed.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, it is very clear that two-thirds of the Army operating force, Active-Duty and Reserve, is now reporting as unready. There is not a single nondeployed Army brigade combat team in the United States that is ready to deploy. The bottom line is that we have no ready strategic Reserve, and this is a stunning indictment of your leadership.

Secretary RUMSFELD. I think it is an inaccurate statement.

Senator REED. How so? Have you seen the readiness reports, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I have.

Senator REED. It is inaccurate to say that the readiness reports of the Army do not indicate severe equipment shortages, leaving many brigades of the United States as nondeployable?

Secretary RUMSFELD. If you will allow me a few minutes to respond, it is complicated, but I would be happy to do so. I stand with what I say. I think the characterization that you made is not accurate. It is complicated. If one sees a chart that shows a deterioration like this over a 5-, 6-, 7-, 10-year period, one has to assume

that the readiness of the military, in this case the Army, has deteriorated. Now, the fact of the matter is if you begin with a standard, a requirement, that is X and then you show the beginning of the chart, and then at the end you have changed your requirement because you have decided you need different things, you have learned from the experiences of the last period of years and you have increased your requirements to 5X, and then you compare yourself against 5X, so if you have improved 300 percent—you were at 100 percent to begin, at 1X, and now you need 5X, you have decided your requirement is different, and you have improved 300 percent to get there, you are still short of that requirement.

That is what shows the deterioration. The fact of the matter is the equipment that the military has today is vastly better today than it was 5 years ago. The readiness of our capabilities are—if you measure them against full spectrum, you can say they are not ready to do everything that anyone conceivably might need to do.

On the other hand, if you ask the readiness of the forces with respect to what they are being asked to do, ask General Abizaid, are the forces over there capable of doing what they are doing, equipped and trained to do what they are doing, he will tell you yes. If you ask General Schoomaker, are the Armed Forces of the United States considerably better today, more capable, better equipped than they were 5 years ago, he will say yes.

If you ask General Pace the question, is the United States today capable of doing, fulfilling the requirements that the country has put on them, the answer is yes.

Senator REED. Let me take that opportunity. General Pace, have you seen the last readiness——

Chairman WARNER. Senator, wait a minute.

Senator REED. Excuse me.

Chairman WARNER. You are way over your time. Just a minute. We need to allow the witness to fully respond to your question. I think your question has been stated. We will have another round and you can pursue this at that time. But I have to accommodate other members. You are quite a bit over your time.

Has the witness had the opportunity to fully reply to the question before him?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I have. I think it would be useful just for the context if the Senator's last question could be responded to.

Senator REED. Mr. Chairman, would you allow me to ask my questions, rather than have the Secretary ask my questions for me?

Chairman WARNER. Well, now, Senator——

Senator REED. If I have given up my time, then my time is gone.

Chairman WARNER. Just a minute. We allowed you to ask your question very fully. It was stated. It is in the record, I think with clarity, and the Secretary was responding. We will have a second round, at which time you can further pursue this important subject. I recognize the importance of the subject.

Now, the Secretary has asked for General Pace to give his perspective in response to the Senator's question.

General PACE. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Readiness is reflected in personnel, in training, and in equipment. Any time a unit comes back from any deployment, when I was battalion commander, the unit has people change out and

therefore the personnel numbers go down. The training as a result of the unit coming back starts out anew into the new cycle. Equipment is taken from what has been used and put into depot maintenance. That is in normal peacetime.

In wartime, we are using equipment at much greater rates. So where you have a notional unit that has 100 trucks and they deploy and they come back, and the trucks normally would be driven 1,000 miles in a year and they are driven 10,000 miles in combat, you have a larger number of those vehicles that end up being put into the depot maintenance, which for the unit that is home then reduces their readiness based on availability of equipment.

The units that are forward have had not only the equipment that they went over with, but have been augmented thanks to Congress providing the funding. For example, our up-armored Humvees. The requirement globally when we started in September 2001 was about 2,000. That number now is up at 12,000. We have bought up to 12,000 and we have used them in combat, and now a number of those 12,000 are currently in depot maintenance waiting.

So we are way over the 2,000 we started with. But now, because of maintenance, usage, and combat losses, we are below the 12,000 that folks are asking for today. So it is very difficult when you turn the kaleidoscope to see all the pieces and it does not allow itself to have a straight, easy answer.

Fundamentally, the United States Army is much more capable today. Fundamentally, the Army that is fighting our war for us today deployed is in tremendous shape, personnel, training, and equipment-wise. But it is absolutely a fact that, for various budgetary reasons, some of which are a result of actions taken by Congress, that we do not have enough funding currently to provide for the repair of all of the equipment that currently sits at our depots waiting to be repaired. I believe that is where the dialogue is about how much money is needed. That $13.1 billion as I understand it, if approved by Congress, will in fact allow the Marine Corps and the Army to take the equipment that is currently stacked up at their depots, hire the workforce, and begin the process.

But what has happened, when we have not had budgets and we have had continuing resolutions, some of the workforce has had to be let go. We cannot have the depots not know whether or not they are going to be able to have the funding long-term to hire people. We cannot go out and hire Mechanic Pace for 6 months and then let him go and expect to hire him back again.

I would ask as we look at this, that we look at some kind of no-year funding that is focused on the backlog of equipment repair, that will allow the depots to consciously go out and hire people who can stay in the workforce long enough to get this work done.

Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. The Senator from Rhode Island raises a very important question and we will further explore it in the course of this hearing. Mr. Secretary, I am going to seek to get documentation that I looked at where you did engage with OMB about the need for these funds. So I think that documentation will be put in this record.

I am advised by the cloakroom that we have two back-to-back votes. It is my intention to go over quickly and vote in the first vote

and, Senator McCain, I would ask that you chair because I am going to be absent for that vote. We will keep the hearing going, colleagues, as members come and go on these votes.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do want to thank you for giving General Pace the opportunity to respond to that question. I think that was an excellent response.

Let me just make a couple of observations if I might. I find it really interesting. I think most of the members of this committee have been to Iraq varying numbers of times. There are some of them who have not been at all. When you get the reaction, the response and the opinions that are formulated by those who have not been there, it is totally different than those who have really been there and understand first-hand what is going on.

There is no better example of that than an article that was in the paper in USA Today just this morning, that said that only—without quoting a source, at least I did not see a source—of the 18 provinces, only one was able to be secured just with the Iraqis. On the other hand, Dr. Rubaire, who is a person I have known for quite some time, at the National Security Agency (NSA), said that right now 4 out of 18 are under the protection and security of Iraqi security forces, and there are 9 more that will be in a very short period of time, which is 13 out of 18.

When you hear people who have not been there and depend on press reports, there is no way that they can get the resolve that our troops have. There is no way—I will share with you, General Pace, since this is up in the Marines' area, in Fallujah, an experience up there with this Dr. Madhi, that you have met many times I am sure. General Madhi was actually the brigade commander for Saddam Hussein. He hated Americans until he started embedded training with the marines, and he learned to love them so much that he said that when they rotated them out that they cried. He then renamed the Iraqi security forces at Fallujah the "Fallujah Marines."

Things like that that are going on, you can only get by being there and experiencing it. Now, I came back from my 11th trip to the CENTCOM AOR and I timed that trip so that it was right after Zarqawi saw his demise and after the new cabinet appointments were put into place. You hear a lot about Maliki and so forth and perhaps even Minister Jaseem, but when you sit down and spend quality time with them you get a different impression than you do by looking at the media here. Certainly Dr. Rubaie is the same way.

Minister Jaseem at that time, General Pace, said, or maybe General Abizaid could respond to this, he said at that time that, of the 36 brigades, 17—we are talking about the Iraqi brigades now—17 were at level 2, or in other words were capable of autonomous operations, and of the 112 battalions 62 were at level 2. Now, this was 2 months ago.

Do you agree with his assessment at that time of those who are trained and equipped, Iraqi security forces, and has that changed in the last 2 months?

General ABIZAID. Senator Inhofe, I think the best way to characterize where the Iraqis are doing well has to do with their units

that are in the lead, in the lead in the security structure in whatever area that has been assigned to them. In October 2004—of 2005, 1 division, 4 brigades, and 23 battalions of the Iraqi armed forces were in the lead in their sectors. Today it is 4 divisions, 21 brigades, and 77 battalions.

That is a pretty impressive gain. I think it is really important for people to understand that, while there are a lot of very important warning signals that cannot be lost to us about where sectarian violence is heading in Baghdad, the most important point that we have to keep in mind is that the army is holding together and that the government is committed to bringing the sectarian violence under control.

So the question is, am I optimistic whether or not Iraqi forces with our support, with the backing of the Iraqi government, can prevent the slide to civil war? My answer is yes, I am optimistic that that slide can be prevented.

Senator INHOFE. That is consistent with what we get from the other side. I like these hearings here where we get it from you, but also to go over there and see what they have to say about it.

I have to say this, that I was incredibly impressed. We all are familiar with Maliki, but Minister Jaseem and this Dr. Rubaie, someone I had known some time before, they are very optimistic about their level of professionalism. When you talk to the troops, getting back up to Fallujah—I was up there during the elections, knowing that they were actually risking their lives. They were just rejoicing at that time. Asking them the question, do you see the time in the future where you are going to be able to take over your own security, they just very enthusiastically say it is.

General ABIZAID. Senator Inhofe, if I may, I just want to say, the Iraqi soldiers are fighting, they are taking casualties. They are fighting for their nation. They are trying to get the sectarian violence and the insurgency under control. They deserve an enormous amount of our respect and support.

So I think sometimes we seem to think that we are the only forces there. We are not. There are 220,000 plus Iraqis that are out there fighting and doing a pretty good job. Yes, there are some problems within their organizations, but they are maturing and they are doing better, and they will continue to do better.

Senator INHOFE. They are committed. I happened to be in Saddam's home town when the training area was bombed by the terrorists. About 40 of them, 41 I think it was, were either killed or very seriously injured. Those families, those 40 families, resupplied a member of their family to replace the one that was killed. This is the type of thing, the stories that you do not hear.

I know my time has expired, but for the record, Senator McCain, I would like to ask them to give us some information. According to Chiarelli and several others, including the Iraqis, probably one of the most serious problems, even though it does not have a lot of sex appeal to it, is the logistics, both civilian and military, and the problem of the organizational structure to distribute simple equipment and supplies is not there. I would like to get your opinions as to what we are trying to do to correct the problem of logistical problems.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The information referred to follows:]

Over the past year, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I), in conjunction with Iraqi counterparts, developed two detailed and concise action plans to improve logistics and Iraqi self-sustainment. The first action plan for the Ministry of Defense was finalized and approved 4 October 2006. The second action for the Ministry of Interior was approved 6 November 2006. These plans outline synchronized and deliberate processes for the generation of Iraqi logistics capabilities and sequential procedures for transferring those capabilities to Iraqi oversight, funding, management, and control.

MNSTC–I is approaching the development of Iraqi logistics sustainment along three parallel avenues. First, MNSTC–I is assisting the Iraqi ministries in the development of their own capabilities to sustain themselves and transferring to them those responsibilities as we mentor them through difficulties. This course of action is best exemplified by the Iraqi ministries' assumption of life support and feeding responsibilities. Second, MNSTC–I is coaching the ministries through the more complex tasks that they are capable of self-performing using Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case funded contracts. These contracts allow the Iraqis to oversee, train, and control commodity and functional areas while we provide a safety net of experienced, established, and honest workforces to maintain sustainment while increasing their capabilities. This course is best experienced by the Iraqi assumption of ammunition and maintenance responsibilities. Third, MNSTC–I is teaching higher order complex and skilled logistics functions such as forecasting, budgeting, and contracting. This is best exemplified by our lead in the joint partnership of developing the military depot and police maintenance capabilities for complex repair and the Iraqi support command contracting and commodity management skills required to sustain a national logistics system.

Recognizing the importance of logistics, the MNSTC–I commander has identified 2007 as the year of logistics and leaders. MNSTC–I is working diligently to train logisticians for every level of the Iraqi Military and Civil Security Forces. The military training mission is training individuals at every level of the logistics system from the service company to the depot level. The Civil Security Forces are utilizing the training opportunities offered by the police "re-bluing" initiative and local civilian logistics capabilities to expand the effectiveness of their sustainment processes.

Both the military and police force training teams, located at every level of the Iraqi chain of command from the ministry to the small unit level, have been focused or assisting the Iraqis in self-sustainment and process improvement. The MNSTC–I commander has tasked every leader in MNSTC–I to transition from leading logistics from the front, to leading side-by-side with our Iraqi partners, and ultimately to assisting from behind as the Iraqis assume greater responsibility in the planning, execution, and improvement of their logistics system. Using self-performance, increased Iraqi participation, and FMS reinforcement for complex task development, MNSTC–I has an aggressive and achievable plan to transition logistics to Iraqi oversight and management by the end of 2007.

Senator MCCAIN [presiding]. Senator Ben Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, thank you, gentlemen, for being here. Today I think your testimony in response to questions has been very helpful.

In connection with the number of Iraqi troops who are combat capable, out of the 250,000-plus security forces that are there, is there any estimate of the number who would be combat capable?

General ABIZAID. Senator, for the record, the number of trained Iraqi police, border security, and Iraqi military forces, the number is closer to 275,000. The combat capability within the army, I think again the best measure are those units that are in the lead, which are 4 brigades—4 divisions, 21 brigades, and 77 battalions.

But there is a very detailed list of what unit is at what level, that we can certainly provide to you.

Senator BEN NELSON. That would be very helpful.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

General ABIZAID. They are much improved and they continue to improve every month.

Senator BEN NELSON. Which is part of the emphasis on standing their military up so that we can stand ours down. The faster and the more capable they are, hopefully then there should be some sort of connection with the reduction of our Armed Forces as a result of that.

In terms of the police, let us say the municipal police, do we know what percentage or what number of the total number you would look at as being, not combat or capably trained, but honest and as part of the overall government, as opposed to a militia?

General ABIZAID. It is a difficult question to answer. There are some places where the local police are exceptionally efficient and very honest, very capable. There are other areas where we know that they have been infiltrated by various militias, such as in Basra, where the government and the British forces that are down there are doing their best to stand down those units, retrain them, and bring them on line in a credible and capable manner.

As far as the national police forces are concerned, in Baghdad it is clear that there are a number of battalions—again, without my notes in front of me I would take it for the record, but there are battalions that need to be stood down and retrained, and Generals Casey and Dempsey are working to do that now.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

Senator BEN NELSON. Do we know whether approximately 50 percent or 30 percent?

General ABIZAID. I would say it is probably 30 percent.

Senator BEN NELSON. 30 percent.

General ABIZAID. That is national police, which is separate and distinct from——

Senator BEN NELSON. Municipal and-or the military.

I think the debate about whether we have a date for withdrawal or there is an open-ended commitment—hopefully the debate will continue. But I wonder about an approach that is different than setting a date for withdrawal and to close any question about whether it is an open-ended commitment, would be better approached on setting conditions for staying with the prime minister, with the Iraqi government. In other words, there is a lot of slippage on how we have standing up to stand down in terms of their military versus our military because things change on the ground.

But do we have some idea of what our conditions for staying are? Is there a tipping point in terms of their ability or inability to get to a certain level so that they can deal with sectarian violence on their own or the Sunni insurgency, to govern themselves, but also to secure themselves?

I guess I would feel more comfortable if we could establish some sort of metrics to know what it takes in terms of percentage, numbers, and what it will take in terms of time so that we can say that they are capable of not only governing themselves with the elected government, but also in terms of securing themselves so they can govern themselves.

I do not know who would like to take that question, but I throw it out to all three of you.

General ABIZAID. Senator, the government has been in existence now for 3 months. They have a lot of work to do to cement their capability to govern. It is a very difficult thing to bring in a new government under these conditions of sectarian violence and insurgency. I think it is very important for people to understand, while there may be a military metric to units in the Iraqi army that are equipped and trained and them taking over certain battle space, there is also a very important political aspect to this reduction of sectarian violence, which is the various communities getting together and agreeing upon ways to reduce the sectarian violence themselves.

It is important that there be a national reconciliation effort and it is important that there be agreed-upon measures to move forward with various militias that are operating outside of government control. I think a combination of those things will lead to less violence over time, establish the role of the national government in Iraq, and allow us to bring our level of forces down as appropriate.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator Nelson, I would just add that the U.S. Ambassador and General Casey have established a committee or a commission with the new Iraqi government and the national security officials in that government to address the very issues that you are raising as to what are the things that need to be done, because, as General Abizaid correctly points out, they reach well beyond military capabilities.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your answers.

Senator MCCAIN. Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, General, Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here and for your responses to the questions. I would like to ask General Abizaid a question. I talked to a soldier last week who has had two deployments to Iraq and raised the question about whether or not the objectives and the goals that we have in Iraq are aligned with the goals that the Iraqi people have, and that they are not. One of the reasons—it seems to me at least if we are going to get control of the sectarian situation there the Iraqi people have to buy into what is happening in Iraq.

His suggestion was that they have not. I know that when we have traveled to Iraq—and I was there a couple of months back with Senator McCain's delegation—we hear from, obviously, the commanders and we talk with some of our troops. In most cases we do not have a lot of interaction with the Iraqi people. But I am just wondering if you could comment about the overall—the interaction that we have with the Iraqi people, our troops on the ground over there, the temperature in terms of their willingness to be a part of a national unity government, a democratic Iraq, and that sort of thing, relative to what we are trying to accomplish there.

This was one soldier who says he visits with these folks all the time and thinks that their interests and their objectives and goals are not aligned with what ours are over there.

General ABIZAID. There are certainly people in Iraq that do not want Iraq to come together as an independent state. There are ter-

rorist groups that have views that they want Iraq to descend into a state of anarchy and chaos so they can establish safe havens for terrorism in the region.

But I think that as I go around and I talk to Iraqi military officers, Iraqi government officials, and people throughout the country—and I think General Casey certainly would echo this—the majority of the people want Iraq to come together as a free and independent nation that is capable of being a meaningful member of the community of nations in that part of the world, that is not dominated by either Iranians or dominated by Sunni extremist groups. I believe that they know they have to fight in order to achieve that.

Secretary RUMSFELD. I think it ought not to be surprising, Senator, that an American soldier would visit with Iraqis and see that they do have a different perspective. They live in a different part of the world, they have a different history, and it is fully understandable.

On the other hand, 12 million of them went out and voted, and they went out and fashioned a constitution and then ratified it. It is there for the world to see. They have been voting in increasing numbers. So while you are right and General Abizaid is certainly right that there are Baathists who want to take back the country, there are Shiite who would like to dominate it to the detriment of the Sunnis, the fact of the matter is that 12 million Iraqis went out and voted for that constitution, and that is not nothing. It is something important.

Senator THUNE. I appreciate General Abizaid's comment, which I have heard you make previously as well, that the forces that want to hold the country together and see it succeed outnumber and are greater than those that want to see it fail. But I just wanted to get your assessment of the on-the-ground, average Iraqi on the street type of view of what is happening there, because it seems to me at least that that is a key component in starting to turn over information on some of the bad guys who are committing the violence there and really making this thing work.

One other question has to do again with the borders and how are we doing with respect to Iran and Syria? Foreign arms serve as the lifeblood of the insurgent groups. Does the Iraqi government see that as a threat to their sovereignty and are they stepping up and doing some of the work to protect the borders and make sure that a lot of the arms that are coming in are cut off?

What is your assessment of that? I have asked a lot of questions of your colleagues who have been in front of this committee about IEDs, for example, and where are they getting the materials to make these IEDs. It seems at least a lot of that is coming from some of these other countries. I know it is impossible, with the length of the borders and everything else, to completely shut it off, but are there efforts being made to regulate and control the materials that are coming in that are being used to inflict casualties on our troops?

General ABIZAID. Yes, Senator, there is a lot of effort building a border force. The border force is effective in some areas, less effective in others. The Iraqi armed forces also back up the border forces. The Syrian border remains the primary conduit for foreign

fighters. I think those numbers remain less than 100 or so that are transitting back and forth.

The vast majority of the munitions that are used inside Iraq come from inside Iraq. There are certainly smuggling routes that Iranian Revolutionary Guard Kudz Force people are using to bring in IEDs into the south and into some of the northern portions of Iraq, that have been used, and it is clear that that has taken place.

Senator THUNE. Were those weapons caches that were discovered this last week, has it been determined whether those were leftovers from the previous regime or are those that have come in, that have flooded in from other countries?

General ABIZAID. Sir, I would have to see the specific report. There are weapons caches found every day.

Senator THUNE. All right.

General PACE. Sir, to help with that number, we have had 420,000 tons of ammunition captured and destroyed in some over 14,000 locations in theater. So it is a huge cache location, and we find them every day.

Senator THUNE. Thank you. I thank you for your outstanding service to our country.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Senator MCCAIN. Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

Mr. Secretary, we are glad you are here. In your opening statement you referenced the common sense of Americans. I think it is fair to say that that collective common sense overwhelmingly does not either understand or approve of the way you and the administration are handling Iraq and Afghanistan.

Under your leadership there have been numerous errors in judgment that have led us to where we are in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have a full-fledged insurgency and full-blown sectarian conflict in Iraq. Now, whether you label it a civil war or not, it certainly has created a situation of extreme violence and the continuing loss of life among our troops and of the Iraqis.

You did not go into Iraq with enough troops to establish law and order. You disbanded the entire Iraqi army. Now we are trying to recreate it. You did not do enough planning for what is called phase 4 and rejected all the planning that had been done previously to maintain stability after the regime was overthrown. You underestimated the nature and strength of the insurgency, the sectarian violence, and the spread of Iranian influence.

Last year Congress passed the United States Policy in Iraq Act, which I strongly supported. This law declares 2006 to be a year of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq, thereby creating the conditions for the phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq.

However, we appear to be moving in the opposite direction, with the number of U.S. troops in Iraq scheduled to increase, not decrease. That is the only way I think you can fairly consider the decision with respect to 172nd Stryker brigade.

So, Mr. Chairman, as we return to our States for the August recess, our constituents have a lot of questions and concerns about the current state of affairs in both Iraq and Afghanistan. I do not

need to remind any of us that we continue to lose our young men and women, 120 from New York alone.

Besides the U.S. losses, violence does seem to be increasing. From January to June of this year, there were 14,338 Iraqi civilian casualties, at least as far as anyone can count. In May and June alone, more than 5,000 deaths and 5,700 injuries. In a July 22 article in The New York Times, General Abizaid was quoted as saying: "2 months after the new Iraqi government took office, the security gains that we had hoped for had not been achieved."

Then there was the big ballyhooed announcement of forward together and the commitment by the new Iraqi government to secure Baghdad. Two months into that, it is clear it is not working and we are now putting in more American troops and, following the lead of Senator McCain's line of questioning, we are moving them from other places that are hardly stable and secure.

In Afghanistan, your administration's credibility is also suspect. In September 2002 you said the Taliban are gone. In September 2004, President Bush said the Taliban no longer is in existence. However, this February Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Director Lieutenant General Maples said that in 2005 attacks by the Taliban and other anti-coalition forces were up 20 percent from 2004 levels and these insurgents were a greater threat to the Afghan government's efforts to expand its authority than at any time since 2001. Further, General Eikenberry made a comparable comment with respect to the dangers that are now going on in Afghanistan and the failure to be able to secure it.

Obviously, I could go on and on. A recent book, aptly titled "Fiasco," describes in some detail the decisionmaking apparatus that has led us to this situation.

So, Mr Secretary, when our constituents ask for evidence that your policy in Iraq and Afghanistan will be successful, you do not leave us with much to talk about. Yes, we hear a lot of happy talk and rosy scenarios, but because of the administration's strategic blunders and frankly, the record of incompetence in executing, you are presiding over a failed policy.

Given your track record, Secretary Rumsfeld, why should we believe your assurances now?

Secretary RUMSFELD. My goodness. First, I tried to make notes and to follow the prepared statement you have presented. First of all, it is true there is sectarian conflict in Iraq and there is a loss of life, and it is an unfortunate and tragic thing that is taking place. It is true that there are people who are attempting to prevent that government from being successful, and they are the people who are blowing up buildings and killing innocent men, women, and children, and taking off the heads of people on television, and the idea of their prevailing is unacceptable.

Second, you said the number of troops were wrong. I guess history will make a judgment on that. The number of troops that went in and the number of troops that were there every month since and the number of troops that are there today reflected the best judgment of the military commanders on the ground, their superiors, General Pace, General Abizaid, the civilian leadership of the DOD, and the President of the United States.

I think it is not correct to assume that they were wrong numbers. I do not think the evidence suggests that, and it will be interesting to see what history decides. The balance between having too many and contributing to an insurgency by the feeding of occupation and the risk of having too few and having the security situation not be sufficient for the political progress to go forward is a complicated set of decisions, and I do not know that there is any guidebook that tells you how to do it. There is no rule book, there is no history for this. The judgments that have been made have been made by exceedingly well-trained people, the gentlemen sitting next to me, the people on the ground in Iraq. They were studied and examined and analyzed by the civilian leadership and by the President and they were confirmed.

So I think your assertion is at least debatable.

The idea that the army was disbanded I think is one that is kind of flying around. My impression is that to a great extent that army disbanded itself. Our forces came in so fast. It was made up of a lot of Shiite conscripts who did not want to be in it and thousands, or at least many hundreds of Sunni generals, who were not about to hang around after Saddam Hussein and his sons and administration were replaced. The work to build a new army has included an awful lot of the people from the prior army and it has benefited from that.

Third, the assertion that the government rejected all the planning that had been done before is just simply false. That is not the case. The planning that had been done before was taken into account by the people who were executing the post-major combat operations activities.

The comments about Baghdad I will possibly let General Abizaid comment on. The goal is not to have U.S. forces do the heavy lifting in Baghdad. There are many more Iraqi forces in Baghdad. The role of the U.S. forces is to help them, to provide logistics, to assist them as needed, and to create a presence that will allow the Iraqi security forces to succeed, and then as our forces step back allow the Iraqi security forces to be sufficient to maintain order in the city.

I cannot predict if it will work this time. It may or it may not. It happens to represent the best judgment of General Casey, General Chiarelli, and the military leadership, and General Abizaid and General Pace and I have reviewed it and we think that it is a sensible approach, as General Abizaid testified earlier.

As for Afghanistan, I do not know who said what about the Taliban are gone, but in fact, the Taliban that were running Afghanistan and ruling Afghanistan were replaced, and they were replaced by an election that took place in that country. In terms of a government or a governing entity, they were gone and that is a fact.

Are there still Taliban around? You bet. Are they occupying safe havens in Afghanistan and other places—correction, in Pakistan and other places? Certainly they are. Is the violence up? Yes. Does the violence tend to be up during the summer and spring, summer and fall months? Yes, it does, and it tends to decline during the winter period.

Does that represent failed policy? I do not know. I would say not. I think you have an awful lot of very talented people engaged in this and the decisions that are being made are being made with great care, after a great deal of consideration. Are there setbacks? Yes. Are there things that people cannot anticipate? Yes. Does the enemy have a brain and continue to make adjustments on the ground, requiring our forces to continue to make adjustments? You bet. Is that going to continue to be the case? I think so.

Is this problem going to get solved in the near-term about this long struggle against violent extremism? No, I do not believe it is. I think it is going to take some time. I know the question was some wars lasted 3 years, some wars lasted 4 years, some wars lasted 5 years. The Cold War lasted 40-plus years. This struggle against violent extremists who are determined to prevent free people from exercising their rights as free people is going to go on a long time and it is going to be a tough one.

That does not mean that we have to spend the rest of our lives as the United States Armed Forces in Iraq. The Iraqis are going to have to take that over. We cannot want freedom more for the Iraqi people than they want for themselves. Senator Thune mentioned earlier about that issue.

I would point out the number of tips that have been coming from Iraqi people have been going up steadily. They are at a very high level and it does suggest to me that the Iraqi people do want to have a free country, as I mentioned because of their voting patterns.

So I would disagree strongly with your statement.

Senator CLINTON. Mr. Secretary, I know you would and I know you feel strongly about it, but there is a track record here. This is not 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, when you appeared before this committee and made many comments and presented many assurances that have, frankly, proven to be unfulfilled.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, I do not think that is true. I have never painted a rosy picture. I have been very measured in my words, and you would have a dickens of a time trying to find instances where I have been excessively optimistic. I understand this is tough stuff.

Senator CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, I would like unanimous consent to submit for the record a number of the Secretary's former comments. Also, may we keep the record open for additional questions?

[The information referred to follows:]

A. Congressional Hearings

1. July 9, 2003
Senate Armed Services Committee hearing

"The residents of Baghdad may not have power 24 hours a day, but they no longer wake up each morning in fear wondering whether this will be the day that a death squad would come to cut out their tongues, chop off their ears, or take their children away for 'questioning,' never to be seen again."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2003/sp20030709-secdef0364.html

2. September 30, 2003
House Appropriations Committee hearing

"My impression is that the war was highly successful."

Source: Transcript of Hearing of House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Defense on President's FY '04 Supplemental Request for Iraq and Afghanistan, available online from FDCH Political Transcripts on Lexis-Nexis.

3. February 4, 2004
Senate Armed Services Committee hearing

"The increased demand on the force we are experiencing today is likely a 'spike,' driven by the deployment of nearly 115,000 troops in Iraq. We hope and anticipate that that spike will be temporary. We do not expect to have 115,000 troops permanently deployed in any one campaign."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2004/sp20040204-secdef0842.html

4. May 7, 2004
Senate Armed Services Committee hearing

"SENATOR BAYH: So my question, Mr. Secretary, my final question is just very simply, do you believe we're on the right course presently, or is dramatic action necessary to regain the momentum so that we can ultimately prevail in what is a very noble and idealistic undertaking?

SEC. RUMSFELD: I do believe we're on the right track."

Source: http://www.pentagon.mil/speeches/2004/sp20040507-secdef0443.html

5. June 23, 2005
Senate Armed Services Committee hearing

"But terrorists no longer can take advantage of sanctuaries like Fallujah."

Source:
http://www.cq.com/display.do?dockey=/cqonline/prod/data/docs/html/transcripts/congressional/109/congressionaltranscripts109-000001742332.html@committees&metapub=CQ-CONGTRANSCRIPTS&searchIndex=1&seqNum=54

6. June 23, 2005
House Armed Services Committee hearing

"The level of support from the international community is growing."

Source:
http://www.cq.com/display.do?dockey=/cqonline/prod/data/docs/html/transcripts/congressional/109/congressionaltranscripts109-

000001743474.html@committees&metapub=CQ-CONGTRANSCRIPTS&searchIndex=0&seqNum=97

7. March 9, 2006
Senate Appropriations Committee hearing

"SEN. ROBERT BYRD: Mr. Secretary, how can Congress be assured that the funds in this bill won't be used to put our troops right in the middle of a full-blown Iraqi civil war?

SEC. DONALD RUMSFELD: Senator, I can say that certainly it is not the intention of the military commanders to allow that to happen. The -- and to repeat, the -- at least thus far, the situation has been such that the Iraqi security forces could for the most part deal with the problems that exist."

Source:
http://www.jcs.mil/chairman/speeches/060309CJCS_SecDefSecStateCENTCOMSenApproCom.html

B. Press Interviews and Other Forums

1. November 14, 2002
Infinity CBS Radio Connect, interview with Steve Kroft

"The Gulf War in the 1990s lasted five days on the ground. I can't tell you if the use of force in Iraq today would last five days, or five weeks, or five months, but it certainly isn't going to last any longer than that."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2002/t11152002_t1114rum.html

2. December 18, 2002
CNN "Larry King Live"

"The Taliban are gone. The al Qaeda are gone."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=2940

3. February 7, 2003
Town hall meeting with U.S. troops in Aviano, Italy

"And it is not knowable if force will be used, but if it is to be used, it is not knowable how long that conflict would last. It could last, you know, six days, six weeks. I doubt six months."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/t02072003_t0207sdtownhall.html

4. February 20, 2003
PBS "NewsHour"

"Lehrer: Do you expect the invasion, if it comes, to be welcomed by the majority of the civilian population of Iraq?

Rumsfeld: There's obviously the Shia population in Iraq and the Kurdish population in Iraq have been treated very badly by Saddam Hussein's regime, they represent a large fraction of the total. There is no question but that they would be welcomed."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=1938

5. March 30, 2003
ABC "This Week with George Stephanopoulos"

"We know where [the WMD] are. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south and north somewhat."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/t03302003_t0330sdabcsteph.html

6. February 1, 2006
Department of Defense News Briefing

"Q: One clarification on 'the long war.' Is Iraq going to be a long war?

SEC. RUMSFELD: No, I don't believe it is."

Source: http://www.defenselink.mil/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=905

Chairman WARNER [presiding]. The record will remain open until the close of business today for all members to contribute additional questions.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General PACE. Senator, may I go on the record, sir?

Chairman WARNER. Yes, of course.

General PACE. Thank you, sir. I think it is very important that I as Chairman, having been Vice Chairman since October 1, 2001, having been part of the dialogue, having worked closely with General Franks, General Casey, General Abizaid, all the Joint Chiefs: The numbers of forces that have been requested up the chain of command have been thoroughly discussed, the pros and cons or the balance, what was needed, how we might provide it, the equipment, the tactics of the major operations, all of those things have come up through the Joint Chiefs. We have given our best military advice.

The collaborative nature between our leaders here in Washington and those in the field is as thorough and complete as I can imagine. I have personally been part of each of those decisions and I

want to go on record as saying that I along with the Joint Chiefs have been, continue to be, part of the decision process, and everything to my knowledge that we have ever asked for with regards to equipment or personnel has been provided to us.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

Again, I have listened to this very important colloquy, but I do believe, Mr. Secretary, having followed this, as is my responsibility, these many years, I think both Secretary Rumsfeld, your predecessor General Myers, and you, General Pace, have always made statements which were in balance and definitely indicating the seriousness of the conflict and the fact that it is going to be a long and a drawn-out one. Our record has many entries in it to the effect that the President and the Secretary of Defense have relied upon the advice of the senior military commanders in structuring those force levels.

We will be happy to include in the record some material of our own on that point. I think, given the number of questions coming about the record, we will hold the record open until close of business on Friday.

Senator Dayton.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank sincerely each of you for your service to our country. I know that all of you live with enormous demands of your positions and the conditions around the world. With respect, we and more importantly the American people deserve to be told, I think more candidly perhaps than we have so far, why the Iraqis remain incapable of succeeding in Iraq and, since our success is predicated on their success, what we and they are going to do about it.

Secretary Rumsfeld, you said in your remarks that you remain confident in the good common sense of the American people, and I agree with you that confidence is well-placed. The American people can tell the difference between succeeding and failing. They perceive, I think correctly, that the Iraqis are failing in Iraq and that our courageous troops continue to bear the brunt of the Iraqi failures, and that the realities there overall are getting worse, not better.

I believe that all of you are mistaken to cast the failures in Iraq as a test of our citizens' will and resolve. I think it is unfair to the American people to do so.

I respectfully disagree with your assertion, General Pace, that most Americans are not affected by this war every day. Most of them lived through September 11, 2001, as you did and we did. They remain profoundly affected by it. They accepted the President's assertion that the United States invasion of Iraq was essential to protect our national security, that Saddam Hussein possessed WMD, as the President and the Vice President said, that immediately and urgently threatened the United States.

The American people continued to support the war even after no WMD were found, even when their sons and daughters and husbands and wives, as you said, General, over a million of them, have been sent halfway around the world, risking their lives, giving their lives, to carry out the orders of their commander in chief.

It is not their will, the will of the American people, that is being tested. It is their tolerance for failure. Over 2,600 Minnesota National Guard's men and women are now serving in Iraq. They are away from their families for 18 months. Some of them will never return alive. They come from 80 of Minnesota's 87 counties. They are the best and the brightest in their communities. So it is not just their families, but it is entire communities that are affected by their absences.

So those families and their fellow citizens deserve to know when the Iraqis are going to be able to take over responsibility civically, militarily, and security so that they can come home when the victory that they achieved when they toppled the Saddam Hussein regime is secured.

I have attended, as all of my colleagues have, I am sure, far too many funerals and wakes in Minnesota, where hundreds and even thousands of grateful and grieving citizens attend. Every one of those funerals is a leading news story in all of the statewide media.

So the people of Minnesota and I believe this country are asking us, both you and us, their leaders, to tell them what is really going on there, not with political spins from either side of the aisle, but the truth, the basic facts: What is the situation in Iraq? Why is it seemingly getting worse, not better, as evidenced, as others have said, by the need to bring more U.S. troops into the capital city of Baghdad? What is our strategy? What is our strategy for reversing that slide? What is the solution to getting the inability of the Iraqis—I remember being with General Petraeus in Iraq in December 2004. He talked candidly there about how it was the most difficult situation he had ever faced in his career trying to train these forces to stand up, not to the American Army, but to their fellow citizens, to these insurgents, some terrorists, but we are told again and again, at least in most of the briefings, 95-plus percent of the violence is generated by indigenous Iraqis.

So their standing up—their inability to stand up to their fellow citizens has caused, according to the reports that I have read, some 850,000 Iraqi citizens to flee the country because they cannot even go to work every day, cannot go to school, without basic security.

Again, by the indicators that I can look at, they are mixed, but predominantly this is a failed effort by the Iraqi people and it continues to be. When are we going to see some indications of their ability to succeed, and if not what are we going to do about it? Mr. Secretary, I will ask you and then others to respond.

General ABIZAID. Senator Dayton, thank you. I disagree. I believe the Iraqis are capable of succeeding. I believe they do want to succeed. I believe they are honorable people who want to live a better life and have security for their children, just like we do.

These forces of extremism are strong. They are very ruthless. They are well-connected, not only inside Iraq but globally, and they present a formidable force that has to be dealt with.

We are not operating in the region in some sort of a battlefield where the enemy does not exist. The enemy exists in Iraq. It exists in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and in Lebanon. You name the location in the region and they exist there.

People say the war started on September 11, 2001, but you can make a case for the war having started in October 1983 when

Hezbollah destroyed the Marine barracks and killed over 200 American marines that were stationed there. You could say the war played itself out to a certain extent at a lower level in Somalia, where we stayed there for a short period of time and then left. You could say that throwing a few Tomahawk land attack missiles (TLAMs) at this enemy created the circumstances by which we had to end up facing this enemy with greater force and greater perseverance and greater patience and courage than we had been able to muster before then.

This is a very serious problem that requires the application of our national might and will along with that of the international community to face down the extremist threat, whether it is sponsored by Iran or whether it comes from al Qaeda, or we will fight one of the biggest wars we have ever fought.

WMD may not have been found in Iraq, but this enemy is trying to develop WMD. We know that from just looking at any unclassified Web site you want to look at. They are working at it day after day and they want to use it against us, and we can simply not walk away from this enemy until the people in the region have the capacity to deal with it themselves, and they want to do that.

We have to shape the environment that allows them to help themselves. It is a slow process. When I think of how long it took us to win the American Revolution and then to solidify our own independence and freedom through the Constitution and eventually through our own Civil War, this is not an easy task. This is a very difficult task.

I think we should give the people in the region credit for wanting to live a better life and achieve greater security and stability. We have to help them if we are going to keep our own children safe from the greater dangers that lurk out there.

Senator DAYTON. General, I do not say this is about walking away from the enemy. I think it is a very unfair characterization. I can say I voted against the resolutions to set a timetable to begin to drawdown troops. I have gotten a lot of heat back home. So be it, because I agree the military command needs to decide what force level is necessary to carry out the mission that they are assigned by their Commander in Chief, and I am not going to second-guess that.

But I express the concern that the force level is going to remain there indefinitely because of the incapacity of the Iraqi society. I recognize that, after living 25 years under a severe dictatorship, that it takes some time. But we heard testimony last week from Iraqis that the health ministry is more corrupt than it was under Saddam Hussein. The amount of electricity in Baghdad we are told is 8 hours a day. I was there with the Chairman in July 2003. As you well know, sir, being there, when you get 115 degree temperatures and no air conditioning and no running water and no sanitation and no refrigeration, you have a crisis on your hands. People, as I said earlier, cannot go to work without fearing and they are fleeing.

So again, you cannot paint it all one way or the other, but it seems to me that the incompetence, the corruption, and the incapacity of the Iraqi forces, despite our 3 years of the best training forces we have capable—when you can train Americans in 8 weeks

of basic training to go over and perform, to me it is inexplicable that after 3 years they cannot take more responsibility than they have so far.

Again, if you extrapolate from those 3 years so far to a decade, the prediction that we would have to have a sizable force level there for a decade is a moderate, even an optimistic prediction. I mean, are we going to be there for a decade or 2 decades at this kind of force level in order to hold that country together?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Certainly no one anticipates having forces in Iraq at these levels in a decade, and the Iraqi security forces, as I say, have gone from zero, they have been trained and equipped up to 275,000. They are going to complete 325,000 by the end of this year. I do not know what the new government will say is the appropriate number. Maybe that number, maybe something more.

But then the support systems and the strengthening of the ministry will be required as that is occurring. I think that your characterization is going to prove to not be correct.

Senator DAYTON. I am sorry; which characterization, sir?

Secretary RUMSFELD. That they could be there up to a decade.

Senator DAYTON. I hope it is not. That is not my characterization. It is that of others.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Mr. Chairman, something came to my attention that I would like to just comment on. We were discussing the reset costs early on.

Chairman WARNER. In the interim I have gotten some material to put in the record that documents it. But I think it is important——

Secretary RUMSFELD. Good. I would just like to say——

Chairman WARNER.—that we at this point continue our colloquy on that, and that that part of your response be inserted in the record.

Please.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Yes, Mr. Chairman. The reset costs have historically been in supplementals, not in the original budgets. The President's budget request for fiscal year 2007 contained $50 billion request for a supplemental allowance or a bridge fund. This bridge fund is intended to partly cover fiscal year 2007 reset costs. I say partly because we fully expect to request additional supplemental funds in the spring, as we have in prior periods.

Reset costs have always been funded in supplementals. The $13.1 billion in the Stevens amendment as I understand it is an advance payment on reset costs that would be covered in the spring supplemental.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you. I have done this research and we will put this in the record. I am going to address a document dated August 2 from the Executive Office of the President, and it reads as follows. It clearly in my judgment supports your statement that you have been in constant consultation with the OMB on this important issue. This document reads in part, and I will put the whole document in the record: "The administration welcomes the committee's strong support for our troops fighting in the war on terror. The funds provided are critical to continuing operations in

Iraq and Afghanistan while keeping our military well-equipped and ready to respond. The administration urges the Senate to fully support the procurement request to provide full funding for Afghan and Iraqi forces to enable them to assume full responsibility for their own security and fully fund our coalition support, to ensure timely reimbursement of critical partners."

Now, this is right on point: "The administration supports the Senate's acceleration of $13.1 billion into the bridge that would have been requested next year in the spring supplemental, bringing the total level of bridge funding in this bill to $63.1 billion. This action will facilitate the needed resetting of the Armed Forces to continue their important missions and provide needed certainty to military planners. This additional funding is necessary to accelerate planned efforts to repair or replace war-damaged equipment"—the point that you addressed, General Pace. "In particular, these funds address Army and Marine Corps depot and unit maintenance requirements and procurement needs, including Abrams, Bradley, Apache, and other helicopters, tactical vehicles, trailers, generators, and bridge equipment."

This is a document that I will also insert, which states the OMB funding levels, and they were followed by the Appropriations Committee in that amendment. So that will be placed in the record as I stated, and I thank the Secretary for bringing that to our further attention and clarifying it.

[The information referred to follows:]

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

August 2, 2006
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 5631 – Department of Defense Appropriations Bill, FY 2007
(Sponsors: Cochran (R), Mississippi; Byrd (D), West Virginia)

The Administration commends the Senate Committee for reporting this bill in a timely manner and urges its swift enactment.

The President's FY 2007 Budget holds total discretionary spending to $872.8 billion and reduces non-security discretionary spending below last year's level. The Budget funds priorities and meets these limits by proposing to reform, reduce, or terminate 141 lower-priority programs. The Administration urges Congress to fund priority needs while holding spending to these limits, and objects to the use of gimmicks to meet those limits. The Administration looks forward to working with Congress to adopt the President's proposals to cut wasteful spending in order to maintain fiscal discipline to protect the American taxpayer and sustain a strong economy.

The Administration opposed the $4 billion reduction in funds for the Department of Defense (DOD) in the House bill and strongly opposes the $9 billion reduction included in this bill. The impact of any additional reductions beyond the House level will result in the degradation of the military's force readiness. The Administration strongly opposes the shifting of base funding requirements to supplemental bills as a way to increase non-security related discretionary funding. If the President is presented with a final DOD appropriations bill that cuts in excess of $4 billion from the Department of Defense to shift funds to non-security spending, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto that bill.

The Administration appreciates the Committee's support for the President's proposed 2.2 percent across-the-board pay raise with additional targeted increases for warrant officers and enlisted troops. The Administration also appreciates the Committee's support for fully funding Cooperative Threat Reduction, and for providing initial funding for wartime operations, maintenance, and re-equipping needs. In addition, the Administration thanks the Committee for providing general transfer authority of $4.5 billion to provide increased flexibility, but urges support for the full $5 billion request.

The Administration would like to take this opportunity to share additional views regarding the Committee's version of the bill.

Bridge Funding for the War on Terror

The Administration welcomes the Committee's strong support for our troops fighting the War on Terror. The funds provided are critical to continuing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan

while keeping our military well equipped and ready to respond when necessary. The Administration urges the Senate to fully support the procurement request, provide full funding for the Afghan and Iraqi Security Forces to enable them to assume full responsibility for their own security and fully fund our Coalition Support request to ensure timely reimbursement of critical coalition partners.

The Administration supports the Senate's acceleration of $13.1 billion into the Bridge that would have been requested next year in the spring supplemental, bringing the total level of Bridge funding in this bill to $63.1 billion. This action will facilitate the needed resetting of the armed forces to continue their important missions and provide needed certainty to military planners. This additional funding is necessary to accelerate planned efforts to repair or replace war-damaged equipment. In particular these additional funds address Army and Marine Corps depot and unit maintenance requirements and procurement needs, including Abrams, Bradley, Apache and other helicopters, tactical vehicles, trailers, generators and bridging equipment.

The Administration, however, opposes the inclusion of funding in the Bridge that does not support direct Global War on Terror related requirements, and strongly opposes the inclusion of base funding needs in the Bridge.

Reductions to Operation and Maintenance and Personnel Accounts

The Administration strongly opposes the Committee's reductions to Operation and Maintenance (O&M) programs. Over half of the total reductions in the bill are to O&M accounts, seriously compromising programs and likely accelerating the need for supplemental funds in 2007. Unrequested reductions in this area would degrade readiness.

The Administration also urges the Senate to restore the $600 million reduction to the President's personnel request to avoid shortfalls in pay accounts.

Defense Health

The Administration urges Congress to consider the President's proposals to encourage the use of cost-effective medical care for military retirees under age 65 using TRICARE. Support for these proposals would ensure that resources are focused on core missions and that high-quality health care is sustainable in the future. Rejecting these changes will create a shortfall of over $700 million in FY 2007 and $11.2 billion from FY 2007 to FY 2011. The failure to address rising health care costs today will threaten the Department's long-term ability to transform and fund future military capabilities.

Reductions in Weapons Systems

The Administration objects to the Committee's reductions of $3.1 billion from the Department's procurement programs and another $700 million from research and development programs. The Administration strongly opposes: the $1.3 billion decrease in Joint Strike Fighter production; reductions and reallocations to shipbuilding that reduce T-AKE and Littoral Combat Ship procurements; a $243 million reduction to the Army's Future Combat System; elimination of all funding ($127 million) requested for the Conventional Trident Modification; and reductions to the VH-71 Presidential Helicopter program. The Administration also opposes the

Committee's significant reductions to the Global Positioning System, Air Force replacement tanker aircraft, the Navy's Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle, and numerous space programs including two especially critical ones: Transformational Satellite and Space Based Radar. Finally, while the Administration appreciates the Senate support for missile defense funding, the Administration opposes Senate reallocations of funding from Command, Control, Battle Management, and Communications, interceptors, system core functions, technology and space-based sensors, which would significantly delay these efforts. These program changes and reductions would divert funds from the Department's transformation efforts and prevent fielding of critical new weapon systems in a timely manner.

Unrequested Additions

The Administration objects to numerous unrequested acquisition programs in the bill, including the Joint Strike Fighter alternative engine and an oceanographic research vessel. The Administration also opposes the shift in the mix of F/A-18 and EF-18 production aircraft. These unrequested and redirected funds would hamper the Department's long-term modernization efforts.

Earmarks

The Administration objects to excessive unjustified earmarks in the bill that are funded by making reductions in high priority spending such as Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation programs. The Administration encourages the Senate to eliminate unjustified earmarks for lower priority items and restore requested funding for priority programs and projects.

Classified Programs

The Administration opposes the $38 million reduction to the Intelligence Community Management Account, which will hinder the Director of National Intelligence's ability to complete the stand-up of his office and implement the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. The Administration looks forward to reviewing the classified annex and working with Congress to address any concerns on classified programs as the legislative process moves forward.

Competitive Sourcing

The Administration would strongly object if an amendment were adopted that precludes the Army from implementing a contract for base support services at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. This contract, awarded after a public-private competition conducted in accordance with OMB Circular A-76 and applicable law, represents the most efficient provision of these services and will save taxpayers more than $30 million over 5 years.

The Administration also opposes requirements in section 8014(a)(3) that would unnecessarily subject private sector bidders to intrusive data requirements concerning the provision of health benefits to their employees. While well intentioned, this provision ultimately undermines efficiencies in private health plans and provides another disincentive for the private sector to participate in DOD's competitions. The Administration urges the Senate to amend the

Army and Marine Corps Reset Needs
[$ in billions]

	Total Need Identified by DOD	FY 2007 Bill as Proposed	Remaining Need (Stevens Inouye Amdt.)
Army:			
Equipment	8.6	3.6	5.0
Maintenance	8.5	5.7	2.8
Total, Army	**17.1**	**9.3**	**7.8**
Marine Corps:			
Equipment	5.3	1.1	4.2
Maintenance	1.3	0.2	1.1
Total, Marine Corps	**6.6**	**1.3**	**5.3**
TOTAL IN THE BILL	**23.7**	**10.6**	**13.1**

Chairman WARNER. I will also put in a memorandum that I have had prepared giving the chronological history of this funding.

[The information referred to follows:]

Army Reset Shortfall

- 2006 Supplemental Appropriations request included $13.5 billion for Army Reset.
- Congress appropriated $8.6 billion – leaving a $4.9 billion shortfall. In the 2006 Supplemental Appropriations Bill the $4.9 billion was diverted to other purposes within the Supplemental.
- FY2007 reset requirement is $12.2 billion – plus the $4.9 billion shortfall from 2006 totals $17.1 billion.
- DOD – including Army and Marine Corps discussed the reset needs with OMB and determined that the reset requirement was $13.1 billion.
- OMB transmitted this information to the Senate. Senator Stevens and Senator Inouye added that amount to the Appropriations Bill.

Chairman WARNER. I see that we are now joined by several colleagues. Senator Dayton having finished his testimony, Senator Chambliss, you are now recognized.

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

Gentlemen, thank you all for being here. As always, General Pace——

Chairman WARNER. Excuse me, Senator Chambliss, the colleague to your left has indicated to the chair that he has to depart to preside over the Senate.

Senator GRAHAM. At noon, but I can defer.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Well, go ahead. That is fine with me.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. It just speaks well of Georgia, that is all I can say, just nice people in Georgia.

Senator CHAMBLISS. This will cost him, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. It will. I know I am going to pay a heavy price for this.

Gentlemen, thank you for coming, and I think it is important to be here and publicly talk about the war and what is going right and what is going wrong. But let us do Insurgency 101. The political situation in Iraq, Mr. Secretary, I think has dramatically improved. We have a government constituted, made up of all three groups. People voted in high numbers. That is something we should be proud of.

I was with Senators Chambliss, Cantwell, and Biden on December 15, the national voting day. It was something to behold. So I would like to put on the record that the Iraqi people are very brave. They went to vote that day with people shooting at them, and they voted in larger numbers than in our primary in South Carolina. So the Iraqi people really have sacrificed a lot to get to where they are at now and I would like to see them get this process completed on their terms, not the terrorists' terms.

But when it comes to the Sunni insurgents, how many do we believe there are and who is their leader?

General ABIZAID. I think the number of Sunni insurgents is consistent with the intelligence estimates of at the bottom side around 10,000, up to around 20,000. There is no distinct group that is in charge of it.

Senator GRAHAM. What is their goal?

General ABIZAID. It all depends on which group it is from within the Sunni insurgency. If it is the former Baathists, it is to come back to power. If it is al Qaeda, it is to establish chaos so that they can achieve a safe haven in the region. Then there are other various groups within the Sunni community, that keep violence on the table because they feel that it is the only thing that they have to negotiate with against the other communities' advantages that they see that have grown at their own expense.

Senator GRAHAM. On the Shiite side, what is the goal of the Shiite insurgency and how many do we think they are?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I think it is not quite what I would call a Shiite insurgency.

Senator GRAHAM. What would you describe it?

General ABIZAID. I think there are Shiite extremist groups that are trying to ensure that the Iraqi government as voted fails and that they become ascendant, and you see this within parts of the Jesh-al-Mahdi under Muqtada Sadr.

Senator GRAHAM. How many people are in that camp?

General ABIZAID. I think that those numbers are difficult to quantify because there are parts that are in various militia groups and there are other parts that are actively working against the government. But I think the number is in the low thousands.

Senator GRAHAM. Al Qaeda, after Zarqawi's death how would you rate their capability and their makeup in terms of numbers?

General ABIZAID. Al Qaeda is significantly depleted. I think their numbers are less than 1,000. I think they are a tenacious and cellular group that needs continued work, but we are making good progress against them and we will continue to make good progress against them.

Senator GRAHAM. The reason I bring this question up is when you add up all the numbers we are talking maybe less than 30,000 people, 40,000 people. The question for our country and the world at large is how can we let 40,000 people in a nation of—how many million in Iraq?

General PACE. 25, 26 million.

Senator GRAHAM. 25 million. Why cannot 200,000 armed people working together contain 30,000 or 40,000?

Secretary RUMSFELD. A couple of comments. One, it is a country the size of California, I suppose, and it is a heck of a lot easier to go around killing innocent men, women, and children and hiding without uniforms and not in any organized military activity which another military could go address—

Senator GRAHAM. That goes to the point, it seems to me, that if the 25 million were united against the 40,000 that they would not put up with this. So it seems to me that the country is not united, because if you had 25 million people minus 40,000 that were on one side of the ledger versus the 40,000 this thing would come to an end overnight.

There is something more going on in Iraq at a deeper level from a common sense perspective for this violence to be sustained so long and grow, not lessen. What do you think that something is?

General PACE. Sir, I think you are fundamentally correct that if the Iraqi people as a whole decided today that, my words now, they love their children more than they hate their neighbor, that this could come to a quick conclusion. Many, about 4,500 to 5,000 per month, are currently feeding tips to their government and to our Armed Forces about potential aggressive movements.

We need the Iraqi people to seize this moment. We provided security for them. Their armed forces are providing security for them and their armed forces are dying for them. They need to decide that this is their moment.

Senator GRAHAM. Well said. The question for the American people I think as we go forward: Will they ever seize this moment any time soon? I would like each of you to give me an evaluation as to whether or not the 25 million less 40,000 will seize this moment any time soon, and what is the general view of the average Iraqi on the street about our military presence and the role that we are playing in their future? Are they more supportive or less supportive of us being there now than they were a year ago? I would stop there.

General PACE. Sir, I think they will seize the moment. I do not know how soon that will be. I think the Iraqi people need to get to the point where the amount of pain they are inflicting on each other goes beyond their ability to endure. I do not have, based on my upbringing, an understanding of how much they can endure or how their society accepts that kind of violence.

But clearly there is a point in time where the amount of violence that they are inflicting on each other is going to reach the point where they are fed up with it and they stand up to be counted. I cannot tell you when that moment is, but I do know that Prime Minister Maliki and his team, his cabinet, those who have been elected as part of their parliament, are the leaders of that nation and are standing up to this challenge and are working with their people to get to that day.

Senator GRAHAM. Has the Iraqi public turned against us or are they still with us?

General PACE. I think they would like us to leave, but not before it is time. I think that they are still with us, but they would like, as we would like, to have foreign troops off their soil.

Senator GRAHAM. Mr. Secretary?

Secretary RUMSFELD. It is an interesting question. I think back over the several years and the situation has evolved unquestionably. The Kurds were and remain very supportive of our presence, concerned that we would leave. The Shiite in many instances were pleased with the opportunity to assert their majority over the country that was provided by our presence. The Sunni clearly were powerfully against our presence.

More recently, the Sunnis see the role of the Shiite, they see influence of Iran, and they are less powerfully against our presence. The Kurds remain where they are and the Shiite, if one talks to the elected leader of the country, who represents the Shiite coalition, it is very clear in his mind that it would be very harmful to him and to his administration and to the country were we to leave precipitously. So it is something that has evolved.

General ABIZAID. Senator, I would certainly agree with the way General Pace characterized it. We took a society like this and we turned it like this [indicating], and now it is moving like this, and there is a tremendous amount of friction associated with those moves. It is a society that must either move towards equilibrium or towards breakup.

Senator GRAHAM. What do you think will happen?

General ABIZAID. I think it will move towards equilibrium.

Senator GRAHAM. How long?

General ABIZAID. I think it will move towards equilibrium in the next 5 years. That does not mean that we need to keep our force levels the way they are, but I am confident that the Iraqi security forces, with good governance, coupled together, will bring the country towards equilibrium because the alternative is so stark. They have had the experience of Lebanon. All you have to do is go ask the Lebanese how long a civil war will last and you will know that you must move towards equilibrium.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you all.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here. General Abizaid, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) report last month stated that corruption is costing $4 billion per year. The U.S. Comptroller General, David Walker, testified that 10 percent

of Iraq's refined fuels and 30 percent of its imported fuels were being stolen.

Can you explain in your strategy how it is tailored to prevent the corruption and theft of the investments and the Iraqis' own resources as we get into the reconstruction?

General ABIZAID. Senator, clearly corruption is endemic in this part of the world. It was very heavily part of Saddam's society. It continues to be part of the current Iraqi society, but I believe that there are many forces within Iraq that recognize the problem, that the good governance that will emerge from representative government and accountability will over time move this in a positive direction.

I think that corruption in this part of the world is one of the great corrosive influences that causes extremism to flourish and in order to be successful against the extremists governments must be held more and more accountable, and I believe this Iraqi government will be held accountable by their people over time.

Secretary RUMSFELD. I would add one other thing, Senator Nelson, if I might. One of the real problems in my view has been the fact that historically the Iraqis have been paying a very small fraction for their fuel of what the market price is. So as we all know, it ought not to be a surprise, if you can buy it at that price you can immediately take it across the border and sell it for a higher price, and that has been a problem because the government has been—is now in the process of raising the price towards the market price, has not gotten there, but is in that direction.

But in the mean time, it is very damaging and it does lead to corruption.

Senator BILL NELSON. The SIGIR's report stated the deteriorating security situation has had a particularly deleterious effect on the establishment of our Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), only five of which have begun operations in Iraq. They went on to tell how the concept, the PRT concept, had worked well in Afghanistan and it was thought to be a key component in the Iraq reconstruction strategy.

So General Abizaid, in your discussions with the Iraqi government and our State Department, what is your thinking in the strategy to implement the PRT in every province to aid in the transition?

General ABIZAID. The PRTs are the strategic responsibility of the Ambassador and I think it is too soon to say that they have not been successful. I was in Mosul the other day and I talked to the PRT up there and it was clear to me that they were making good progress, that they had good access to the Iraqi provincial leadership. In other parts of the country, the vast majority of the country, by the way, which is fairly secure and fairly stable, the PRTs will over time gain more access and become more efficient.

Certainly in those areas around Baghdad where the sectarian violence is extreme it is difficult for the PRTs to do the work. But I am confident that the strategy that the Ambassador has adopted to move the PRTs forward will be successful, especially provided that the other agencies of the U.S. Government, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), State Department, et cetera,

provide their manning in those teams and give them the strength that they are capable of giving it.

Senator BILL NELSON. How committed do you think Maliki is to disbanding the militias?

General ABIZAID. Sir, I have talked to him personally about it. General Casey talks to him almost every day about it. He has conveyed time and time again that he is committed to it. I believe that to be the case.

Senator BILL NELSON. What are the prospects that people like Sadr and Hakim and Hashemi will disband their militias?

General ABIZAID. I think that the prospects of the militias over time disbanding are good.

Senator BILL NELSON. What is that time frame?

General ABIZAID. I am not sure I could say. I think the Prime Minister is in the middle of working with his cabinet—he has only been there for 3 months—to figure out how he is going to move towards militia disbandment. In Afghanistan it has taken us a long time to move in that direction. It is a long process, depending upon how dangerous the militia is to the state. Those that are benign or that are working in conjunction with the state to provide some additional security do not need to be disbanded right away. Those that are sponsoring death squads need to be dealt with immediately.

Senator BILL NELSON. Is that the key, the disbanding of the militias, to the preventing of the sectarian violence that you testified to from going into all-out civil war?

General ABIZAID. Senator Nelson, I said in my opening statement that militias are the curse of the region and they are. Whenever non-state actors have the attributes of the state, yet bear no responsibility for their actions, it brings the region into very unpredictable directions, as you see Hezbollah moving with regard to inside of Lebanon. So it is very important that militias be controlled, but it is not something that can be achieved easily overnight. But it is something that has to be accomplished.

Senator BILL NELSON. Are they the biggest part of stirring up the sectarian violence that you testified about?

General ABIZAID. In my opinion, yes.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator, very much.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Colleagues on my side, Senator Chambliss had begun his questions when he had to be interrupted. I would like now to recognize you for your full time.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again to all three of you, thank you for your service and your great leadership. General Abizaid, General Pace, when you see your troops on the ground just let them know how much we appreciate the great job they continue to do. I am always very humble to be in their presence.

Let me give you my quick assessment. It is more complex than the way I am going to lay it out there, but here is what I see having happened in the 3-plus years that we have been involved in this conflict. We started out with a basic ground war, which we moved very quickly toward Baghdad. Then we began to face the

nonconventional enemy out there and the IEDs and the vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) became a major factor. They are still a major factor, but the fact is that we are not seeing that type of conflict directed towards the American soldier now as much as we had been in the past.

So it is pretty obvious we have done something right, both in the original ground war as well as our defense against the enemy from an IED standpoint. I do not think we talk about that enough, and I want you to comment on that.

But now we are in kind of another phase, where the violence is primarily being directed toward the Iraqi people, a lot of intimidation, a lot of threats, and they are not just idle threats. They are being carried out. We are seeing gangland-style executions. We are seeing literally gangs of individuals numbering from 12 to 25 coming in and, for example, going into the Olympic committee meeting and taking hostages, an entirely different type of reaction.

When Senator Levin said that Mr. Talabani said that this is their last quiver, I am not sure whether it is their last quiver or not, but it is pretty obvious that we have done some things right and we have forced them to change their tactics.

Now, obviously we cannot talk about, in an open hearing, what we are doing relative to this new type of tactic. But can you comment on that type of assessment and can you talk about some of the things that we have done right relative to the IEDs, and what are we doing relative to this new type of offensive that is coming from the insurgents?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I think it is very clear to us that, if you look at the recent experience that the Israelis are having as they operate in Lebanon and you look at how other armed forces, say Pakistani armed forces, operate in their northern territories, that asymmetric warfare is here and with us and it is the warfare of the 21st century, where the enemy seeks to attack the weaknesses of their opponent and where they will attempt to win media victories as opposed to military victories.

It should go without saying that in 5 years of war we have never lost a major engagement to the enemy anywhere in the region. Yet there is considerable loss of confidence because the enemy is so agile and capable in purveying the notion that the situation is not winnable.

Certainly the IED fight has been a difficult fight and it is a fight that we see not only in Iraq, but we see it in Afghanistan, and in Pakistan. We see it in southern Lebanon, you see it in other places such as in Egypt, where they are using IEDs occasionally there as well. Their tactics, techniques, and procedures are shared. We are learning a lot about it. We have gotten pretty good about it and I think in a closed session we could talk to you about some of the great successes we have had.

With regard to other situations with tactics, techniques, and procedures that the enemy have applied across the battle space, I think we will continue to adjust. Again, I am very confident that our forces are not only capable but very effective against what the enemy has put against us.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Senator Graham was talking about the fact that it is difficult for the American people to understand why

40,000 military insurgents cannot be controlled by 127,000 or whatever, Mr. Secretary, you said we had over there now, plus the Iraqi army. I think the numbers in Lebanon of Hezbollah insurgents is probably very insignificant, particularly compared to the force. As long as they are moving, hostile, and agile, as you refer to them, General Abizaid, it is pretty obvious that does present significant problems.

Lastly, let me just say that Senator Graham referred to our trip over there in December. We met with eight members of the Iraqi Election Commission, all of whom happened to be Sunnis, and every one of them made the comment, unsolicited on our part, about the presence of the American soldier. The comment was that, do we want to see the American soldier leave, and if you ask the Iraqi people that today they would say sure. But if you ask, do you want the American soldier to leave today, the answer would be overwhelmingly no.

I think that is borne out in a newspaper story today where there are a number of quotes here in the Washington Times from Iraqi citizens with regard to the troops, General Abizaid, that you put into Baghdad to run the militia out of the various neighborhoods, and the fact now that these Iraqi citizens are quoted as saying that for the first time in months that they are able to come out of their homes now, to reopen their shops, and for commerce to once again be present within the city of Baghdad, speaks volumes about the American soldier, and there are nothing but compliments about the job that the American soldiers are doing.

It still goes back to the fact that they do want us to leave, but they do not want us to leave until the job is done. So I hope that the Iraqi leadership is right that by the end of the year that they are able to take over control of the entire country, but in the mean time it is pretty obvious that our troops are doing the right things over there today under your leadership.

So with that, thank you. I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Bayh.

Senator BAYH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for your presence here today. General Abizaid, I would be interested in your opinion. Some observers have commented that there remain unresolved political questions for the Iraqis involving their constitution, division of oil revenues, that sort of thing, and that this is in significant part fueling the insurgencies and the continuing conflict. I would be interested in your opinion about whether you think that is true and, if so, what you think we can do to keep the pressure on the Iraqis to resolve their remaining political disputes.

General ABIZAID. Senator, as General Casey has said to me on numerous occasions, this conflict has gone from essentially insurgency to a discussion within the internal Iraqi groupings about the distribution of power, resources, and future control. You can approach it one of two ways. One way is by violence, the other way is by compromise.

It is my opinion that the forces of compromise will eventually understand that violence gets them nothing and that the compromise is absolutely essential, just like we had to determine that in our

own constitutional mechanisms after our own independence. So do I think that they can compromise? I think there will be a period of violence. I think that people are looking at very severe violence in Baghdad now that can be brought under control, and that the constitutional discussion they know has to be one of compromise, national reconciliation, and sharing of resources.

If you look at their neighborhood, I think they have all come to the conclusion that an Iraq that is not united and independent will be one that will be dominated by unfriendly neighbors in a way that will be very bad for the Iraqi people, and I believe they are determined to hold the country together, to stabilize the country, to compromise their way through it. But I think it will be a violent period and one that will ultimately lead to stability.

Senator BAYH. So your opinion is that these unresolved political disputes are contributing in a material way to the ongoing——

General ABIZAID. Certainly they do contribute, but I believe that this is part of the resolution process.

Senator BAYH. Perhaps I can ask both you and the Secretary, if he thinks it is appropriate—maybe this is going on behind the scenes, but what is keeping them from getting on with this business of revisiting the constitutional disputes that basically were put off until after the last election? That would be number one.

Number two, Mr. Secretary, perhaps this is appropriate for you: Some other commentators have opined that perhaps something similar to what happened in Dayton to help resolve the Balkans conflict would be appropriate to try and bring this to some political closure so that we can deal with this and move on. What do you think about that?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, it is a fair question: What is keeping them? They have gone from an election in January of last year to the drafting of a constitution, to a referendum on the constitution in October of last year, to an election on December 15 of last electing these people under the new constitution, to a relatively long period of some months, longer than we have with an election in early November and then finally getting our cabinet put in place some time in February or March here.

They are doing it for the first time and it is a permanent government, and the issues are tough. Some of them were reasonably intractable. For example, we urged them to not put sectarian unskillful ministers in the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior, and the Prime Minister-designate fought it and fought it and fought it, received a lot of pressure from people to put political people in there in a way that did not have the competence and did not have—and might have been sectarian. He prevailed, he ended up getting people that he accepted as being nonsectarian and competent. Time will tell, but it showed a lot of courage, but it took time.

The issued you raised about the constitution were set aside. They kicked the can down the road just like we did. We still did not have women voting, we still had slavery with our original Constitution. So it is not as though those things come out perfectly formed in the first 5 minutes. It takes some time, and they are going to have to work on them.

The Dayton process idea, I do not know the answer. All I know is that our Ambassador Zal Khalilzad, is in fact trying to serve, along with the British officials, a facilitating role in encouraging things to move faster, because time hurts. People are being killed while that time is being taken and there is no question about that.

But my impression is that our Ambassador is doing a very skillful job, with the assistance of coalition countries and General Casey, trying to facilitate the different groups working out some darn tough issues.

Senator BAYH. It is understandable why they would not get all of these things resolved in the first effort and some were postponed. But if, as I think we all agree, this is fueling the insurgency, I guess what we are looking for, Mr. Secretary, would be a greater sense of urgency and perhaps something of a higher profile nature like a Dayton-like process would assist the Ambassador with his efforts to really focus the minds of the participants as well as the world on, look, we need to get this done and the sooner the better, because some of the trend lines here, frankly, are not positive.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Certainly the President and the Secretary of State and the U.S. Ambassador and Chief of Mission, who worry through those issues, are aware of that possibility and I am sure they are considering it.

Senator BAYH. General, back to you for one moment. You mentioned that, and several others have mentioned, we can argue about the semantics of what constitutes a civil war, but that it is a real possibility if things do not go as we hope. If it does come to that, which side are we on?

General ABIZAID. I do not think it is a civil war because the institutions of the center are holding, and I believe that before we start talking about what we are going to do if there is civil war that we do everything in our power to prevent it from moving that way, and I do not believe that Iraq will move towards civil war as long as we apply the necessary military, diplomatic, and political actions necessary to bring the Baghdad situation under control in the short-term.

General PACE. Senator, if I may, both General Abizaid and I have been asked if it was possible that this could lead to civil war, and the answer is yes, it is possible. Speaking for myself, I do not believe it is probable and I do not believe it is probable for the exact same reasons that General Abizaid just stipulated, which is that the government is holding, the army is holding solid and is loyal. When they had the Golden Mosque bombing, it was the army, the Iraqi army, that went into the streets and helped keep calm. So I do not expect this to devolve into civil war.

Senator BAYH. We all hope that is right, General. But if it takes a course that is not as optimistic as we would all like to see here and it does come to civil war—the reason for my question essentially, if it does come to that, then what is our role in the country? Many people would say we would not have a role. That is why I asked you which side would we be on. We would be put in a very difficult situation where we would not want to take sides, but the Iraqis themselves would have chosen up sides and at that point the mission would become much different.

Mr. Secretary, my last question, back to you again on the Dayton.

Chairman WARNER. Just a minute, Senator. I think you have posed a question in your preliminary comments. Is it, or do you wish to go to your last question?

Senator BAYH. My last question, assuming we have—I have a couple blue cards here.

Chairman WARNER. I want to make sure the panel had adequate opportunity to answer.

Senator BAYH. Let me pose it as a question, then. If it does come to that, do we have a continuing mission in Iraq? If the Iraqis themselves have not been able to hold the center and they have chosen up sides along sectarian lines, at that point do we have a continuing mission in Iraq or not?

Chairman WARNER. That will be your last question, but let us give the panel—it is directed to whom? All three?

Secretary RUMSFELD. I am reluctant to speculate about that. It could lead to a discussion that suggests that we presume that is going to happen and both General Abizaid and General Pace have offered their comments on that. Our role is to support the government. The government is holding together. The armed forces are holding together. We are functioning in a very close relationship with that government in providing them assistance in achieving their goals.

We have seen what happens when governments pull apart, militaries pull apart. We saw it in Lebanon and it is not a pretty picture. Obviously, that would be a set of decisions that the President and Congress and the country would address. But I think that beyond that it would be not my place to be discussing it.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I think that disposes of the question unless either of the other witnesses want to add any views.

If not, Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One discussion that we have had here and had some votes—I think the last vote we had was on the question of whether we should set a firm date for pulling out regardless of the situation in Iraq. It was voted down 83 to 16 or something to that effect.

Senator Warner made a reference, General Abizaid, to the fact that the emotional reactions to the Lebanon situation could make the situation more difficult perhaps for our soldiers in Iraq. I would like to ask a little bit of a different question. It would be, what kind of reaction, what kind of impact would there be with regard to the Islamic extremists in the Middle East—and you are a student of that region. You have spent time in that region as a young person. You speak Arabic and you have been with us conducting this Iraq war from the beginning. What kind of impact would result if we were to precipitously withdraw?

Would it mollify the extremists? Would it make them say, well, the United States is a nicer place and we do not have to be so aggressive now? Or would they likely be emboldened and empowered and more aggressive?

General ABIZAID. Emboldened, empowered, and more aggressive.

Senator SESSIONS. In your opinion, would a failure in Iraq embolden and empower these radical extremists?

General ABIZAID. Yes, it would.

Senator SESSIONS. In your opinion, would setting a fixed date regardless of the situation in Iraq for a withdrawal embolden or empower the extremist forces?

General ABIZAID. Embolden.

Senator SESSIONS. General Pace, this is a matter we have discussed. Fortunately it has had very little support in the Senate. But there is a political election coming up and people float this idea that we should just pull out. You have heard General Abizaid's comments. He has been in the region for years and been leading this effort. Would you agree with his comments?

General PACE. Sir, I agree with each of General Abizaid's responses to each of your questions.

Senator SESSIONS. As Senator Warner has said for some time, we have asked much of our Nation. We have asked much of our soldiers. They have gone willingly. Almost without any single objection, they have gone and served in harm's way to carry out a policy that this Senate and this Congress has voted for, the American people ratified with the reelection of President Bush. It was an issue in that election.

Do you not think we owe it to them to continue to work in every way possible to make the sacrifice of those who have gone before be successful, General Pace?

General PACE. Sir, I was in Afghanistan last Thursday and Friday. Our troops there are so proud of what they are doing. We do owe them and their families the continued support of this Nation and especially those who have sacrificed their lives that we might live free.

Senator SESSIONS. I just hope that we put an end in this political season to any suggestion that we may just precipitously withdraw without regard to the circumstances there.

General ABIZAID. Senator Sessions, what I would like to say is the troops that serve in the region are not afraid of what is happening there. They would be afraid of what would happen if we just precipitously left there.

Senator SESSIONS. I heard that repeatedly. On the anniversary of the Army, I was with the Army to celebrate that day recently and this young guy told me: Senator, we want to be successful.

General Pace, you made reference to the reenlistment rate. I am told that our reenlistment rates of National Guard units that deploy to Afghanistan or Iraq and return exceed that of units who have not gone. Do you think that bespeaks of the military's belief that they are doing something that is worthwhile and meaningful?

General PACE. Sir, I think it does. I think that our troops know what they are doing. They get it. They are proud of what they are doing and, as General Abizaid said, the main question they ask is, do the American people support what we are doing? When we point to the numerous ways in which the American people support it, including what this Congress does to provide resources, it reinforces with them the goodness of what they have dedicated their lives to do.

Senator SESSIONS. We have people say, well, we are spending too much on this war, and then they come forward and say, well, you did not spend enough, you did not have enough equipment. Let us talk about that a little bit, General Pace. I am familiar with just one depot, Anniston Army Depot. I know that they are vigorously and aggressively hiring new people to reset the equipment.

I was also aware that we did not have enough money apparently in this budget to meet the high challenges that we were facing with the reset. The DOD blessed the Army's concern in that. It was made known to Congress. We just added another $13 billion and another amendment by Senator Dodd that would allow another $6 billion, allow another $6 billion to meet that challenge.

First I will ask you, do you think we are going to, with those funds, will be able to meet that reset problem?

General PACE. Sir, the money that was just—the $13.1 billion will meet the current Marine Corps and Army backlogs at the depots. It will allow for hiring of the additional shifts of skilled workers to get the job done. That is why I mentioned before that as best Congress can provide a no-year funding stream that the depots can depend on, so they can go out and hire workers who know they will have a job for the foreseeable future, we can start working off this backlog, sir.

Senator SESSIONS. I think you are exactly right and I am glad we have taken steps on that, and if we need to do more I believe this Congress will meet your demands.

One more thing. With regard to readiness, I was in an Army Reserve unit and they rated us whether we were ready or not in the 1970s and 1980s. If you do not have all your vehicles, you are not rated ready. When a unit comes off any major deployment, particularly coming off a combat deployment, is it not inevitable, I think you indicated, that you will not be rated ready?

One of the complicating factors for an effort like we are undergoing in Iraq, it seems to me, is units take their equipment with them and it is cheaper and smarter to leave that equipment over there for the next unit that replaces them. Therefore when they get back they may not have the full complement of equipment they need to be rated in your strict standards of readiness as ready.

General PACE. Sir, you are exactly right, and the reset money has been in the supplementals. The money for the Reserve and National Guard to build the 28 fully-manned, trained, and equipped brigades that the Army has stipulated they need is in the baseline budget to the tune of $21 billion over the next 5 years.

Senator SESSIONS. General Pace, you have been at this quite a number of years. Would you say that we are moving to have the best-equipped, most ready military the world has ever seen, at least this Army in peacetime before this war started, and as we go forward are we not better equipped and moving to a way to have our Guard and Reserve have the kind of equipment they have never had before?

General PACE. Sir, we are today the best-equipped, manned, trained, battle-hardened that we have ever been. With your continued support in Congress, we will be able to maintain the equipment and replace the combat equipment that has been lost. It takes upwards of 36 months from the time you lose a helicopter in

combat until the time the replacement helicopter comes on line. That does not mean that people are not trying to do the right thing or that the system is not working. It just takes that amount of time for that kind of equipment to be identified as lost, put into the budget process, funded, contracted, and built.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you very much.

Secretary RUMSFELD. It argues, Senator Sessions, for the possibility of Congress looking at the idea of a reset fund. That is to say, if you want to shorten that period of time, the time it takes for the analysis as to what has been lost or degraded, the time that Congress takes to consider and weigh it, the time it takes to place the orders and have the contract validated, and then the time it takes to produce it, which is, as General Pace said, it can be up to 3 years, if you had a reset fund that Congress approved and it was only for those purposes, the funds could then be drawn down in a much shorter period of time. Depots could plan their hiring earlier and you would have the ability to shorten that.

I guess I have not talked to the OMB about this, but inside the DOD we have been talking that there has to be a way to shorten that time period, and one of the ways would be for Congress to act more rapidly on budgets than happens each year. Another way would be for Congress to approve a reset, and another way would be for us in the DOD to find a way to try to cut in half the period of time it takes to actually let a contract and go through that whole procedure.

If the three of us did those things, it is conceivable we could abbreviate that period and solve some of the problem General Pace is talking about.

Senator SESSIONS. General Pace, just briefly, the idea that was stated earlier about a number of our brigades not being ready, in your opinion does that misrepresent the status of our capability at this time? Would it cause someone to have a higher degree of concern than is warranted? I know we want to do better. We want every unit to be ready. But is it not inevitable that as units transition off combat that there will be a period when they do not meet your high standards of readiness?

General PACE. Sir, there will be a period like that. Our readiness reporting system has been accurately reported to Congress as is required every quarter. We have been talking about the need to repair equipment now for about the last year to 18 months. So it is not wrong to say that we have equipment deficiencies and that we need to spend the money to do that. That is an accurate use of the data that is available.

But if you say to me would I rather have 100 percent of the 2,000 up-armored Humvees that I thought I needed in 2001 or 50 percent of the 12,000 up-armored Humvees that I say I need today, and which Army is better, I would tell you that, although my reporting system would tell you I am now at 50 percent and therefore command, control, communications, and computers (C4), that the Army I have built is three times better with regard to Humvees.

You can multiple that toward hundreds of thousands of end items. That is why it is really a kaleidoscope, and to try to have a discussion that just lays out exactly precisely what the readiness ratings are lends itself to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

Senator SESSIONS. Well said.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Could I say one other thing?

Chairman WARNER. Oh, yes.

Secretary RUMSFELD. I am sorry. I apologize.

Chairman WARNER. No, that is all right.

Secretary RUMSFELD. I think it is important that we be careful how we describe the capabilities and the readiness of the U.S. Armed Forces. We have multiple audiences and Iran listens and North Korea listens and other countries listen, and it is important to be precise, it is important to be accurate, and it is important to not leave an impression that might entice someone into doing something that would be a mistake on their part, because we have enormously capable Armed Forces.

Chairman WARNER. Mr. Secretary, I associate myself with your remarks. You are absolutely right. Unfortunately, some of the remarks have come from your Department from very high-ranking officials in connection with this budget process. So we are trying to do our very best with that.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, Senator Sessions has done an excellent job of pointing out the pitfalls of an abrupt withdrawal on a set timeline from Iraq. But I want to talk to you about my concerns about what our exit strategy does seem to be. It is premised on the ability of Iraqi troops to assume full responsibility for the security of their country. Over and over again we have heard the phrase that as Iraqi forces stand up, our troops will stand down. We have heard that time and again.

Our troops are the best-equipped, the best-trained, the best-led in the world, and I am enormously proud of them and I have the utmost confidence in their ability to handle any mission. Yet sectarian violence is worse than ever in Baghdad in particular, and I wonder about the validity of a strategy that says that less capable troops that are not as well-equipped, trained, and led as the best troops in the world can handle the security of this country.

If the upswing in violence has occurred despite the presence of the best troops in the world, it does not give me a lot of confidence in our underlying strategy, and it suggests to me that what we need is a political rather than a military solution.

General ABIZAID. Thanks, Senator Collins. I believe you have to have a combination of political action and military action that moves towards a lessening of the sectarian tensions. But I would try to make people that are listening to this understand that there is no better troops to deal with the sectarian problem than well-led Iraqi troops that are loyal to the government. They do not want their nation to fall apart. They have a much better intrinsic view of what is happening. They have instincts about what goes on within their own culture that, as well-trained and as well-equipped as we might be, we do not have.

So I would never sell the Iraqi armed forces short on their ability to make a difference. But the Iraqi armed forces must be well-led by their military leaders. The military leaders must be well-connected with the political leadership and they must share a common vision of where Iraq is headed.

Again, I will emphasize that Prime Minister Maliki and his current government is only 3 months old. I believe they very much share a vision of a unified Iraq where the armed forces will impose its will upon the people of Iraq and defeat the insurgency and the groups that are sponsoring sectarian violence, especially the terrorists.

I think that what General Casey has embarked upon, which is a very artful form of trying to gauge the capabilities of the Iraqi armed forces and at the same time bring down our forces so that the Iraqis will do more to defend their own turf, is one of the most difficult strategies that any wartime commander has ever had to execute. I think he is doing it enormously well, and there will come times in the campaign, such as the current period, where the sectarian violence is showing us a level of concern which means that we have to take the time to apply the military pressure necessary, and that Zal Khalilzad will help apply the political pressure necessary, to get it back on the right path.

Again, I do not want to be mischaracterized by what I have said here today. I am very confident that can be done.

Senator COLLINS. The prime minister, one of his very first initiatives was the new national security plan. I realize it has only been 3 months since he has been in office, but that plan does not seem to have been effective in quelling the upsurge in sectarian violence. Do you think that it is too soon to judge that plan or has it failed?

General ABIZAID. Senator, it is a great question. I do not think that the plan has failed. I think what you are seeing is an adjustment to a plan that was not working with the speed that we had hoped. So General Casey and his commanders are adjusting the plan and they are doing it in conjunction with the Iraqi commanders.

Of course, the enemy is attempting to really make the sectarian divide become the decisive point at a point in time where the Iraqi government has not quite gotten itself together yet. I am very confident that over time you will see that the Iraqi forces in conjunction with our forces, primarily with the Iraqis at the lead, will bring the sectarian problems under control.

Senator, nothing in the Middle East moves in a straight line. Things get worse, they get better. The question is whether or not the trend line is a trend line that can lead to success, and my belief is so far the answer is yes and it will continue that way.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. You go ahead, Senator. Go ahead.

Senator COLLINS. Mr. Secretary, yesterday I chaired a hearing at which the SIGIR testified. He described massive cost overruns, schedule delays, half-completed projects for which the money had run out. It was not a pretty picture. It seems that everything in Iraq is costing more than was anticipated by a considerable amount and, as many of us have discussed, earlier this week the Senate

added $13.1 billion in emergency spending to replace the worn-out equipment that we have discussed this morning.

The chairman mentioned that we have spent some $437 billion, I believe, over the last 3 years. I think the current spending rate is $2 billion a week. There has been an enormous cost to this war and an enormous impact on the Federal budget.

Looking ahead to next year, what are your projections for the spending on the war?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The Iraqi reconstruction is something that the Department of State works on and requests funds for. You are quite right, there have been a number of inspector general reports about open investigations into fraud and corruption and the like. There also are a number of projects that, because of security problems, have cost a great deal more than had been anticipated. As we know, a number of them are instances where the insurgents have actually gone in and blown up something that had been halfway built, and we have seen that happen.

I do not have a number that I can give you. I know the OMB can.

Senator COLLINS. I am not talking about the reconstruction projects, which I realize are under the State Department largely and USAID. I am saying for the DOD, as you look ahead to the next year. Many of us believe that the spending for the war needs to be part of the regular budget and not just dealt with in emergency supplementals. So I am asking you to look ahead because we as a Congress need to budget more accurately for the cost of the war and we can only do that based on your projections.

Secretary RUMSFELD. I understand. We do not know yet what we will get for this year's budget and we do not know what the supplemental will be. We do know that we are in the process of preparing the budget for next fiscal year, and that it will be presented by the President in January. But I can try to get back to you for the record to give you something that the Comptroller's office at the Pentagon would take out as a discrete piece for the DOD's portion, if that would be helpful.

Senator COLLINS. That would be. I am just trying to get a sense, Mr. Chairman, of whether we can expect indefinitely approximately $2 billion a week from our budget to be spent on this war.

[The information referred to follows:]

Given our current force levels and stability conditions in Iraq and Afghanistan, about $2 billion a week is a good estimate of our immediate war-related spending, but I certainly would not expect that funding level to continue "indefinitely" because force levels and stability conditions certainly will change at some point.

Chairman WARNER. Senator, that is a question that is constantly in the minds of the American people and it is an important one. As you well point out, the success of our ability to bring about a democracy in this country requires a certain amount of infrastructure rebuilding, and that has to be done at a constant level and make some progress.

But as the Secretary said, we take two steps forward and all of a sudden we look around and have to take a step backward because of the internal disruption.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

I would like to, before calling on Senator Talent, and then I want to ensure that the Senator from Rhode Island has an opportunity to speak, but our panel of witnesses must appear before the whole Senate at 2 o'clock sharp and consequently within the period of roughly 1 o'clock to 2 o'clock they have other obligations. So it is my hope to conclude this session here in a matter of 10 minutes or so.

Senator Talent, your time is now recognized.

Senator TALENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank all three of you for your service. I was going to say——

General PACE. He will be right back, sir.

Senator TALENT.—in absentia General Abizaid in particular for being in that crucible for years.

Chairman WARNER. He got a telephone call.

Senator TALENT. I understand entirely, Mr. Chairman. I will direct my questions at the Secretary anyway.

Mr. Secretary, I agree with an awful lot of what you said in your opening statement. I think it is important to remind people about what this is about. I agree this is an existential struggle and that is how they view it, a struggle for existence. I agree that there are no conceivable accommodations with them that would cause them to stop attacking us. Just we do not have the choice of them not attacking us. They are going to attack us. We therefore have to fight the war.

I also agree that the war in Iraq, the mission in Iraq, was a good strategic option and maybe the only strategic option. I have always said that mission was to remove Saddam, who was an organic threat, and replace him with a multi-ethnic democracy that would be an ally in the war on terror.

I also agree that we are making progress towards that end. If we are talking about whether the circumstances are such that we can withdraw, we are talking about whether the mission has been completed. I think we need to understand that. As long as the terrorists are prepared to concentrate to the extent they are in Iraq, we cannot guarantee that it is going to be a pacified country. But we are getting closer to the point where the Iraqi government can sustain itself with less American help. So I do think there has been progress and I am pleased about all that.

What I want to ask you about, Mr. Secretary, is this. Given that we are involved in this war and in this existential struggle, how can we be in a situation where we are allowing the budgets that you think you need to be reduced by the OMB year after year? I refer to the budget reduction in the fall of 2004, $30 billion over the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP), in the fall of 2005, $32 billion over the FYDP, April of this year indications there would be another 2 percent cut.

I am concerned that we may see a cut in the fall of this year, and these cuts are coming from the OMB. Now, we are in an existential struggle. I just do not think—you referred appropriately, I think, that we have to be concerned about the message we are sending. I am concerned that these budget cuts coming from people who are not warfighters are sending the message that we are weakening, that we are not prepared to bear the cost of this.

Before you answer, I will just make one other point with reference to something Senator Collins said. Yes, this is a difficult struggle. We have spent over $400 billion in 3 years. Our gross domestic product (GDP) in that period of time has been $36 trillion, so we are spending about what, 1.2 percent of our GDP on this? Given the importance of this struggle to the country, we are fighting it, it seems to me, at a cost that this economy can afford. We are so strong and I think sometimes that we forget that.

So if you would address that I would appreciate it. This is what is frustrating me. We need to give you what you think you need, not what the bean counters at OMB think you need.

Secretary RUMSFELD. Senator, you are experienced. You know how this town works. Let me say that I agree with you that the United States of America spending 3.8 percent of the GDP on our entire national security is a relatively small percentage of the GDP. When I came to Washington in the Kennedy and Eisenhower era, we were spending 10 percent of the GDP. Thirty years ago when I was Secretary of Defense for President Ford, we were spending, I think, 5 percent of the GDP. Today we are down to 3.8 percent of the GDP.

That is, this country can afford to spend what is necessary. You have mentioned the OMB. Let me talk about Congress for a minute. This year, if you take the House and the Senate, the authorization and the appropriation committees, and drop a plumb line through all of it, we are looking at somewhere between $15 to $20 billion that we will not have to spend on the things we need to spend it on.

If you look at the time it takes to pass an authorization and to pass an appropriation bill, the delays that are incurred and the gyrations that the Services have to go through to try to cash-drawer what they are doing, take money from this and spend it on that, the inefficiencies, the inability to plan ahead, the inability to get the depots to hire the people they need in advance because we do not have this depot—correction, the reset fund that I mentioned might be a way to help solve this problem—it is a combination of cuts. I guess the Senate Appropriations Committee wanted to cut something like $9 billion this year.

Then it is the Member adds, all the things that have been added on top that we—without money, simply things that we need to spend on that we do not want. Then a series of things that we have offered to not do—a second engine for the Joint Strike Fighter, a 12th carrier that we do not believe we need because it costs too much to repair it—and we are being forced to do those things.

Then we came in and said, we can save money doing a series of things with respect to health care and a variety of things, and we were told, you may not do that. The combination of all of that is big dollars and it hurts.

Senator TALENT. Mr. Secretary, you are looking here at two committee members who offered and got passed an amendment raising the top line for defense and that was reallocated away. So I could not agree with you more about it. I just think all of us who understand, who have sat on these committees or been in your chair or the chair of the Generals there and know what we need, have to find a way to insist on getting what we need.

I would encourage you very strongly, because it is just—you mentioned Congress and I am not trying to—I am just saying it is harder for those of us here who understand this to hold this if we are getting cuts from the administration that the economic and the budget people are recommending.

I do not think there is any way we can lose this war unless we lose it. I think you are saying the same thing in general terms and I agree with you completely. Let us just agree not to let this happen, and I certainly will do my part. The chairman certainly has done his part and I know Senator Reed has as well.

So I wanted to make that point. Mr. Chairman, I see my time is up too and I know we are under time constraints.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Talent. Thank you very much.

Senator Reed, I had indicated that you would have an opportunity for a follow-up question.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Pace, you are familiar with the current readiness reporting of the Army and the Marine Corps, but particularly the Army?

General PACE. Yes, sir, I am.

Senator REED. Would you dispute the conclusion of former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry that two-thirds of the Army's operating force, Active and Reserve, is now reporting as unready, and the conclusion of General Schoomaker in response to this question from Mr. Skelton, "Are you comfortable with the readiness levels of nondeployed units that are in the Continental United States?" General Schoomaker's reply: "No," he is not comfortable?

General PACE. I think that the readiness reporting system as it is constructed has been accurately described that the number of brigades in the United States Army whose equipment requirements have changed dramatically over the last 5 years are being accurately described. I absolutely agree with General Schoomaker in his comments about additional funding needed to buy back combat losses, to buy back the reset.

All those things are absolutely accurate, Senator. All I want to make sure we understand is that the system itself is reporting pure math, but as one example again, the pure math is based on in 2001 needing 2,000 up-armored Humvees, in 2006 needing 12,000, and therefore the capacity of the Army to wage war is significantly greater than it was, even though the reporting system, properly utilized, is highlighting places where we need to put more money.

Senator REED. General, I can recall when General Abizaid and I were lieutenants together in the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment. I will just speak for myself. We took this reporting system very seriously because we understood, and I think you do, that soldiers and marines, as good as they are, need equipment to fight. We presumed that the leadership, both uniformed and civilian, in the DOD, took those reports seriously also and that they were not requiring us to report on equipment which was really tangential to the needs of the unit.

In fact, we all recall where individuals were relieved because they could not maintain adequate levels of readiness under the current reporting system at the battalion level. But it does not appear that takes place at the national level, because you have a readiness

crisis. We have tried to address it with $13 billion last Tuesday, noting that this document was submitted Wednesday, a day late and $13 billion short.

Chairman WARNER. Let the record show that the document that you are referring to is the one that I introduced, the OMB document.

Senator REED. So I think the signal that you are sending to those lieutenants, sergeants, and captains is that this reporting system is either illogical and nonsensical or it is being disregarded at the highest levels, because it was not the DOD that was asking for this money to the President—forget OMB; to the President. It turned out that, I think, within the Army there was such concern about their troops that they went around you all and approached Congress. I think that is a sad commentary on the leadership of the DOD.

This may not be a question but a comment, but I am particularly incensed with some of the suggestions that this is all just kind of some subjective evaluation we do, and the readiness reporting has no real impact in the world, and also the suggestion that if we talk about readiness, particularly when it is in a crisis like this, we are somehow giving unfair advantage to our adversaries.

But I recall in 2000 when then-Governor Bush stood up and said the President of the United States, if he called on his DOD, they would have to report two divisions not ready for duty based upon the reporting system. How many divisions will we have to report that way to that question today based on the reporting system, General Pace?

General PACE. First of all, sir, we are not doing divisions any more. We are doing brigades, as you have already——

Senator REED. I know that.

General PACE. About two-thirds of the brigades, as you pointed out, would report C3 or C4.

Senator REED. Not ready for duty.

General PACE. I will stand by my comments. First and foremost——

Senator REED. Thank you, General.

General PACE. Sir, may I finish?

Senator REED. Yes, sir.

General PACE. Thank you.

We do take with great integrity and responsibility the readiness reporting system. That is exactly why for every quarter, as required, we report to Congress the exact accurate reporting for readiness. I am saying that we do need more money. I am not disputing that at all, sir. We do need more money, for all the reasons I have articulated.

All I was trying to point out, Senator, is that the way that the system functions, the time it takes to build a new helicopter, for example, the fact that in combat we are learning and as a result of learning we have changed our requirements—we currently have 40,000 armored vehicles in Iraq that did not even exist 5 years ago.

Sir, all I am saying is that we are providing for our soldiers and marines on the ground the finest equipment ever fielded. We are using it up at rates faster than we budgeted for and therefore to use the readiness system to identify, as you have, the requirement

for more funding is absolutely correct. I am just trying to make sure that everybody listening to this conversation understands how you can go from 2001 with 2,000 vehicles, 2006 with 12,000 vehicles, and not have all 12,000 vehicles and still feel better about our Army's capacity to get the job done.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. May I say to my colleague from Rhode Island, General Schoomaker is visiting with me on this issue this afternoon at 4 p.m. I would be pleased to have you join us. I have invited Senator Levin. He is likewise going to join us. It may well be that he will wish to put his comments on the record of these proceedings today in the section relating to your questions.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

One last question and then we will conclude this, I think an excellent hearing. Last week President Bush and Prime Minister Blair agreed to seek a U.N. resolution calling for the creation of a multinational force to help the Lebanese government extend control in southern Lebanon. I strongly support those initiatives by our President and, given that that country, Lebanon, is in your area of operations, given your long experience, first I would like to have your assessment of what is the capability of the Lebanese army today and what training and equipment would they require for the mission of their government to go out and begin to maintain control, given the assumption that there will be a multinational force eventually put together.

So if you could include your assessment of the size and the capability of such force that would be needed to fulfill the commitments that President Bush and Prime Minister Blair made to our respective nations and the world.

General ABIZAID. Senator, certainly I do not want to let any of my comments get in the way of the diplomacy that is going on right now. It is very important that the diplomats do their work.

The Lebanese armed forces is a professional armed force. It has one of the most educated officer corps in the Middle East. It is a small force for Middle Eastern standards of about 50,000 or so, and it needs significant upgrade of equipment and training, capability that I believe the western nations, in particular the United States, can assist with.

We recently, before the current difficulty started, visited the Lebanese armed forces, did an assessment of where they happen to be in readiness. We saw that they needed some significant spare parts. I think we have made our desires known through the DOD as to how we could help them immediately. I think there will be need for other assistance to the Lebanese armed forces because it will never work for Lebanon if over time Hezbollah has a greater military capacity than the Lebanese armed forces. The Lebanese armed forces must extend the sovereignty of the nation throughout the country. I believe that they can do that in assistance with the international community and with a robust peacekeeping force or peace enforcement force, depending upon what the diplomats decide is the right equation.

I would say that I served with the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon back in the mid-1980s and it was not capable of really enforcing peace and security in the region. So whatever force goes in has to have robust rules of engagement.

Chairman WARNER. Robust rules?

General ABIZAID. Robust rules of engagement, very clear and unambiguous mandate, and clear cooperation from the Lebanese government and any other parties.

Chairman WARNER. Could you further define your professional definition of "robust rules of engagement"? That was the second part of my question.

General ABIZAID. Robust rules of engagement means that the commander has the ability to effect the mandate that has been given to him by the international community, to include the use of all available means at his forces' disposal, and I think in the case of southern Lebanon he will have to have capabilities that are just not minor small arms, but would include all arms.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

My distinguished colleague from Minnesota, I indicated the hopes to have a second round. We have had some, but the intervention of two votes precludes a further second round of questions by members. But I invite you to provide for the record your question. It will be open until tomorrow close of business.

I would like to say in conclusion, Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, General Abizaid, that this has been a very thorough and constructive hearing and I thank each of you for your participation and forthrightness in your responses.

The hearing is now adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

TROOP LEVELS IN IRAQ

1. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, what do you believe are the most likely ramifications of a withdrawal of American forces from Iraq by a date certain? What effect might setting a timeline for withdrawal have?

Secretary RUMSFELD. There are calls in some quarters for withdrawal or arbitrary timelines for withdrawals. The enemies hear those words as well. We need to be realistic about the consequences. If we left Iraq prematurely, as the terrorists demand, the enemy would tell us to leave Afghanistan and then withdraw from the Middle East, and if we left the Middle East they would order us and all those who do not share their militant ideology to leave what they call the occupied Muslim lands from Spain to the Philippines. Then we would face not only the evil ideology of these violent extremists, but an enemy that will have grown accustomed to succeeding in telling free people everywhere what to do.

Setting an artificial deadline to withdraw would also send a message across the world that America is a weak and unreliable ally. Setting an artificial deadline to withdraw would send a signal to our enemies that if they wait long enough, America will cut and run and abandon its friends.

General PACE. First, a set date for American withdrawal would provide something the enemy could anticipate. It would give them light at the end of the tunnel, a date for which to wait, prepare, and then claim victory. Second, it would set a limit for American commitment to the Iraqi government. There should not be a time limit for our support of a new democratic government in Iraq. Third, a set date for withdrawal would not be based on the actual situation, which is fluid and uncertain. Force reductions should be conditions-based so that we are adjusting troop levels to the realities on the ground. Lastly, a set date may limit or inhibit international donor commitment and investment.

General ABIZAID. Early withdrawal of American troops will endanger the stability of Iraqi security force (ISF) institutions, the Iraqi political process, and establishment of Iraqi civil institutions. Our objectives were developed to be conditions-based within a timeframe reflected in the Joint Campaign Plan in agreement with our coalition partners, and in line with our mandate from the United Nations. However, a fixed timeline for leaving Iraq would lead terrorists to believe that they could win by waiting for our departure. It would also signal a lack of coalition patience and will, and would play directly into the intentions of terrorists and foreign fighters who seek to destroy the ability of the Iraqi people to forge their own national identity. Our enemies know that they cannot defeat us militarily. To succeed, they will focus on the battle of perceptions, which they plan to win by encouraging the coalition's withdrawal before Iraq is ready to stand alone.

2. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, could you describe the new strategy for Baghdad, one that reportedly involves the deployment of several thousand additional troops to the city and the adoption of the so-called "oil spot" strategy?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The Baghdad Security Plan, named Operation Together Forward, is not an "oil spot" strategy but is designed to improve the security situation in Baghdad by increasing checkpoints, curfews, and enforced weapons bans in focused areas within the city. Security forces are also conducting targeted operations against terrorist cells and death squads.

Security forces are moving from neighborhood to neighborhood identifying and eliminating violent forces, securing weapons caches, and restoring basic civil services. As the situation improves, security forces will transition to policing and emergency response operations.

In addition to stepping up security operations, the Government of Iraq, with Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF–I) support, is working with the local District Advisory Councils to employ local labor to rebuild neighborhood markets and restore essential services. As of September 22, Iraqis have spent more than 11,000 man-days cleaning up and restoring essential services. The Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee approved 15 reconstruction projects totaling $9.2 million. Fourteen projects are in the Doura District which, until recently, was one of the most violent districts in Baghdad.

General PACE. The concept of the plan is to assert increased control over the populace by conducting increased checkpoints, curfews, and enforced weapons bans in focused areas within Baghdad. Security forces are also conducting targeted operations against terrorist cells and death squads. They are conducting systematic neighborhood by neighborhood operations to identify and clean out violent forces, identify and secure weapons caches, and identify and restore basic civil services. Ultimately, this operation will restore the confidence of the Iraqi people in the ISF, which will also assist in lowering the levels of violence. As the situation improves, security forces will transition to steady state policing and emergency response operations. The positive reaction to the "clean-up Baghdad streets" initiative, in which Iraqi and coalition force troops were cleaning the streets together, is an excellent example of the 'nonkinetic' effect aspect of the Baghdad Security Plan.

The Government of Iraq, with MNF–I in support, is working very closely with the local District Advisory Councils in the areas of operations by employing local labor from the community to clean and rebuild parts of the neighborhood markets and repair and restore essential services. To date, more than 11,000 man-days of employment have been executed by Iraqis for projects directly related to cleaning up and developing the areas where operations are focused. On 24 August, the Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee voted unanimously to support the Baghdad Security Plan with Economic Security Funds; 15 reconstruction projects totaling $9.2 million were approved. Fourteen projects are in the Doura District, until recently one of the most violent districts in the city. One project is in the Ghazaliya, Al Mansour District. Included are the following:

- Four road projects (to include an asphalt overlay of all residential city roads);
- Two water projects;
- Four sewer projects (to include completion of a sewer network that will connect approximately 2 million residents to the waste water treatment plant);
- Four school projects (to include construction of one primary, one secondary, and one high school); and
- One project to supply essential service equipment.

General ABIZAID. The "oil spot" strategy is a counterinsurgency effort based on fixing parts of the country across all lines of operation such as security, government, and economic in order to return basic services such as sewage, water, electricity, education, trash, medical, and transportation. As life returns to normalcy in these "oil spots" the citizens dislocate themselves from the insurgency as they come to realize that the insurgency is a destructive force while the host nation government gains legitimacy. It is the legitimacy of the government which is the key in any successful counterinsurgency. Other areas around this "oil spot" will then want to enjoy those benefits and as the theory goes the "oil spot" begins to spread as oil does on top of water.

The security of Baghdad is without a doubt very important to the successful outcome of this campaign. In order to displace the local citizens from the insurgency and in order to boost the legitimacy of the Government of Iraq we have started Operation Together Forward. Operation Together Forward is designed to regain those areas that were hardest hit by the insurgency. Those objective areas within Baghdad are first cleared by coalition and ISF—house by house, building by building. Next is a hold phase with ISF in the lead the citizens and the local government begin to help not only clean up the objective but also to re-open businesses and commerce. The last phase is the build phase whereupon the local citizens will build upon the successes in the security, economic, and government lines of operations. We are still in the clear stage of this operation.

3. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, where will these additional troops come from? If we are redeploying U.S. troops from outside Baghdad, won't we need to replace those troops with additional forces?

Secretary RUMSFELD. It is important to remember that Iraqi troops are also being moved into Baghdad. The number of Iraqi troops in the Baghdad area is greater than our troops. We are supporting them in the main operational areas. They can benefit from our command and control capabilities and the systems that a unit such as the Stryker brigade brings to the fight.

Levels of violence and terrorist activities drive decisions to reallocate U.S. forces inside Iraq. MNF–I commanders normally do not reallocate troops to areas experiencing moderate levels of enemy activity. Moreover, the capability of the local ISF is a deciding factor as to whether to reallocate U.S. forces. Before any U.S. combat unit is reallocated, U.S. commanders must be confident that the departed area will not backslide into increased violence.

General PACE. After being relieved by the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), 2nd Infantry Division (2ID) in MND–N, the 172nd SBCT was extended for up to 120 days and repositioned to support the main security effort in Baghdad. Since their replacement (3rd SBCT, 2ID) was part of a normal Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) force rotation, no additional forces were required to backfill. That said, commanders in the field continue to evaluate conditions on the ground and make recommendations and requests for force adjustments as conditions warrant.

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

4. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, President Talabani has stated that Iraqi forces will assume security duties for the entire country by the end of this year. How does this square with the increased U.S. troop presence in Baghdad and the continuing presence of coalition troops throughout Iraq?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Coalition commanders expect ISF units will have the security lead in all of Iraq by March or April 2007. The ministries and the joint headquarters, with coalition support, are expected to take the lead by the end of 2007. However, we believe that our partnership with these institutions will be required for some time into the future. However, our assessments are conditions-based; unforeseen improvements or setbacks could affect the ISF's scheduled assumption of the security lead. The enemy will have an affect on the timeline.

General PACE. Given the current security situation on the ground, the level of training and equipping of ISF, and the development of the leadership core of ISF, we estimate that all Iraqi territory will be under ISF lead by the end of 2007. The ministries and the joint headquarters are expected to be in the lead with coalition support by the end of 2007. However, a partnership with these institutions will be required through at least the first peaceful transfer of power in 2010. These assessments are conditions-based, and unforeseen improvements or setbacks may affect the ISF's scheduled assumption of the security lead. The enemy will always get a vote.

General ABIZAID. Coalition force requirements are determined through a conditions-based process, factoring in the presence and activities of the terrorists and in-

surgents in an area as well as the strength and capabilities of Iraqi army and police forces in area. These factors ultimately determine the level of coalition force requirements in an area. Each area has its own unique circumstances. President Talibani noted the significant capabilities of the ISF and the fact that Iraqi army and police forces have assumed responsibility across Iraq, responsibilities that will increase through the remainder of the year. In many areas, however, Iraqi forces will still require coalition forces to help back them up. Additionally, until the Iraqi logistics system is fully established, Iraqi forces will require coalition support to provide some key resources until the Iraqi system is able to provide these requirements. Additionally, there are some areas where the terrorist and insurgent presence requires additional security force presence. Baghdad is currently one such area where additional coalition forces are required until additional ISF can be deployed.

5. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, it seems clear that even today, more than 3 years after our invasion of Iraq, we do not have sufficient troops to control the country or help the Iraqi government impose its authority. We are talking about redeploying thousands of troops from around Iraq to Baghdad. More troops will be deployed to Ramadi, possibly coming from Falluja. Have we had since our invasion, and do we have today, sufficient force levels in Iraq? If you believe we do, what do you believe will be the turning point in this war, since additional troops seem to be unnecessary?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The number of troops that went in, and the number of troops that were there every month since, and the number of troops that are there today reflected the best judgment of the military commanders on the ground, their superiors, General Pace, General Abizaid, the civilian leadership of the Department of Defense (DOD) and the President of the United States.

The Iraqis will determine the "turning point" in the war when they view their security situation tenable, their political process as legitimate, and their economic future as hopeful. For its part, the Government of Iraq needs to resolve the difficult issues of national reconciliation, militias, oil revenue sharing, federalism, and de-Baathification. They must address these issues in a way that does not exacerbate sectarian tensions.

General PACE. It is impossible to provide a discreet "turning point" because the turning point must happen in the minds of the Iraqis. Iraqis, including minorities, must view the political process as legitimate and effective and Iraq's economic prospects as sufficient and equitable for themselves, their families, and their tribe or sect. Effective political and economic reform is central to a lasting reduction in violence, to a far greater extent than solely increasing U.S. troop numbers. The Government of Iraq must resolve the difficult issues of national reconciliation, including de-Baathification reform, militias, oil revenue sharing, and the nature of Iraqi federalism. They must address these issues in a way that does not exacerbate sectarian tensions. Additionally, the Government of Iraq must deliver basic goods and services and a program to increase economic opportunities to provide a counter to crime and militias.

The 172nd SBCT was temporarily extended. This unit is the coalition's most experienced unit, with the most mobile and agile systems, in support of the main security effort in Baghdad at a decisive time. With the rest of the elements of the plan to protect the population in Baghdad, this unit's deployment gives coalition forces a potentially decisive capability to affect security in Baghdad in the near-term. Commanders in the field will continue to evaluate our force structure and recommend changes as conditions warrant. We continually assess future force requirements with the Iraqi government. Decisions about coalition troop levels are conditions based and tailored to the overall situation in Iraq. We continue to transition and transfer additional responsibilities to the ISF. The people of Iraq continue to meet the political milestones they have established. As these and other conditions are met we assess the capabilities here and make recommendations as to the levels of troops needed in the coming months. We are committed to ensuring Iraq's security forces are trained, equipped, and organized in a manner that will allow them to provide security and stability on their own. They are making progress and our partnership program should help develop their capabilities even more. Adjustments to the coalition troop levels are conditions-based and not based on a timeline. Those conditions include continued political development, ISF development, and the transition of security responsibilities from coalition forces to ISF. Coalition forces remain in a support role.

General ABIZAID. I believe we have had and currently have sufficient troops in Iraq. While the number of U.S. forces has varied from as many as 185,000 to as few as 120,000 depending on rotation cycles, there are still 23,000 coalition troops in Iraq, and most importantly we now have trained and equipped over 300,000 Iraqi

soldiers and police, and an additional 100,000 forces in the ministries as well. The increasing number of ISF is the most telling number as it is integral to the Government of Iraq bearing ultimate responsibility for Iraq's security.

As decisive as our joint military operations are, particularly our efforts to secure Baghdad, the turning point in this war will be when the majority of Iraqis believe in and support their elected government in the difficult tasks ahead. The year-old Iraqi Constitution calls for approximately 55 enabling or implementing acts to make it operative, including such significant and broad areas as judiciary development and economic reform. Passing and enforcing this legislation will be a key indicator of progress for the new Iraqi government and this campaign.

IRAQI MILITIAS

6. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, with the death of Zarqawi and the capture of several of his lieutenants, how would you assess the threat posed today by al Qaeda in Iraq?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Killing Zarqawi did not destroy al Qaeda in Iraq. Its capacity, however, has been diminished. Although al Qaeda is a tenacious organization, we are making progress against them and we will continue to make progress. Sectarian violence was always Zarqawi's strategy. Violence creates fear and targets innocent civilians in an attempt to derail democracy.

General PACE. [Deleted.]

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

7. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, has Moqtada al Sadr's militia become problem number one for the Iraqi government and the coalition, and what are our current plans to deal with his and other independent militias?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Article 9 of the Iraqi constitution prohibits the formation of military militias outside the framework of the armed forces.

Nevertheless, the problem of illegal armed groups and militias requires both kinetic and political solutions. Coalition forces will assist the Iraqi government in addressing illegal armed groups by reintegrating individuals into the ISF, disarming them, and demobilizing them. Indeed, the two primary objectives of the security operations in Baghdad are rapidly reducing sectarian violence by de-legitimizing the illegally armed groups and establishing the ISF as the dominant security presence.

Once Iraqi citizens have more confidence in their security forces, they will be less likely to rely on militias. Improvements in the capabilities of the ISF are steady as seen in Baghdad neighborhoods cleared as part of Operation Together Forward.

The Iraqi government is also encouraging the organization of popular committees. The committees, like neighborhood watches, assist Iraqi police and Iraqi army by providing information on threats in the neighborhood. The unarmed popular committees should provide information to be acted on by the security forces.

General PACE. The recent increase in sectarian violence is the number one problem for the Iraqi government and the coalition; that said, any group associated with terror, murder, or extreme violence is equally detrimental to a free and democratically-elected Iraqi government. Those groups will be pursued and brought to justice by Iraqi and coalition forces. In that Iraq is a sovereign nation, current plans to deal with security in Iraq require close coordination with Iraqi government and associated ISF. An example of this is Operation Together Forward, in which coalition forces are working closely with Iraqi counterparts to reduce murders, kidnappings, assassinations, terrorism, and sectarian violence in Baghdad.

General ABIZAID. Preventing sectarian violence from escalating into civil war is the coalition's highest priority. Sadr's Jaysh-al-Mahdi militia is a contributor to sectarian violence but only part of the overall problem. Sunni and Shiite extremists at both ends of the spectrum are increasingly locked in retaliatory violence, contesting control of ethnically mixed neighborhoods in order to expand their existing areas of influence.

The challenge for the coalition is to support the government in breaking the cycle of ethno-sectarian violence while allowing the Prime Minister to consolidate the Shiite and Sunni constituency he needs in order to be able to exercise power. An effective disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program for militias and illegal armed groups is essential to meeting security requirements that will have long-term implications for economic development and foreign investment. Integrated with the effort to disarm the militias is the Prime Minister's "National Reconciliation and Dialogue Project," which he presented to the Iraqi Council of Representatives in June. This 24-point initiative was aimed at reconciling past inequities, rallying

Iraqis around a principle of equality devoid of sectarian divisions, firmly establishing the basis of national unity via a democratic political process, and creating conditions for Iraq to assume a leading role regionally and internationally. The National Reconciliation Project is intended to open dialogue, reduce sectarian tensions and violence in Iraq, and increase commitment to the democratic process and the new National Unity Government.

8. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, the police obviously pose a problem for stability and safety in Iraq. Are there plans to eliminate infiltrators from the police ranks, and distance the police from militia control?

Secretary RUMSFELD. There are some places where the local police are exceptionally efficient and very honest. There are other areas where we know that they have been infiltrated by various militias, such as in Basra, where the government and the British forces that are down there are doing their best to stand down those units, retrain them, and bring them on line in a credible and capable manner.

As far as national police forces, there are battalions that need to be stood down and retrained. We are in the process of doing that now.

The Iraqis are building Internal Affairs and Inspector General units in the police ranks, a move that will ensure that police respond to the legitimate chain of command.

General PACE. The Ministry of Interior (MOI), in conjunction with coalition forces, is conducting a unit-by-unit inspection of the Iraqi national police. While this inspection is focusing on equipment accountability and training level proficiency, it is also providing a platform to conduct retraining of policemen on basic professionalism and anti-corruption methods. This inspection is also providing ministry and coalition leadership the opportunity to rid the police of those members whose militia affiliations take precedence over loyalties to the nation. While this inspection has been ongoing for more than a month, the retraining and revetting of police will continue for the foreseeable future.

General ABIZAID. During his 31 July speech to Parliament, MOI Bolani acknowledged there are disloyal and corrupt elements that had infiltrated the police and government and in less than 3 months in office, has shown himself to be decisive in removing infiltrators and criminals from police ranks. Within MOI, Internal Affairs (IA) is leading the effort to eliminate militia and terrorist infiltrators through the implementation of an aggressive MOI employee vetting process using the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) combined with criminal record checks. The AFIS is also being integrated into the police cadet screening process which involves the collection of personal information and biometric data, to include fingerprints. Over 7,000 "hits" have been referred to the IA Directorate based on known criminal connections. In addition to the AFIS screening process, the MOI staff has taken the initiative to conduct an internal audit of all personnel to ensure that every employee meets the initial entry criteria.

IRAN'S INFLUENCE IN IRAQ

9. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, what role is Iran playing today in southern Iraq and more widely throughout the country?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The primary security problem in Iraq has shifted from a Sunni insurgency to sectarian violence. Al Qaeda terrorists, insurgents, and armed Shiite militants supported by Iran also compete to plunge the country into civil war. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Qods Force arms, trains, and equips rogue Shiite groups. These Shiite militias do Iran's bidding and exert an improper and undue influence from Basra to Baghdad. Prime Minister Maliki is concerned and has appointed a military officer to go to the south to get the security situation back under control.

General PACE. [Deleted.]

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

10. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, if Iran's influence were somehow eliminated, what concrete effect would that have on violence in Iraq?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Iran talks about stabilizing Iraq but in reality, it arms, trains, and equips Iraqi extremist Shiite militias to do its bidding. Eliminating Iran's influence would likely result in less Shiite extremism and sectarian violence. Moreover, Sunni resistance probably would diminish along with their fear of a Shi-

ite-dominated Iranian-sponsored government that discriminates against Sunnis. Stability would increase.

General PACE. First, although it is difficult to predict with concrete certainty, most likely there would be a reduction in funding, guidance, morale, and material support to Iranian parties, resulting in a reduction of Shiite extremism and sectarian violence. There would also very likely be a reduction in the sectarian motivated violence and a reduction in the Sunni resistance that is based on fear of a Shiite-dominated government that discriminates against Sunnis and is a proxy of Iran. There would likely also be an increase in stability as these factors that drive conflict are eliminated.

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

VIOLENCE IN IRAQ

11. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, what, if any, events do you think will bring down the level of violence in Iraq?

Secretary RUMSFELD. National reconciliation could reduce the factors leading to violence by resolving those outstanding issues among Iraq's major factions. Dismantling militias and extragovernmental armed groups and reintegrating them into society would permit the Iraqi government to control the sole use of force which should also reduce violence. Finally, reforming the MOI and the Iraqi Police Service will also increase stability in Iraq.

General PACE. First, national reconciliation promises to resolve the outstanding issues between the major factions in Iraq. This should greatly reduce many of the drivers of the violence. Second, the successful reduction of militias and extra-governmental armed groups, which includes a fully implemented disarm, demobilize, and reintegration program, should reduce violence and allow the Iraqi government to retain the monopoly on the use of force. Third, MOI and Iraqi Police Service reform, development, and supervision will also reduce violence in Iraq.

General ABIZAID. While individual events can cause an escalation in the level of violence, only a sustained campaign can reverse the trend. The campaign in Iraq will bring down the level of violence by generating capable, non-sectarian security forces with the capacity to counter internal threats and to deny the passage of foreign fighters and their support across Iraq's borders. An effective democratically elected government of national unity will provide security and essential services, removing the need to rely on local militias for protection and other support. Finally, provincial elections and constitutional reform will reinforce equities between Iraqis and their country's future prosperity.

IRAQI ARMY

12. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, to build a truly national Iraqi army, it is necessary to build units of mixed ethnicities and religions (Shiite, Sunni, Kurds)—not simply an army comprising homogenous units. How far have we gone toward the goal of building mixed units so far, and what steps are we taking to accelerate it?

Secretary RUMSFELD. We are committed to creating an Iraqi military that reflects the ethnic and religious diversity of Iraq, with units loyal to the nation and not to sectarian interests. Although competence and merit are the deciding factors when selecting recruits, (particularly leaders), the ISF are developing so they generally mirror the demographic makeup of Iraq. Sectarian lines remain drawn, however, in those units recruited along geographic lines, with Sunni, Shiite, or Kurdish overrepresentation within those units reflecting the areas where the units were formed.

The Minister of Defense, through an Officer Selection Committee, uses the normal transitions to continue to diversify the senior leadership in the Iraqi army. This continuing process strives to ensure that the Iraqi army is led by competent leaders who are representative of the nation.

General PACE. We do not track soldiers by ethnicity—they are all Iraqis. Historically, we have seen that the Iraqi army does a much better job in recruiting multiple ethnicities than the Iraqi police. The Government of Iraq is committed to ensuring ISF represent the population, both ethnically and geographically, to enable the Iraqi people to build and maintain confidence in their security forces. A representation of the Iraqi populace would ideally consist of 60 percent Shiite, 20 percent Sunni, and 20 percent Kurd force.

General ABIZAID. The senior Iraqi military and political leadership share our views on the requirement to build units of mixed ethnicity and religions. It is important to note that the Iraqis are taking the lead to properly integrate their army and

to ensure they do everything possible to make each division representative of the population at large and not a collection of units that represent different ethnic, religious or geographical areas. Recruiting efforts are focused at providing an equal opportunity to everyone to join the military. In a recent visit to Iraqi army units, Prime Minister Maliki stressed that when Iraqis join the military they must forget about the town or province they came from and must forget about the circumstances under which they joined and focus on representing Iraq as a whole. This has been a recurring theme for the Iraqi army and it fits well into the Prime Minister's plan for reconciliation. During recent missions, the Iraqis have sent Mobile Recruiting Teams out into areas of the country where no teams were previously sent, in an effort to extend opportunities for service to the nation. The Iraqis, with coalition partners in support, have made a genuine effort to extend the opportunity for service to all ethnic and religious groups in the country. They also monitor the distribution of soldiers who complete initial entry training to ensure ethnic diversity continues as the units build and sustain. The coalition understands the importance of diversity and will continue to provide overwatch and advice to our Iraqi partners. Currently, the Iraqi army units and their leaders are largely representative of the population of Iraq.

13. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, there have been reports that large numbers of Iraqi troops are deserting and that there is corruption among the troops. In one report, only half of an entire unit was actually present in an operation. In some places, Iraqi troops have gotten caught with bombmaking materials or allowed insurgents to attack U.S. convoys by looking the other way. These activities are fueling distrust for Iraqi soldiers. What is being done to fix these problems and how do we ensure that it will not happen in the future? How is this going to affect transfer of command to the Iraqis and how do we guarantee that once the transfer occurs, they will be able to prevent corruption themselves?

Secretary RUMSFELD. There have been several cases of unit-wide corruption and malfeasance but we do not see a wide-spread problem. Coalition force partners and ISF embedded transition teams conduct monthly assessments, to include unit leadership and loyalty. ISF units cannot assume a security lead until they are assessed as ready. Multi National Security Transition Corps-Iraq (MNSTC–I) along with the Government of Iraq and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Training Mission-Iraq, developed and fielded an Iraqi Army Training Command that resembles the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). TRADOC implements training at all levels within the Iraqi army. Part of TRADOC's curriculum focuses on professionalism and loyalty, especially for the officers and noncommissioned officers.

We do not believe that the few incidents of anti-coalition activity will affect the transfer of command to the Iraqis. Regarding corruption, the Iraqi Public Integrity Commission is conducting internal audits of senior government employees' incomes, and will investigate any suspicious findings.

General PACE. While there have been a few cases of unit-wide corruption and malfeasance, we do not believe that it is a widespread problem. Units are assessed monthly in several areas, and are not allowed to move forward to a security lead posture until they are assessed as competent to do so. Coalition force partner units, in conjunction with ISF embedded transition teams, routinely assess ISF unit leadership and loyalty. Multi National Security Transition Corps-Iraq (MNSTC–I) has, in cooperation with the Government of Iraq and the NATO Training Mission-Iraq, developed and fielded an Iraqi army Training Command that resembles the U.S. TRADOC. This command oversees and implements training at all levels within the Iraqi army. Some of this training is centered on professionalism and loyalty, especially for the officers and noncommissioned officers.

We do not believe that these few cases of anti-coalition complicity will affect the transfer of command to the Iraqis. In fact, we have already transferred control of the Iraqi air force, navy, and Iraqi ground forces command (with one Iraqi army division), and will transfer another division later in September. The Iraqi Public Integrity Commission is conducting internal audits of senior government employees' incomes and will investigate any situation that exhibits suspicious activity. These procedures represent another step in fighting corruption from two angles—administratively and financially.

General ABIZAID. The Iraqi army is a developing institution. From essentially nothing in the summer of 2003, the Iraqi army has grown rapidly to meet Iraq's security requirements in the fight against the terrorists and insurgents. In many areas of Iraq, they have assumed the security lead in this fight and performed admirably—most notably in securing the voting process for the Constitutional Ref-

erendum and National Elections in late 2005, to the fight against the terrorists and insurgents across Iraq today. In a complex environment such as Iraq, the rapid buildup of the ISF has been remarkable. Challenges are expected in these conditions and the Iraqi government and military leaders are directly addressing these issues with the support of coalition forces. Iraqi leaders are working hard to place the right leaders in their units to provide dedicated, professional leadership. Our embedded transition teams are also making a great contribution to this effort and demonstrate on a daily basis how professional military leaders execute their missions. Desertions and other actions are an issue in Iraq, but the facts are that the leadership—especially the Iraqi leadership—is directly dealing with these issues. Every day, the Iraq army improves. The transition of operational responsibility to the Iraqi army is a conditions-based process. We will take each step as conditions are right to transition responsibility. Our training teams will remain with their Iraqi partnered units after transition and will continue to provide that direct support. Additionally, the Iraqis take great pride in this transition of responsibility and we look to the Iraqi government and military leaders to continue to provide direct support to ensure issues of performance and corruption are dealt with appropriately.

14. Senator McCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, I understand there are small soldier-teams supervising and training Iraqi forces. What feedback do you have from them regarding the capabilities of Iraqi troops, and how would you rate the success of these teams?

Secretary RUMSFELD. More than 1,200 U.S. soldiers and leaders are embedded with Iraqi army and Iraqi police units. To the degree that one can generalize about Iraqi troops, the embedded trainers describe them as brave and aggressive soldiers. The trainers' monthly reports measure the staffing, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipping and leadership of their partnered Iraqi units. These reports play a major role in determining when Iraqi provinces are ready to be released to Iraqi control. Iraqi units, specifically their leadership, benefit from the presence of these teams. The transition teams are a great success story, and are key in assisting Iraq to achieve security self-reliance.

General PACE. We currently have more than 1,200 soldiers and leaders embedded with both Iraqi army and Iraqi police units throughout Iraq. We receive feedback from these teams monthly, which encompasses a large part of the overall assessment that determines when Iraqi provinces are released to Iraqi control. The feedback we receive from these teams is as dynamic as the environment in which they exist. What we are seeing is that Iraqi units are benefiting from the presence of these transition teams, specifically within the leadership of Iraqi units. These transition teams have been a great success story, and are key in Iraq achieving self-security reliance.

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

AFGHANISTAN

15. Senator McCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, what accounts for the recent upsurge in fighting in southern Afghanistan?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The insurgency views the ongoing transfer of authority in Afghanistan as an opportunity to test NATO's will. The increased violence against coalition, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and Afghan national security forces is intended to intimidate our allies and cause them to question their commitments in Afghanistan. As Operation Mountain Thrust demonstrates, however, we are on the offensive and inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy.

General PACE. [Deleted.]

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

16. Senator McCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, now that the NATO has taken over operations in southern Afghanistan, please describe how NATO operations will interact with Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) operations. Do the missions and the rules of engagement (ROE) for NATO and OEF differ, as several NATO officials have suggested?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Both ISAF and OEF share the same vision and the same endstate—a safe, free, and self-sufficient Afghanistan. Both share the same general lines of approach: a reconstruction and stabilization effort with the military creating a safe and secure environment for civilian relief agencies, international organizations and—most importantly—Afghan government agencies rebuilding the country. There are differences in the missions traceable, to the different powers of NATO versus autonomous nations in a coalition, and to different national capabilities and

constraints. However, combat and stabilization operations in the field have shown that both forces are compatible on the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

This cooperation will only increase when the remaining OEF troops in the east fall under ISAF command this fall. The U.S. Deputy Commander of ISAF for Security will be charged with ensuring coordination.

General PACE. OEF and the ISAF do have different ROE, as would be expected for any NATO operation involved in the same country as a coalition operation. However, this has precedent for success with many previous NATO operations, which include Balkan operations in the 1990s and Operation Active Endeavor maritime forces operating in proximity of other naval vessels. It is not an issue to have two forces operating together with different ROE but it is critically important that those forces have good procedures in place to provide deconfliction. NATO operations will interact with OEF operations in much the same way as they have been doing for the last couple of weeks in Operation Medusa. Operation Medusa concluded offensive operations on 13 September 2006 and was accomplished by ISAFs operating in southern region of Afghanistan with OEF forces integrated into the operations. In this example, the OEF forces were SOF in their foreign internal defense role, but it serves as a good example of how well these two operations can work together. Thorough planning was conducted to ensure deconfliction procedures are integrated into NATO procedures as they operate in the region south. The primary deconfliction occurs through the Deputy Commander (DCOM), Security billet in the headquarters of Commander, ISAF. DCOM Security will be a U.S. general officer indefinitely and is currently being executed by Major General Freakley, who is also Commander, JTF–76 as the 10th Mountain Division Commanding General. With his "dual-hat" role as DCOM Security and CJTF–76, he has responsibility for deconflicting ISAF operations with OEF operations. The DOD and NATO continue to work on the effectiveness of this deconfliction to ensure it is set up for success for the long-term.

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

17. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, could Pakistan be doing more to crack down on Taliban and al Qaeda operating from Pakistani territory?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Pakistan is a key ally in the war on terror. We work closely with Pakistan to improve its military capabilities, particularly in the critical Pakistan-Afghanistan border regions. There are approximately 80,000 Pakistani troops currently assigned to this region. Furthermore, the Government of Pakistan recently announced a new three-pronged strategy in the federally administered tribal areas, which combines political, economic, and military initiatives. These initiatives are designed to yield long-term results. We will continually assess their effectiveness. Simultaneously, we will continue to impress on Pakistan our desire to see results in cracking down on al Qaeda and Taliban in the border region.

General PACE. Pakistan is a key ally in the war on terrorism and cooperates closely with the U.S. military in the ongoing fight along the Afghan-Pakistan border. The U.S. Government and DOD continue to look at ways to help improve Pakistani military capabilities in order to enhance their effectiveness in war on terrorism efforts in the border regions. President Musharraf recently unveiled a new strategy for efforts in the federally administered tribal areas, which includes a comprehensive approach involving political, economic, and military initiatives. Since these initiatives are just underway and many will be long-term efforts, it is too early to measure the effectiveness of the new Pakistan strategy. Of course we would like to see better results in cracking down on al Qaeda and Taliban in the border region. We continue to work closely with the Pakistan government and military to improve the effectiveness of the Pakistan effort.

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

18. Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, has the United States and the international community provided enough attention and resources to Afghanistan to ensure that it does not slide backward?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The situation on the ground in Afghanistan is dynamic and requires both the United States and our international partners to continually review our initial assumptions and refine our strategy. The DOD, along with the interagency, is conducting a review of the situation in Afghanistan to ensure that the necessary requirements are correctly identified and appropriately resourced. The United States is fully committed to the security, stability, and reconstruction of Afghanistan. We and the international community are helping Afghanistan to rebuild and assisting the Afghans to establish a credible and self-sustaining government.

General PACE. The United States is leading the international community in conducting a comprehensive strategic review of all aspects of DOD efforts in Afghanistan to ensure that it does not slide backward. This comprehensive strategic review, led by the NSC and in close coordination with the interagency, will reprioritize U.S. and coalition efforts to achieve the permissive environment vital to achieving our goals in Afghanistan. Although initial efforts were well thought out and appropriately resourced by the United States and international community, the reality on the ground has changed in Afghanistan and we must adapt to this new reality. I think we must keep in mind that not only are we fighting a counterinsurgency, but we are also rebuilding a nation, one of the poorest on Earth. Of course the U.S. Government and the international community could always do more, but right now, from a military viewpoint, I believe we are providing enough attention and resources to prevent a backward slide.

General ABIZAID. Resource levels in Afghanistan are based on the needs of the ground commanders and their assessment of the threat. I continue to review and adjust resources as necessary in order to achieve success.

The center of gravity in Afghanistan is decreasingly military and increasingly within the domain of governance and economic development. Therefore, resource requirements are shifting. The enemy is focused on winning the battle of perception, so we must counter any perception that our commitment to Afghanistan is in any way wavering. Continued development of the Government of Afghanistan and success in stabilizing the country require uncompromising commitment and consistent international cooperation. Afghanistan will continue to require both U.S. and international community resources to maintain development of the Afghan national security forces, counternarcotics assistance, infrastructure, and border security. The London Compact of 2006 provides the framework for the international community to help the Afghans create a legitimate government. As NATO assumes control of security and stability operations, I will maintain a close relationship so as to advise and support with regard to NATO's requirements. The strength and capability of the Afghan government is growing rapidly.

Coalition forces provide the shield behind which the accomplishments of the past 4½ years can be made permanent.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR SUSAN COLLINS

NATIONAL GUARD

19. Senator COLLINS. General Pace and General Abizaid, it has been widely reported in the press and through senior National Guard officials' testimony before Congress that the war in Iraq has badly depleted the National Guard's domestic store of vehicles, weapons, and communications gear—leaving National Guard units with one-third the equipment needed to meet homeland security and homeland defense requirements.

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Lieutenant General Steven Blum, has repeatedly stated that in September 2001, the National Guard had 75 percent of its needed equipment "on hand." Today, that number is 34 percent.

Maine's National Guard certainly is not immune to this severe equipment shortage. My State's Adjutant General has informed me that the Army National Guard (ARNG) in Maine is currently experiencing a lack of vehicles—primarily Humvees and crew-served weapons—and I am concerned with the amount of suitable equipment available to deploy overseas, conduct training, or respond to a domestic emergency.

What kind of risk is incurred by having so few resources stateside, and what type of vulnerability does this expose for State National Guard troops in responding to domestic crises?

General PACE. At this time last year, the ARNG was just completing its largest deployment since World War II. Approximately 17 brigades or brigade equivalents were deploying, deployed, or preparing to deploy. Equipment on hand, available to the Governors to respond to natural disasters, in the 54 States and Territories was at about 26 percent. Yet, the ARNG was able to deploy around 50,000 soldiers, equipped to the Gulf Coast in support of fellow citizens during hurricane Katrina. Since last year, equipment has been coming out of reset and returning to the States and we are now at around 39 percent as a national average.

The Army in coordination with the ARNG has completed an analysis of equipment required along the coast from Texas to Maine, and in the islands (Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and Guam) to support possible hurricanes. The Adjutants General of these States/Territories provided their requirements through the National

Guard Bureau to the Department of the Army. All components of the Army have provided equipment or pledged unit capabilities to respond to these possible hurricanes. The States are confident that there is enough equipment on hand or through the use of the additional capabilities and Emergency Management Assistance Compacts to respond. Maine did not request any additional equipment for hurricane response.

Maine has received 67 percent of their Table of Organization and Equipment requirements. They do not have all of this equipment on hand. The whereabouts of their equipment is as follows:

31 percent of their authorized equipment is nondeployed and currently available (5 percent substitute items) national average is 39 percent.

31 percent of their authorized equipment is deployed or in reset (Maine should get 5,141 pieces back from reset in fiscal year 2007).

5 percent of their authorized equipment has been left in theater (Department of the Army and ARNG are working payback plans for equipment left in theater).

Critical Dual Use Equipment: Maine is at 60 percent and national average is 53 percent.

Maine is scheduled to get 68 pieces of new equipment in fiscal years 2007 and 2008 (includes 20 medium trucks and 15 trailers for medium vehicles).

Of Army's total new procurement allocations over fiscal years 2007 and 2008, ARNG will receive 24 percent of night vision devices, 32 percent of Single Channel Ground Airborne Radio System (SINCGARS) radios, and 71 percent of Medium Tactical Vehicles.

General ABIZAID. As the combatant commander, the Service force providers continue to provide me with highly qualified troops and the equipment needed to meet operational requirements in the Central Command AOR. As the proponent for manning and equipping the National Guard to meet their full spectrum of missions, the National Guard Bureau is best suited to respond to this query.

TROOP LEVELS IN IRAQ

20. Senator COLLINS. Secretary Rumsfeld, the DOD Office of Inspector General (OIG) announced several months ago that it is conducting an audit to see if U.S. troops deployed to Iraq have the equipment they need. The ongoing audit is supposed to determine whether units were provided with required equipment before they deployed, whether modifications made to equipment satisfy unit requirements, and the impact decisions on equipment repair have when units are redeployed, according to the IG's office.

What is the status of this audit and can you share any interim findings with the committee at this time, particularly regarding the equipment available to units as they prepare to deploy from the United States to Iraq?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The OIG has initiated two separate audits regarding the equipment provided to troops deployed to Iraq. The first audit is nearing completion and the second was just recently announced.

On November 17, 2005, the DOD OIG announced the Audit of Equipment Status of Deployed Forces within U.S. Central Command. The objective of the audit is to determine whether units deployed to Iraq have been equipped in accordance with mission requirements. Specifically, the audit is evaluating whether units were provided the required items of equipment and whether the equipment modifications satisfied mission requirements. The audit is still ongoing and final results are not available. The OIG expects to issue a final report by the end of the year.

On August 30, 2006, the OIG announced the Audit of the Inspection Process of the Army Reset Program for Ground Vehicles for Units Returning from OIF. The objective of the audit is to evaluate the Army's reset program for ground vehicles to determine the effectiveness of the technical inspection process for those units that are completing their tours in support of OIF. The audit team plans to start the project in September and travel to Iraq during the first quarter fiscal year 2007.

HADITHA

21. Senator COLLINS. General Abizaid, on November 19, 2005, a Marine convoy in the Iraqi town of Haditha was hit by a roadside bomb. One marine and 24 Iraqi civilians, including women and children, were killed. Allegations surfaced in February 2006 that the marines may have killed the Iraqi civilians in reprisal.

Two investigations were then opened to review this tragic incident. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is conducting one investigation, and Major General

Eldon Bargewell, USA, recently completed a separate, independent report into whether marines attempted to cover up the incident or if commanders were negligent in failing to initially investigate. While General Bargewell's report is not yet public, he reportedly submitted his findings to General Chiarelli on June 16, 2006.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have asked Senator Warner, the chairman of the committee, to hold a public hearing on the Haditha incident at the earliest possible date. He has assured me that such a hearing will be held in the coming weeks.

I believe congressional oversight is essential to ensure that our Armed Forces investigate accusations of this nature in an appropriate manner. These serious allegations of misconduct are deeply troubling, although the vast majority of our troops in Iraq continue to perform their duties with the utmost respect, restraint, and courage.

What strikes me as curious is the lapse of time between the incident and subsequent investigations. Although marines initially reported that civilian casualties resulted from an IED explosion, photographs taken by the exploitation team conflicted with this report. The photographs clearly showed that the victims were killed as a result of gunshot wounds.

According to a June 1 Washington Post article, the exploitation team's reporting chain lay outside that of the other marines—who were members of the 3rd Battalion of the 1st Marines—and went up through military intelligence channels directly to the 1st Marine Division's intelligence director. Had the exploitation team reported accurately what it witnessed, it would have presumably set off alarms and prodded military commanders to immediately investigate.

I understand that you are currently reviewing General Bargewell's report on the Haditha incident. Are you able to share what his investigation revealed about the exploitation team actions or inactions? Are you aware of any exploitation team reporting policies changed as a result of this incident?

General ABIZAID. The United States Central Command is unable to share any details of the Major General Bargewell AR 15–6 Investigation. That investigation was previously forwarded to U.S. Marine Forces Central Command and this headquarters will transmit a copy of the investigation to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I recommend appropriate coordination with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Marines.

TROOP READINESS

22. Senator COLLINS. General Pace and General Abizaid, General Pace's answer to Senator Reed talked about the components of readiness. Just this week, USA Today reported that the Army has begun training the oldest recruits in its history . . . "the result of a concerted effort to fill ranks depleted during the Iraq war."

Just 5 months after the enlistment age limit was raised from 35 to 40, the Army raised it to just under 42. The Army has also lowered the minimum physical requirements needed to pass basic training.

Another article earlier this year described one strategy being employed by General Thomas Bostick, USA, Commander of all Army recruiting efforts. The article referenced many new and varied incentives being used to attract potential recruits in what has been a tough environment during the last several years.

The ARNG, Reserve, and Active-Duty Forces all fell short of their fiscal year 2005 recruiting goals. While the Army has reached many of its recruiting targets this year, some could argue that this occurred in part due to the fact that the goals were lowered. The press report indicates that recruiters sent 2,697 fewer Active-Duty recruits to basic training from October to December than they did during that period in 2004.

More troublesome is the fact that General Bostick admitted that more than 10 percent of the recruits during these 3 months had scores on the aptitude test that were "near the bottom of the scale—more than double the annual 4 percent limit set by the DOD."

Does the recruiting shortfall, combined with lowered benchmarks, indicate trouble for our force and ability to re-supply the ranks?

General PACE. At this time, we do not see any significant challenges with our ability to resupply the ranks with high quality men and women needed to support our deployed forces.

Although challenges remain in this tough recruiting environment, our superb recruiters in the field and the great support of Congress have made for recruitment success during fiscal year 2006. The Active Army and the ARNG are postured for mission success as we near the end of the fiscal year. Predictions for the Army Re-

serve are somewhat less optimistic. However, with high missions the last 2 months and continued strong resourcing and efforts, the fiscal year 2006 accession mission is achievable. In fact, the Army Reserve has already recruited more soldiers this year than they did in all of fiscal year 2005.

As of the end of July 2006, the Army has met its Active recruiting goals for 14 consecutive months and has recently announced that they will meet their annual recruiting goal of 80,000. The Army Reserve and the National Guard are just behind (99 percent) their mission goals through the month of July. Additionally, a major contributing factor to the overall health of the force is that retention rates remain high across all three Army components.

The Army accessed higher numbers of lower mental category soldiers early this fiscal year. However, through the end of July they remain at 3.8 percent, under the DOD goal of 4 percent for Test Category IV accessions (those scoring between the 10th and the 30th percentiles on the Armed Forces Qualification Test). They are committed to achieving mission success while maintaining this DOD standard.

At this point, there is no indication that the increase in this area will have any effect on overall unit readiness. In fact, attrition in the training base remains at all-time lows; a remarkable feat in light of the increased rigor of basic training.

General ABIZAID. As the combatant commander, the Service force providers continue to provide me with highly qualified troops to meet my operational manpower requirements. As the title X proponents for recruiting and training requirements, the Service Chiefs are best able to fully respond to this query.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

COUNTERDRUG—U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT

23. Senator LEVIN. General Abizaid, in January 2005 a group of 35 NGOs wrote to Secretary Rice recommending 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.

Are the forces under your command doing any of this?

General ABIZAID. The United States Central Command has supported the lead nation and lead U.S. Government agencies responsible for the counternarcotic mission in Afghanistan with intelligence support and has provided assistance, within our existing means and authorities, to those lead agencies to identify and destroy laboratories, and interdict the movement of narcotics. Regarding the group's second recommendation, forces under my command are not authorized to make payments to traffickers. Since counternarcotics is primarily a law enforcement mission, the United States Central Command is actively supporting Department of State (DOS) International Narcotics and Law (INL), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), international, and Afghan efforts to build an Afghan capability to effectively address the threat posed by the illicit narcotics trade. Since 2004, Congress has provided, and the DOD has expended, approximately $470 million for counternarcotics programs in Afghanistan and the surrounding region. These programs are training Afghan counternarcotics police forces, providing infrastructure and equipment for the police and border security forces, purchasing equipment to improve command and control, building an Afghan counternarcotics intelligence capability, assisting the Government of Afghanistan in their public information campaign, and leveraging interagency intelligence capabilities in the fight against drugs. We are also providing operational support as directed by the Secretary of Defense in support of the U.S. Embassy Kabul Counternarcotics Action Plan.

24. Senator LEVIN. General Abizaid, do the United States and ISAF have a unified operational plan to deal with eliminating drug cultivation and trafficking—activity which essentially funds the Taliban and al Qaeda? More specifically, are we doing enough to interdict cross-border flows of narcotics?

General ABIZAID. Reducing drug cultivation and trafficking in Afghanistan are missions of U.S. Government and international aid and law enforcement agencies. However, the ISAF does have sufficient ROE which allow these forces to assist with the drug threat in Afghanistan. We are confident that ISAF will continue to provide adequate support to these organizations in the poppy elimination and counter-trafficking tasks. Regarding our efforts at stopping the cross-border movements of narcotics, U.S. military forces are currently not actively engaged on the border to interdict drugs. However, DOD is aggressively assisting the Government of Afghani-

stan, DOS, and the DEA to build an Afghan capacity to interdict narcotics and precursor chemicals. Additionally, while Afghanistan is the source of much of the world's opium, we recognize that this opium must transit the region to reach its worldwide market. As a result, we are also working with other regional partners to improve their capacity to interdict narcotics as they move across national boundaries.

COUNTERDRUG—STRATEGY

25. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, do you believe that we are doing enough with our allies in the Middle East, including the Gulf States, to interdict drugs flowing out of Afghanistan?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Aside from the many capacity-building programs DOD executes within Afghanistan in support of DOS, INL, and DEA requests, DOD also executes programs throughout the surrounding region in those countries that serve as the main transit zones for Afghan narcotics. DOD has programs in support of the governments of Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Oman, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya in an effort to better interdict drug flows from Afghanistan.

DOD also participates in the Central and South Asian Counternarcotics and Security Working Group. This group of representatives from Central and South Asian countries meets regularly to examine strategies that promote regional stability and enhance their capability to defeat narcotics trafficking in the region.

Despite relative improvements in their capabilities to date, Afghanistan will require continued long-term assistance from the United States and the entire international community to fully handle its own narcotics issues.

26. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Rumsfeld, do you see an opportunity for us to work with the Gulf States, with Pakistan, and even—despite our tremendous differences with the government—Iran, to stem the flow and thereby stem the drug proceeds to Taliban and al Qaeda? If so, how would you ensure that this opportunity is seized—that we develop a multinational, cross-border drug interdiction strategy?

Secretary RUMSFELD. As previously mentioned, our programs focus on those countries that serve as the main transit zones for Afghan narcotics. Pakistan is one of these countries, and the amount we spend on support to counternarcotics efforts in Pakistan is second only to what we provide in Afghanistan when compared to the rest of the region.

The Afghan drug trade also has seriously affected Iran, and Iran has a strong interest in combating the drug flows from Afghanistan through their country. There is little opportunity at the present time for DOD to work directly with Iran on this issue, but the United Kingdom and the Government of Afghanistan may be in a better position to develop counternarcotics relationships with Iran.

COUNTERDRUG—PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS ROLE

27. Senator LEVIN. General Abizaid, do the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) have an explicit counterdrug mission?

General ABIZAID. Although the PRTs do not have an explicit counterdrug mission, the PRTs do coordinate with and support Afghan, U.S., and other international efforts to provide alternatives to poppy cultivation. For instance, the PRTs support the Afghan Poppy Elimination Program (PEP) teams in their efforts to provide education, alternative crops, and jobs for Afghans involved in the cultivation of poppy. Both DOS/International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and United States Agency for International Development provide significant support to these PEP efforts.

28. Senator LEVIN. General Abizaid, are the PRTs helping build infrastructure and providing alternative livelihoods at a rate, and in a fashion, that leads you to believe we may be able to achieve reduced levels of poppy cultivation in the future?

General ABIZAID. The PRT program is a great success and is key to stabilizing Afghanistan. There are 23 PRTs operating and they allow the Afghan government to expand reconstruction and outreach efforts and security. PRTs are a catalyst and their presence brings security to the area where it operates and serves to enable reconstruction and development. I believe their support is absolutely critical to develop the infrastructure and markets required to provide the Afghan farmer with a licit means to make a living and to the establishment and sustainment of endur-

ing alternative livelihood programs, which in time, will favorably impact poppy cultivation.

AFGHANISTAN—NATO CAPACITY

29. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Rumsfeld and General Abizaid, I understand that the current plan is to turn responsibility for Afghanistan over to NATO by the end of the year. Are there conditions that will determine whether NATO takes control of the east, where U.S. troops are concentrated now?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Stage IV transfer of authority for Regional Command East is conditions-based. We are working with NATO, coalition members, and the Government of Afghanistan to ensure that the ISAF Commander has the forces and assets available to succeed in his mission, and to ensure a seamless transition.

General ABIZAID. We have already completed transition of three of the four regional commands to NATO. Each transition decision was determined by established criteria. The decision to execute transfer of authority (TOA) of Regional Command-East (RC–E) to the NATO ISAF is based on a set of 12 major operational and tactical criteria, as well as a strategic evaluation. These criteria have been agreed upon by both the United States and NATO. They are not simply focused on RC–E, but rather encompass an evaluation of ISAF operations throughout Afghanistan. The decision involves estimations of the effectiveness of current and planned ISAF operations throughout the regions; the level of cooperation they have achieved with the Government of Afghanistan; a determination on whether NATO has sufficient combat enabling capabilities such as emergency medical evacuation support; coordination of detainee operations; agreement on execution of ROE; and NATO's ability to operate and support the PCTs.

TOA execution will not take place until the United States, through the Secretary of Defense, and NATO, through the NATO Advisory Council, agree that all of the criteria have been satisfied, and the strategic conditions are determined appropriate.

30. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Rumsfeld and General Abizaid, what will be the ongoing U.S. role? Will the troop commitment remain at the same levels, and if not, what matrices are you using to determine whether we need to increase, decrease, or change the composition of the U.S. troop contribution?

Secretary RUMSFELD. With regards to Stage IV, the ongoing U.S. role in Afghanistan will be two-fold. First, as a member of NATO, the United States will be the single largest contributor of forces and capabilities to ISAF. Second, we will retain a strong national capability to support counterterrorism missions and to continue our role in training and equipping Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), a mission that is essential to our long-term strategy in Afghanistan. U.S. force numbers will continue to be determined by conditions and requirements. As the ANSF develop the capability to provide for Afghanistan's security, the requirement for U.S., NATO, and coalition troop contributions will decrease.

General ABIZAID. The United States will continue its significant role in the security and development of Afghanistan during and after the transfer of authority to NATO. U.S. forces are deployed throughout Afghanistan, in support of OEF and NATO ISAF. While the bulk of combat forces will be under ISAF, the support enablers for those units will remain under national command. Additionally, we will continue operation of nine PCTs under ISAF.

The Counterterrorism Task Force, as well as development of the ANSF, to include the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police, will remain the responsibility of the United States in partnership with the Government of Afghanistan.

U.S. force levels will be predicated on conditions on the ground as observed and evaluated by U.S. Central Command, and with the concurrence of the Government of Afghanistan. Our troop commitment is perceived by the Government of Afghanistan as a direct reflection of our confidence in President Karzai's administration and our national commitment to the development of Afghanistan.

RISK ASSESSMENT

31. Senator LEVIN. General Pace, in February of this year, you provided this committee with a classified assessment of the risk of executing our National Military Strategy (NMS). The classified risk assessment you provided to this committee earlier this year does not appear, in my judgment, to be consistent with the readiness statistics the Army and the Marine Corps have provided to this committee in recent months.

Do you stand by that risk assessment today?

General PACE. Yes. I remain confident that the Armed Forces can accomplish the objectives of the NMS. The 2006 Biennial Review of the NMS provided an assessment of the current security environment and the capacity of the Armed Forces to accomplish the objectives of the NMS. This assessment is updated through a continuous risk assessment process in which the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the combatant commanders review the risks associated with accomplishing the objectives of the NMS and recommend appropriate actions to address these risks. I will not hesitate to notify the committee should my judgment change on the risk of executing our NMS.

32. Senator LEVIN. General Pace, what level of risk exists today if our military were called on to execute a mission, requiring a substantial number of ground forces, somewhere in addition to the operations ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan?

General PACE. While our Armed Forces are engaged in a variety of activities, including significant operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, we fight as a joint team—ground, air, and naval forces working together. This joint approach provides the Nation with an exceptionally flexible and capable military. Our joint team is fully capable of responding to changing circumstances and situations throughout the world and prevailing against any threat—decisively.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

CORRUPTION IN IRAQ

33. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, the July 2006, Quarterly and Semi-Annual Report by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction states that corruption has become wide-spread in Iraq, so much so that, according to the report, it "threatens to undermine Iraq's democracy."

Prior to this report, to what extent were you aware of how rampant corruption had become in Iraq? Also, what steps have you taken or do you plan to take to counteract fraud and corruption?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Corruption was omnipresent in Saddam's society and it continues to be a part of the current Iraqi society. It is one of the causes that leads to extremism. In order to be successful against extremists, governments must be held accountable. Such accountability will emerge in Iraq with the good governance created by representative government. For our part, we are helping the Iraqis develop anti-corruption agencies such as the Board of Supreme Audit and the Commission on Public Integrity.

MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

34. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, if the U.N. were able to successfully negotiate a permanent cease-fire between Israel and the Hezbollah forces in Lebanon, a number of European countries, including France, Italy, and Poland, have indicated a willingness to contribute forces in order to help maintain the peace. What role do you imagine that U.S. forces would play in the deployment of an international peacekeeping force?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The United States is considering how it can best support an international peacekeeping force in Lebanon. That support could take the form of logistics, communications, and other assistance.

TROOP LEVELS

35. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Rumsfeld, the President has asserted the need for more troops in Iraq in order to help stem the ongoing violence and insurgency. Just last week, you approved a request to extend the deployment of the Army's 172nd SBCT. Given that Lieutenant General Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, has recently asserted that two-thirds of the Active Army's National Guard's brigades are not ready for war, I am very concerned about our military's ability to fulfill its worldwide mission. More specifically, to what extent has the large scale deployment of troops to Iraq limited our ability to respond to a threat from North Korea?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The DOD has refined its Force Planning Construct to focus on three objective areas: homeland defense, war on terrorism and irregular warfare, and conventional campaigns. We are continuously assessing the force sizing and capability mix required by the operational commitments associated with our worldwide mission. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have stressed military personnel

and equipment, particularly of the ground forces. We are seeking ways to reset the force and are reassessing the overall size of our military forces.

The United States must maintain the ability to conduct and win conventional campaigns, and we remain fully committed to fulfilling our historic responsibilities of mutual defense on the Korean peninsula to deter and, if required, defend against the threat from North Korea. The United States has encouraged all parties involved to resume the Six-Party Talks that provide a multinational discourse on achieving a peaceful resolution to the North Korean weapon issue. Moreover, U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea have been working with the South Korean military to increase capacity to deter aggression and further prospects for lasting peace.

The increased operational tempo and resulting readiness concerns have impacted the risk associated with other commitments, and we are continuously analyzing risk and prioritizing U.S. military activities. The Chairman is specifically charged with formally assessing the National Military Risk and will provide that annual assessment to Congress in 2007.

IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

36. Senator AKAKA. General Pace and General Abizaid, the latest Executive Summary Report to Congress regarding the United States policy in Iraq asserts that Iraq's Ministry and Defense and MOI forces "continue to increase in size and capability and are increasingly taking over lead combat responsibility from coalition forces" yet rather than drawing down our troops we are increasing the numbers deployed and extending the tours of the men and women already there.

To what extent did the report overestimate the progress of the ISF? Also, what more needs to be done in order to make the transition to a more limited mission and to prepare the ISF to be able to take over responsibility?

General PACE. Effective political and economic reform is central to a lasting reduction in violence, to a far greater extent than the number of Iraqi or coalition troops. The Government of Iraq (GOI) must resolve the difficult issues of national reconciliation, including de-Baathification reform, militias, oil revenue sharing, and the nature of Iraqi federalism. They must address these issues in a way that does not exacerbate sectarian tensions. Additionally, the GOI must deliver basic goods and services and a program to increase economic opportunities to provide a counter to crime and militias.

Before the Samarra shrine bombing in February 2006, we anticipated that insurgent attacks would decline. The bombing ignited sectarian tensions that have necessitated adjusting U.S. troops to assist the ISF in quelling the violence. Accomplishment of 325,000 individually trained and equipped ISF is just a step in the process. Our ability to reduce the number of coalition forces depends on the overall capability of ISF, capacity of the GOI and its institutions, and GOI ability to provide essential services.

We are seeing progress as Iraqi units go from formation to being able to operate side-by-side to being in the lead. We are just now beginning to see more ISF being able to operate independently without coalition support. We anticipate we will begin to reduce our footprint as ISF become more capable and enemy activity can be handled solely by the ISF.

The MNF–I Commander is the best judge of when forces can be redeployed. He has a process to make those decisions and we base our recommendations to the Secretary of Defense based on his judgment. Finally, the enemy gets a vote on when we withdraw forces.

General ABIZAID. The August Report to Congress did not overestimate the progress of the ISF. Rather, the report accurately stated the progress the coalition is making in developing the ISF. By the end of 2006, the 325,000-person ISF will be trained and equipped. In just under a year's time, the Iraqi army has grown from 23 battalions in the lead conducting security operations, to 88 battalions in the lead.

Iraqi units designated as "in the lead" are capable of planning and executing counterinsurgency and security operations today. These units can and do conduct independent operations, however most of these units still require support from the coalition, particularly in the areas of logistics and sustainment. Where our initial focus in developing the ISF was on creating, equipping, and training the units, our focus is now shifting to developing the ISF's capacity to sustain itself. One of our key efforts is to assist the Government of Iraq in developing policy, planning, and budgeting capabilities in the Ministries of Defense and Interior. These efforts will allow the ISF to continue assuming more of the security responsibility for Iraq, thus permitting coalition forces to transition to a supporting role.

IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION

37. Senator AKAKA. General Pace and General Abizaid, the DOD reported that it is working closely with Iraq and international donors to maximize international reconstruction assistance. What impact do you believe that the recent violence between Iraq and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon will have on the ability of the Iraqi government to garner further international support?

General PACE. The International Compact with Iraq is a joint Iraqi/U.N. initiative to garner increased international support for Iraq. The Government of Iraq commits to reforms, while donor nations pledge assistance to help Iraq meet its commitments. As the co-lead U.S. Government agencies, the Departments of State and Treasury are better positioned to comment on the impact on the Compact of the recent fighting between Hezbollah and Israel.

General ABIZAID. Recently, the struggle within Iraq has transitioned from violence directed against coalition forces to violence between ethnic and sectarian groups, mainly Sunni and Shiite, seeking to control Baghdad and the distribution of political and economic power. Continued sectarian violence will ultimately serve as a deterrent to further international support. In order to set favorable conditions for garnering international support, Prime Minister Maliki has initiated key programs to resolve issues leading to sectarian violence. These key programs include the National Reconciliation and Dialog Plan, the International Compact for Iraq, the Iraq Constitutional Review Process, and the Baghdad Peace Initiative.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

AFGHANISTAN

38. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, on July 21, Lt. Gen. David Richards, the head of NATO's International Security Force in Afghanistan, the man now in charge of coalition military operations in the south, described the situation in Afghanistan as "close to anarchy," and said that we are "running out of time" if we are going to meet the expectations of the Afghan people.

Reports indicate that Operation Mountain Thrust has been successful in killing more than 600 suspected Taliban in the run-up to the recent handover of operations in the south to NATO forces. Considering that we've had a significant troop presence in Afghanistan for over 4½ years, it's disturbing that there has been a comeback of the Taliban in the south. Were you wrong when you said "the Taliban are gone"? What has gone wrong in Afghanistan?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Five years ago, Afghanistan was ruled by the Taliban and provided a safe haven for the terrorists who planned September 11. Today, the Taliban are no longer in power. The Afghans have a democratically elected President and National Assembly leading the international community's reconstruction efforts. Meanwhile, ANSF are fighting insurgents alongside U.S., coalition, and NATO ISAF forces. Challenges remain, including violence, narcotics, and the lack of infrastructure, but it will take time and international participation to completely address the damages caused by close to 30 years of war.

39. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, given that the lead coalition commander has described the situation as "close to anarchy," how does the current plan to turn this around differ from the earlier game plan? What are our "lessons learned"?

Secretary RUMSFELD. A cornerstone of our strategy in Afghanistan is the coordination of aggressive combat operations with reconstruction and development efforts. We have found that in areas where this coordination is implemented effectively, the perception of government control is bolstered and the local populace is disinclined to lend its support to insurgent elements. Successfully pairing the removal of insurgents with reconstruction efforts will prove to the Afghans that it is the government, not the insurgency, which will provide the security and economic stability that is needed for Afghans to prosper.

General PACE. One of the larger lessons learned at this stage in our mission is the strategic importance of redevelopment. Within the broad category of redevelopment, three areas are most prominent and appear to be the most cost-effective. Our strategic review strives to incorporate our lessons learned and place great emphasis in these three areas: roads, power, and rural development.

In areas that the central Government of Afghanistan and the ANSF and alliance can access via roads, the insurgency is far less likely to hold sway over the local area. Simply put, where the roads end, the Taliban begins. Power increases in priority based on the broad-based expectation from the Afghans that they should have

power. Power also gains them access to alliance information operation efforts via radio and television. Rural development is the ability to stimulate economic activity through efforts aimed at supporting farmers getting their produce to markets. Taken in combination, we are striving to create an environment where Afghans from outlying areas maintain a greater connection with the central government through the ability to grow, transport, and market goods to areas beyond the immediate village. With a greater belief in the ability of the central government to provide, we are hopeful that Afghans who earlier tolerated or even supported the insurgency see a greater benefit to themselves and their families to support the central government. If so, they will no longer provide any support and may start to actively oppose the presence and activities of insurgents.

The south of Afghanistan is the historical home of the Taliban and the area where most of the violence is occurring. We have adapted our strategy there to more broadly coordinate kinetic and nonkinetic activities. This summer we have conducted a series of major operations in the south and achieved significant successes against the Taliban. One of the most important components of our effort is that once the kinetic activity is complete and we gain control of an area, we then begin intensive nonkinetic civil-military operations to solidly control and maintain it.

General ABIZAID. U.S. Central Command's strategic vision for Afghanistan has not changed since the beginning of OEF. We remain committed to a fully self-reliant Afghanistan with a representative government that is committed to national development, respect for the rule of law, and that rejects international terrorism. It is an Afghanistan that is capable of providing for its own security, controlling and governing its territory, implementing economic development policies, and eliminating the production of illegal drugs.

We are conducting a variety of military and non-military operations to counter the recent resurgence of Taliban rejectionist forces in Southern Afghanistan. Much of this resistance is occurring as NATO and the Government of Afghanistan expand control into those areas; areas where we have had a very small presence over the past 4 years. As they expand, they will naturally encounter areas where the populace is unaccustomed to a national government and will provide some level of resistance until the population accepts that the Government of Afghanistan is serving their interests.

TROOP READINESS

40. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, General Abizaid, at the August 2, 2006, DOD press conference, Secretary Rumsfeld stated, "One of the problems we've seen is that in the readiness charts that are used, we see apples and oranges; we see a standard on the left side for some years back, and then a standard that's different on the right side." Secretary Rumsfeld went on to say, ". . . a third aspect of that that General Pace and I have been probing is you can say, 'Ready for what,' and if they're ready for the task they're doing, that's what you want. Or you could put a standard that says, 'Are they ready for any conceivable task that might be asked,' and if that's the standard, then you get a different set of numbers."

If you change the readiness standard, doesn't it make sense to measure against the new standard?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Yes, we should measure our readiness against the new standard, and are in the process of changing our readiness reporting system to do exactly that. Our legacy reporting system, the Status of Resources and Training System (SORTS), simply measures the amount of assets assigned to a unit. This measure does not account for the mission the unit is tasked to perform, the capabilities of its equipment, or the experience of the people. These legacy system measures can be very misleading. A unit can be "unready" simply because it did not deploy with all of its equipment, even if that equipment is not needed for the mission. Likewise, units undergoing transformation to a modular configuration can become "unready" overnight because of newly authorized organizational structures and equipment. Our new Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS) allows us to see true mission requirements as well as unit assets on hand.

General PACE. Yes. To meet this new standard, the DOD is transitioning readiness reporting to a capabilities-based readiness assessment focused on a unit's ability to perform specific mission essential tasks (MET) while integrating this additional information with our legacy resources-based readiness assessment of personnel, equipment, supply, training, and ordnance. The integration of MET data requires establishing conditions and standards for the tasks and dissemination of the new requirements procedures across the DOD.

The DOD is in the process of developing new policy guidance to address the improved standards. In addition, the new standard requires information technology systems and training to accompany the process. The new DRRS is making significant progress toward supporting the new readiness reporting model. We need appropriate testing and validation for the DRRS system prior to full implementation.

General ABIZAID. The new DRRS is intended to identify and implement reporting standards across the DOD. The DDRS Office is responsible for developing and establishing this system within the DOD. As the proponent responsible for this new readiness measurement system, the DRRS Implementation Office is best able to fully respond to this query.

41. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, aside from the fact that changing standards apparently is causing issues with the readiness charts, how long is reasonable for units to not be ready as they reset?

Secretary RUMSFELD. As the Army resets, it is refurbishing some assets, modernizing others, and creating the new Brigade Combat Team structure. As one would expect, these processes take some time to complete. Generally speaking, it takes about 9 to 12 months to complete this process. We are very interested in making sure this conversion happens expeditiously.

General PACE. The amount of time necessary for a unit to reset varies according to individual Service reset procedures, the type of unit, length of deployment, equipment availability, and other issues. There is no single answer or template for all units on how quickly they reset. Each Service maintains a structured process to provide combat ready forces. For example, the Army uses an Army Force Generation model with force pools of 'Reset/Train,' 'Ready,' and 'Available' forces as a framework for the structured progression of increased readiness. In this model, Army Active component units require 9 to 12 months in the 'Reset/Train' Force Pool before the unit can be certified to move into the 'Ready' Force Pool. An Army Reserve component unit will typically spend 36 to 48 months in the 'Reset/Train' Force Pool before it can be certified to move into the 'Ready' Force Pool. Currently, these time frames are compressed due to high operational tempo of ongoing war on terrorism operations. The sustained strategic demand has placed tremendous strain on the Army's people and equipment that have been employed in the harsh operating environments of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Case-by-case assessments are made by senior commanders within each Service, and rolled up into top-level reporting forums. This process ensures that deploying units are trained and equipped to support the full spectrum of operations outlined in our NMS.

General ABIZAID. As the combatant commander, the Service force providers continue to provide me with highly qualified troops to meet my operational manpower requirements. As the title X proponents for establishing individual Service reset requirements, the Service Chiefs are best able to fully respond to this query.

42. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, how far in front of the next deployment is sufficient to ensure units have the equipment and personnel they need to accomplish their assigned mission?

Secretary RUMSFELD. We try to maximize the time available to man, equip, and train our units for the mission at hand. To date, we have been able to provide most units with the appropriate personnel and equipment in time to conduct a Mission Readiness Exercise prior to deployment. The "lead time" necessary for these actions vary considerably depending on the mission and unit assigned.

General PACE. This answer varies by the type of unit, the deployed mission assignment, and the requirements associated with that assigned mission. We make every effort to have the equipment and personnel necessary to train for assigned missions in place before units commence their pre-deployment training cycles. Optimally, these training cycles range from 120 days to 20 months prior to deployment. Currently, these times are compressed due to high operational tempo and demand.

General ABIZAID. As the combatant commander, the Service force providers continue to provide me with highly qualified troops to meet my operational manpower requirements. As the title X proponents for establishing individual Service personnel and training requirements, the Service Chiefs are best able to fully respond to this query.

43. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, how does that timeline mesh with the units' training timeline?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Training timelines are tailored to account for the lessons learned from previous deployments, the experience of the unit and personnel in-

volved, and current events in theater. In the preponderance of cases, there is time available to allow units to become fully trained for their assigned missions.

General PACE. Training timelines are built into Service pre-deployment cycles and vary by individual unit missions. The consistent policy across Services is that every effort is made to ensure appropriate enablers are in place for units commencing their pre-deployment training. In a traditional operational cycle, training commences from 120 days to 20 months prior to deployment and would enable forces to train to a full-spectrum capability. The current high operational tempo has resulted in shortened training timelines and, in some cases, has required the focusing of training enablers on deployed missions.

General ABIZAID. As the combatant commander, the Service force providers continue to provide me with highly qualified troops to meet my operational manpower requirements. As the title X proponents for establishing individual Service personnel and training requirements, the Service Chiefs are best able to fully respond to this query.

44. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, what standard of personnel and equipment on hand is required for units to participate in the collective training prior to deployment?

Secretary RUMSFELD. The unit commander makes the decision on whether his unit can perform collective training with the personnel and equipment on hand. Collective training is a continuum, and starts with smaller units of organization and builds to include multiple organizations and command staffs. Generally speaking, the unit will have appropriate personnel and equipment in place to conduct the mission rehearsal exercise.

General PACE. The goal is to ensure there is an adequate amount and type of equipment on hand to support the realistic training objectives required for deployment. Those specific numbers vary by the type of unit, assigned mission, equipment on hand, training level of personnel, and other variables. Two specific examples follow:

The Army mans units to 85 percent and equips them to a level determined by a Force Feasibility Review as required to start collective training. The Army's goal is to increase equipment and manning to 100 percent prior to the unit's deployment.

Certain Navy units, such as the Naval Mobile Construction Battalions, train with stateside equipment and systems that are identical to those that are used when deployed overseas. They remain fully capable to participate in collective training prior to deployment.

The intent is to ensure units have enough personnel and equipment to fully participate in pre-deployment training events as they ramp up to peak readiness for deployments and wartime taskings.

General ABIZAID. As the combatant commander, the Service force providers continue to provide me with highly qualified troops to meet my operational manpower requirements. As the title X proponents for establishing individual Service train and equip requirements, the Service Chiefs are best able to fully respond to this query.

45. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Rumsfeld, General Pace, and General Abizaid, is it possible to train to standard if you do not have comparable equipment on hand to train with?

Secretary RUMSFELD. Yes, the majority of training can be accomplished with similar or substitute items. Ideally, units will have comparable equipment for the mission rehearsal exercise, but some of this equipment may only be available in theater (e.g., up-armored High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles). Accordingly, training with these specific pieces of equipment will only take place upon deployment in a non-combat, training environment in theater. The Udari range in Kuwait is used specifically for this in-theater training.

General PACE. With approved equipment substitutes, our personnel train to standards every day. Military processes exist that ensure equipment substitutes are similar enough in form, substance, and function to be adequate for realistic and reasonable training. In those cases in which units do not organically possess adequate equipment, we ensure that equipment or a suitable substitute is provided to the unit during its training for deployment.

Additionally, many of our military systems rely on simulators and embedded training systems. Quite often, a large percentage of the initial training is actually conducted on these simulators, so there is no loss of capability associated with the usage of these systems.

We will continue to do our best to ensure the needs of the units getting ready for their next rotation are met to ensure they are at the peak of readiness prior to deploying.

General ABIZAID. As the combatant commander, the Service force providers continue to provide me with highly qualified troops to meet my operational manpower requirements. As the title X proponents for establishing individual Service train and equip requirements, the Service Chiefs are best able to fully respond to this query.

[Whereupon, at 1:06 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE CURRENT SITUATION AND U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2006

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:28 a.m. in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator John Warner (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Warner, McCain, Roberts, Sessions, Collins, 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 John H. Quirk V, security clerk.

Majority staff members present: William M. Caniano, professional staff member; Regina A. Dubey, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Derek J. Maurer, professional staff member; Elaine A. McCusker, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, counsel; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; Sean G. Stackley, professional staff member; Scott W. Stucky, general counsel; Kristine L. Svinicki, professional staff member; Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member; and Richard F. Walsh, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Democratic staff director; Jonathan D. Clark, minority counsel; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Evelyn N. Farkas, professional staff member; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, minority counsel; Peter K. Levine, minority counsel; Michael J. McCord, professional staff member; William G.P. Monahan, minority counsel; and Michael J. Noblet, research assistant.

Staff assistants present: David G. Collins, Micah H. Harris, and Jessica L. Kingston.

Committee members' assistants present: Sandra E. Luff, assistant to Senator Warner; Christopher J. Paul and Richard H. Fontaine, Jr., assistants to Senator McCain; John A. Bonsell, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Libby Burgess, assistant to Senator Roberts; Arch Galloway II, assistant to Senator Sessions; Mark Winter, assistant to Senator Collins; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Sen-

ator Chambliss; Andrew G. Brake, assistant to Senator Graham; Arjun Mody, assistant to Senator Dole; Stuart C. Mallory, assistant to Senator Thune; Mieke Y. Eoyang, assistant to Senator Kennedy; Barry Gene (B.G.) Wright, assistant to Senator Byrd; Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Richard Kessler and Darcie Tokioka, assistants to Senator Akaka; William K. Sutey and Alea Brown, assistants to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric Pierce, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Luke Ballman, 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. Good morning, everyone. The committee will meet today to receive testimony on the current situation in Iraq as well as Afghanistan and to discuss strategy options for the future. The hearing will be conducted with two panels. It was a challenge to arrange this hearing and our schedules, and I thank you, Senator Levin, for assisting me in making this come about.

I congratulate you on the recognition that your colleagues have given you and that you will become chairman the first of the year.

Senator LEVIN. If I could intervene, Mr. Chairman, as always we are going to need your help, support, and advice, because we have been doing this together for many years.

Chairman WARNER. Twenty-eight years the Senator and I have been working together. We came together to the Senate.

As I look back on my own modest career and association with the U.S. military, I value above all events in my life the association over these many decades with the men and women of the Armed Forces. General Abizaid, I say to you, as I have come to know you very well over the past 3-plus years in meetings here, in Washington, and in this committee room, and both of us in fatigues in far parts of the world where you have commanded our forces with an extraordinary degree of professionalism. You have been at the point of one of the most challenging chapters in the military history of this country.

Speaking for myself, and I do believe a number of my colleagues, you have discharged that professionalism, not only to your own credit, but to the credit of the men and women of the Armed Forces in your command and all those who have served. We thank you, sir.

The committee also welcomes Ambassador David Satterfield, Special Advisor and Coordinator for Iraq, on his first appearance before this committee. Ambassador Satterfield has a distinguished background. He served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the embassy in Baghdad from May 2005 until July 2006, where we saw him in visits that Senator Levin and I made to the area. We thank you for your work and service to country. I have had the opportunity, as has Senator Levin, to visit with you on a number of occasions. I think you are an extraordinary professional and you tell it like it is, and we anticipate you will do the same this morning.

Last month when Senator Levin and I returned from Iraq, in press conferences we both described the situation as we saw it. I

used a phrase that was given to me by a Marine sergeant in the darkness as we were departing the Al Anbar Province. I turned to him and said: "How do you think things are going?" He said: "Senator, I simply say that Iraq is going sideways."

I saw personally the forward progress in many areas in Iraq, but I also witnessed and learned of other areas sliding backwards. So I think that sergeant's appraisal was pretty accurate. That was about 4 weeks ago is my recollection.

My views and that of my colleague Senator Levin and other Senators expressed in that timeframe I think, and say with modesty, resulted in a substantial increase in the introspective study within all levels of the executive and legislative branches of our Government. I draw your attention to press reports this morning where the President has formally launched a sweeping internal review of Iraq policy yesterday, pulling together studies underway by various Government agencies, according to U.S. officials. I understand, Ambassador Satterfield, in your opening remarks you will address that subject further.

It is interesting to note that World War II began on December 7, 1941. The European theater conflict concluded with the German surrender in May 1945 and operations in the Pacific theater ended in August 1945. I remember the period well. I was a young sailor in the following year of that war. Accordingly, I note that on November 26, 2006, this year, but a few days away, our involvement in Iraq will surpass the length of this historic World War II period.

In October 2002, Congress approved a joint resolution authorizing the President to use the Armed Forces of the United States to, "One, defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and two, enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq."

With regard to this resolution, I make two observations. First, I observe that the resolution at that time—and I had a hand in drafting it—addressed the Iraq of Saddam Hussein, which is now gone and no more a threat to us. Today our Nation, together with our coalition partners, is engaged with a government of Iraq which we helped create and was freely elected by the people of Iraq. We are helping this Government to assume the full reins of sovereignty and eventually become a member of the coalition of free nations fighting international terrorism. That has been our goal, certainly this Senator's goal, and hopefully will continue to be our goal. But we need to revise our strategy to achieve that goal.

Second, I note that the current United States Security Council Resolution on Iraq, No. 1637, will expire on December 31, 2006. We anticipate the coalition of nations and the Government of Iraq will work with the United Nations Security Council on a follow-on version of this resolution. Having just spoken with Ambassador Satterfield, I learned there have been developments overnight and he will specifically refer to them in his opening statement.

Again, currently all levels of the executive branch, now confirmed by the President, that have a responsibility for our Nation's security are in the process of reexamining the strategy and means to achieve a goal, to continue our support for the Government of Iraq. In addition, in Congress as well as the executive branch we have

the potential benefit of views coming from the private sector, particularly from the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group.

With that said, we as Congress, and particularly the Senate through our Committee on Armed Services, have to consider at least five developments between today and late in December.

First, this very important hearing today. This is a most appropriate and timely way to perform the committee's first step in our thorough review of this situation.

Second, our committee, as the White House forwards the nomination of Robert Gates to the Senate, will provide Dr. Gates with an opportunity to share his views on the future strategies in Iraq.

Third, the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group will submit their report. Depending on the timing of their report, Senator Levin and I will renew our invitation to members of that group to come before our committee and to give us a briefing.

Fourth, General Pace, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has undertaken an independent study among his own military analysts. Likewise, I have spoken to him desiring that he and such colleagues as he wishes come before the committee and provide us with the advice that he will be giving to the President.

Finally, the committee will benefit from the overall dialogue between the Government of Iraq, our coalition partners, and other nations as the Security Council resolution progresses, that is the revised one.

We have been informed that the Government of Iraq is interested in influencing how that follow-on resolution will be drawn up and, Ambassador Satterfield, you showed me this morning copies of a communication that related to those recommendations by the Government of Iraq to the Security Council, and you will cover that important subject.

As we go through this process as a committee, indeed as a Senate, we must be ever mindful of the daily loss of life, and life of not only our brave forces, men and women, but of those of our coalition partners and indeed the many, many innocent citizens of Iraq who every day, every hour of every day, are losing their lives.

Fortunately, the American people know and deeply appreciate that our Nation's men and women in uniform and their coalition partners are performing courageously, selflessly, and with the highest degree of military professionalism. The American people honor deeply, reverently the sacrifices of the families of our servicemembers.

I am personally concerned about the challenges of two sovereign nations, Iraq and the United States, exercising command and control, directly, as in the case of the United States from President Bush down to the privates, and likewise Prime Minister Maliki through his forces. This poses a very challenging situation and we are endeavoring to bring about the increased security and stability of Iraq for the people of Iraq through the coordination of those two independent sovereign nations' forces.

For example, I found the events in late October in Sadr City especially complex. On October 25 Iraqi special forces and U.S. forces launched a combined joint raid in Sadr City. That was a step, in my judgment, in the right direction. We put tremendous emphasis, General, on the importance of bringing about a degree of security

in Baghdad and this was an integral part of that operation. However, on October 31, U.S. troops complied with orders from U.S. commanders, those commanders reacting to Prime Minister Maliki's direction, to abandon certain checkpoints, particularly in Sadr City.

I would like to know if that situation in any way increased the danger to any of our Armed Forces in the performance of their military mission and was that a reflection of what we expect to come, or can we have a clear sense of confidence in the coordination between the two military forces in the days and months to come as they continue to try and help the Iraqi people?

In closing, I urge my colleagues as we proceed through the steps outlined above to carefully study all of the material that we develop in this committee and elsewhere and then reach individual and collective recommendations for the Senate and indeed for the President on the future strategy in Iraq.

The committee welcomes our first panel and looks forward to your very important testimony. Senator Levin.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for scheduling this important hearing, which is just the most recent example of your steady, thoughtful, and fair leadership of this committee. I join you in welcoming our witnesses this morning.

Last week, the American people delivered a clear, indeed a dramatic, message to the administration, to Congress, and to the Iraqi Government that "stay the course" is not a strategy for success in Iraq. It was a message heard around the world. The American people don't accept the President's recent assessment that, "absolutely we're winning" in Iraq, nor should we.

The American people have said forcefully that they are impatient with Iraqi leaders who will not make the political compromises required to blunt the sectarian violence and unite the Iraqi people. They are impatient with Iraqi Government leaders who have not disbanded the militias and death squads that are a plague on Iraqi society. They have lost patience with the Iraqi leaders who will not condemn Sunni-Shiite enmity, tribal rivalries, and ethnic hatred.

America has given the Iraqi people the opportunity to build a new nation at the cost of nearly 3,000 American lives and over 20,000 wounded. But the American people do not want our valiant troops to get caught in a crossfire between Iraqis, if Iraqis insist on squandering that opportunity through civil war and sectarian strife.

We were assured by the President over a year ago that, "As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down." Even though the Pentagon claims that almost 90 percent of the Iraqi security forces (ISFs) are now trained and equipped, our troop level remains about the same. We were momentarily hopeful when the Iraqi leaders signed a four-point agreement on October 2 to end the sectarian violence. That turned out to be another false hope.

Recently, Ambassador Khalilzad announced that Iraqi officials had agreed to a timeline for reaching benchmarks to confront the sectarian militias, to implement a reconciliation program, to share oil revenues, and to recommend changes to the constitution. Prime

Minister Maliki repudiated that timeline the next day, providing additional evidence that the Iraqi political leaders do not understand that there is a limit to the blood and treasure that Americans are willing to spend, given the unwillingness of the Iraqis themselves to put their political house in order.

Our uniformed military leaders have repeatedly told us that there is no military solution to the violence in Iraq and that a political agreement between the Iraqi sectarian factions themselves is the only way to end the violence. Just last month at his October 25 press conference President Bush said that, "In the end the Iraqi people and their Government will have to make the difficult decisions necessary to solve these problems." In the end, we are 3½ years into a conflict which has already lasted longer than the Korean conflict and almost as long as World War II.

We should put the responsibility for Iraq's future squarely where it belongs, on the Iraqis. We cannot save the Iraqis from themselves. The only way for Iraqi leaders to squarely face that reality is for President Bush to tell them that the United States will begin a phased redeployment of our forces within 4 to 6 months. That is not precipitous. It is a responsible way to change the dynamic in Iraq, to stop the march down the path to full-blown civil war on which the Iraqis are now embarked.

Yes, some U.S. troops would need to remain in Iraq for the limited missions of counterterrorism and training of ISFs and to provide logistical support and force protection. Yes, we should also convene an international conference to support a political settlement and to provide resources for Iraq's reconstruction.

We are grateful to our witnesses for their service to our Nation. We are especially grateful and united in support of the brave troops who are serving us in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. We look forward to our witnesses' best judgment on the issues and we and other groups that have been outlined by our chairman will be grappling with these issues in the weeks and the months to come.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator Levin.

We will now proceed to hear directly from you, General Abizaid, followed by Ambassador Satterfield.

STATEMENT OF GEN JOHN P. ABIZAID, USA, COMMANDER, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

General ABIZAID. Chairman Warner, Senator Levin, members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I refer the committee to my August 3 opening statement, where I outlined the broader strategic dangers to United States' interests in the Middle East. Indeed, the dangers outlined in that statement—al Qaeda's extreme ideology, hegemonistic revolutionary Iranian ambitions, and the corrosive effect of continued Palestinian-Israeli confrontation—represent major dangers to international peace and security for decades to come.

American regional and international deployment and security policies must be articulated and coordinated to confront these problems. Despite our current focus on the struggle underway to stabilize Iraq, the interests of the international community still require the confrontation and defeat of al Qaeda's dark ideology, the

containment of Iranian expansionism, and progress towards Arab-Israeli peace. In the current atmosphere in the region, with the use of powerful non-state militias, the development of weapons of mass destruction, and the acceptance by some of terror as a legitimate tool of normal discourse, American leadership in diplomatic, economic, and security elements of power is essential to protect the international order.

How we confront these problems and empower forces of moderation in the region to resist them will define our future. Today over 200,000 men and women of the Armed Forces are deployed in the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of operations (AORs). They protect the flow of global commerce. They confront terrorists. They work hard to stabilize young, unsteady yet elected governments in Iraq and Afghanistan. They support stability by increasing regional security capacities of our partners and our friends in the region.

Well over 1.5 million Americans have served in the region since September 11, 2001. Many have given their lives and even more have suffered life-changing injuries. Whatever course our Nation chooses in the years ahead, we must be ever mindful of the sacrifice and courage of our troops and the debt we owe our veterans and their families. We must also remember that hundreds of thousands of coalition and partner forces fight directly or indirectly with us in the broader region.

Today the committee will no doubt focus on the way ahead in Iraq, and rightfully so. Yet we must be mindful of increasing threats from Iran, as evidenced by its recent military exercise, which was designed to intimidate the smaller nations of the region. We must also be mindful of the real and pervasive global threat presented by al Qaeda and its associated movements. Failure to stabilize Iraq could increase Iranian aggressiveness and embolden al Qaeda's ideology. It could also deepen broader Sunni-Shiite fissures that are already apparent throughout the region.

The changing security challenges in Iraq require changes to our own approach to achieve stability. Let me remind the committee, however, that while new options are explored and debated, my testimony should not be taken to imply approval of shifts in direction. It is my desire today to provide an update on current security conditions in Iraq and elsewhere and current thinking about the way ahead on the security lines of operation. I remain optimistic that we can stabilize Iraq.

I just departed Iraq, where I visited with General Casey and his senior commanders. On the Iraqi side, I had meetings with the prime minister, the defense minister, and the interior minister. Over the past 4 weeks, levels of sectarian violence are down in Baghdad from their Ramadan peak, but they remain dangerously high. The Iraqi armed forces, while under sectarian pressure, continue to perform effectively across Iraq. Our focus against al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) continues to take a toll on Iraqi AQI members and foreign fighters. Operations against selected targets on the Shiite death squad side also have had good effect, and our understanding of these complex organizations continues to improve.

Sunni insurgent attacks against ISFs and the Multi-National Force remain at high levels and our forces continue to experience attacks from armed Shiite groups, especially in the Baghdad re-

gion. In the north, significant progress is being made in transitioning security responsibilities to capable Iraqi forces. Currently around 80 percent of the sectarian violence in Iraq happens within a 35-mile radius of Baghdad. Nonetheless, security transitions continue in most of the country.

Iraqis and Americans alike believe that Iraq can stabilize and that the key to stabilization is effective, loyal, nonsectarian ISFs coupled with an effective government of national unity.

In discussions with our commanders and Iraqi leaders, it is clear that they believe Iraqi forces can take more control faster, provided we invest more manpower and resources into the coalition military transition teams, speed the delivery of logistics and mobility enablers, and embrace an aggressive Iraqi-led effort to disarm illegal militias. This is particularly important with regard to the Jaysh al-Mahdi elements operating as armed death squads in Baghdad and elsewhere.

As we increase our efforts to build Iraqi capacity, we envision coalition forces providing needed military support and combat power to Iraqi units in the lead. Precisely how we do this continues to be worked out with the Iraqis and with our own staffs, but we believe that ultimately capable, independent Iraqi forces loyal to an equally capable independent Iraqi Government will set the conditions for the withdrawal of our major combat forces.

Our commanders and diplomats believe it is possible to achieve an end state in Iraq that finds Iraq at peace with its neighbors, an ally in the war against extremists, respectful of the lives and rights of its citizens, and with security forces sufficient to maintain order, prevent terrorist safe havens, and defend the independence of Iraq.

At this stage in the campaign, we will need flexibility to manage our force and to help manage the Iraqi force. Force caps and specific timetables limit that flexibility.

We must also remember that our enemies have a vote in this fight. The enemy watches not only what we do on the ground, but what we say and do here at home. Also, Prime Minister Maliki and his team want to do more. We want them to do more. Increased Iraqi military activity under greater Iraqi national control will only work, however, if his government embraces meaningful national reconciliation. His duly elected legitimate government deserves our support and his Armed Forces, backed by ours, deserve his full support.

While I know the committee has a wide range of interests, including developments in Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, and the Horn of Africa, I will defer comment on those subjects in order to take your questions.

In closing, thank you for your support of our great soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in the field. Their still unfinished work keeps us safe at home. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Abizaid follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN JOHN P. ABIZAID, USA

Chairman Warner, Senator Levin, members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I refer the committee to my August 3 opening statement where I outlined my broader strategic dangers to United States interests in the Middle East.

Indeed the dangers outlined in that statement; al Qaeda's extremist ideology, hegemonistic revolutionary Iranian ambitions, and the corrosive effect of continued Palestinian-Israeli confrontation represent major dangers to international peace and security for several decades to come. American, regional, and international diplomatic and security policies must be articulated and coordinated to confront these problems. Despite our current focus on the struggle underway to stabilize Iraq, the interests of the international community still require the confrontation and defeat of al Qaeda's dark ideology, the containment of Iranian expansionism, and progress toward Arab-Israeli peace. In the current atmosphere in the region, with the use of powerful non-state militias, the development of weapons of mass destruction, and the acceptance by some of terror as a legitimate tool of normal discourse American leadership in diplomatic, economic, and security elements of power is essential to protect the international order. How we confront these problems and empower forces of moderation in the region to resist them will define our future.

Today, over 200,000 men and women of the Armed Forces are deployed in the Central Command area of operations. They protect the flow of global commerce; they confront terrorists; they work hard to stabilize young, unsteady, yet elected governments in Iraq and Afghanistan; and they indirectly support stability by increasing regional security capacities of our partners and friends in the region. Well over 1.5 million Americans have served in the region since September 11, 2001. Many have given their lives, and even more have suffered life-changing injuries. Whatever course our Nation chooses in the years ahead, we must be ever mindful of the sacrifice and courage of our troops and the debt we owe our veterans and their families. We must also remember that hundreds of thousands of coalition and partner forces fight directly or indirectly with us in the broader region.

Today the committee will no doubt focus on the way ahead in Iraq and rightfully so. Yet we must be mindful of increasing threats from Iran as evidenced by its recent military exercise, which was designed to intimidate the smaller nations in the region. We must also be mindful of the real and pervasive global threat presented by al Qaeda and its associated movements. Failure to stabilize Iraq could increase Iranian aggressiveness and embolden al Qaeda's ideology. It could also deepen broader Sunni-Shiite fissures throughout the region. The changing security challenges in Iraq require changes to our own approach to achieve stability. Let me remind the committee, however, that while new options are explored and debated, my testimony should not be taken to imply approval of shifts in direction. It is my desire today to provide an update on current security conditions in Iraq and elsewhere and current thinking about the way ahead on the security lines of operation. I remain optimistic that we can stabilize Iraq.

I just departed Iraq, where I visited with General Casey and his senior commanders. On the Iraqi side I had meetings with the Prime Minister, the Defense Minister, and the Interior Minister. Over the past 4 weeks, levels of sectarian violence are down in Baghdad from their Ramadan peak. The Iraqi armed forces, while under sectarian pressure, continues to perform effectively across Iraq. Our focus against al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) continues to take a toll on Iraqi AQI members and foreign fighters. Operations against selected targets on the Shiite death squad side also have had good effect, and our understanding of these complex organizations continues to improve. Sunni insurgent attacks against Iraqi security forces and Multinational Forces remain at high levels, and our forces continue to experience attacks from armed Shiite groups, especially in the Baghdad region. In the north significant progress is being made in transitioning security responsibilities to capable Iraqi forces. Currently around 80 percent of the sectarian violence in Iraq happens within a 35-mile radius of Baghdad. Nonetheless, security transitions continue in most of the country.

Iraqis and Americans alike believe that Iraq can stabilize and that the key to stabilization is effective, loyal, non-sectarian Iraqi security forces coupled with an effective government of national unity.

In discussions with our commanders and Iraqi leaders it is clear that they believe Iraqi forces can lake more control faster, provided we invest more manpower and resources into the coalition military transition teams, speed the delivery of logistics and mobility enablers, and embrace an aggressive Iraqi-led effort to disarm illegal militias. This is particularly important with regard to the Jaysh al Mahdi elements operating as armed death squads in Baghdad and elsewhere. As we increase our efforts to build Iraqi capacity, we envision coalition forces providing needed military support and combat power to Iraqi units in the lead. Precisely how we do this continues to be worked out with the Iraqis as ultimately capable independent Iraqi forces, loyal to an equally capable independent Iraqi Government, will set the conditions for the withdrawal of our major combat forces.

Our commanders and diplomats believe it is possible to achieve an end state in Iraq that finds Iraq at peace with its neighbors, an ally in the war against extremists, respectful of the lives and rights of its citizens, and with security forces sufficient to maintain order, prevent terrorist safe havens and defend the independence of Iraq. At this stage in the campaign, we'll need flexibility to manage our force and to help manage the Iraqi force. Force caps and specific timetables limit flexibility. We must also remember that our enemies have a vote in this fight. The enemy watches not only what we do on the ground but what we say and do here at home. Also, Prime Minister Maliki and his team want to do more; we want them to do more. Increased Iraqi military activity under greater Iraqi national control will only work however if his government embraces meaningful national reconciliation. His duly elected, legitimate government deserves our support and his armed forces, backed by ours, deserve his full support.

While I know the committee has a wide range of interests, including developments in Central Asia, Afghanistan-Pakistan, Lebanon, and the Horn of Africa, I will defer comment on those subjects in order to take your questions. In closing, thank you for your support of our great soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in the field. Their still-unfinished work keeps us safe at home.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, General.

Ambassador Satterfield.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID M. SATTERFIELD, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND COORDINATOR FOR IRAQ, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify today.

The situation in Iraq is very serious. The Iraqi people as well as Iraqi and coalition forces have suffered through months of extreme brutal bloodshed. The insurgency and al Qaeda terror are responsible for the major U.S. casualties taken. They remain lethal challenges above all to the Iraqi citizens themselves.

It is increasingly clear that al Qaeda's strategy to undermine the Iraqi Government by sowing sectarian conflict has created and fuels today a dangerous, indeed a strategically threatening, cycle of violence. Some Iraqis have turned to armed militias and other extragovernmental groups to provide security, while others have seized upon a security vacuum to pursue local political power, criminal aims, or narrow sectarian interests. Sustained sectarian violence, the associated rise in armed militias and other extragovernmental groups are now the greatest threat to a stable, unified, and prosperous Iraq.

Sectarian differences in Iraq have long historic roots, but coexistence has been the rule in Iraq until the past 10 months, when, pushed too hard by al Qaeda's targeted attacks, sectarian violence has now emerged and continues to be fomented by al Qaeda violence to create the violent conflagration we see today.

If the increasing presence and activity of armed militias with a sectarian identification are not dealt with, then indeed Iraqi national identity will erode and hope for a united Iraq, a peaceful, stable Iraq, will over time diminish. This outcome in Iraq is unacceptable. It would undermine U.S. national interests in that country and in the broader region and it would lead to a humanitarian disaster for the Iraqi people.

The goals of the United States in Iraq remain clear. We support a democratic Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, defend itself, and be an ally in the war against terror. While our goals do

not change, we are constantly reviewing, adapting, and adjusting our tactics to achieve them. The President has asked his national security agencies to assess the situation in Iraq, to review options, to recommend the best way forward. The Iraq Study Group to which you referred, Mr. Chairman, will have its own recommendations. They will be duly considered. We look forward to their recommendations. As the President has said, our goal is success in Iraq, and we look forward to pursuing, including with the bipartisan leadership of Congress, the best means to accomplish that.

At the Department of State (DOS), we have adapted over the past year by significantly increasing our staffing levels in Baghdad and at our vital Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) located throughout Iraq. Over twice the number of DOS employees and a significant number of other civilian agency staff are now present in these sites, some of which encounter daily incoming fire. This is a hazardous undertaking, but it is a vital undertaking for the sake of our interests in that country and for the sake of developing Iraqi institutions, Iraqi democracy, and projecting our own ability to shape events on the ground in a way that supports success.

We have also changed in the DOS our fundamental assignments process. Filling positions quickly and with the most qualified officers at posts which are in critical threat, which are unaccompanied, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, is now the DOS's number one priority. We are pleased to be able to inform the committee that the rate of volunteerism by qualified officers for these positions has steadily increased. We are very pleased at the support being expressed and we will continue to devote our own resources to ensuring that we provide our best to these challenging posts.

Mr. Chairman, Iraq's future is dependent upon the performance and the commitment of three pillars of actors: first and foremost, the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people; second, the United States and our coalition allies; and third, the international community, in particular Iraq's neighbors. All of these groups need to work together to help make progress in Iraq possible.

Progress has to occur along three critical strategic tracks—political, security, and economic—if a stable, united, peaceful Iraq is to emerge. As the President, Ambassador Khalilzad, and General Casey have all stated, it is essential that, we the United States, work with the Government of Iraq to set out measurable, achievable goals and objectives on each of these tracks. In short, the Iraqis themselves need, with our help but with their lead, to articulate and then achieve clearly defined goals on a clearly defined timeline.

On the security track, our focus is on transitioning more control and responsibility to the Iraqis, as General Abizaid has stated. Prime Minister Maliki wants this and so do we. While I will leave further details to questions to General Abizaid, we are in the process of transitioning more command and control to Iraqi commanders, to divisions, to battalions. We have already moved Muthanna and Dhi Qar Provinces to provincial Iraqi control and we expect to move the rest of Iraq's provinces to that status over the months to come.

We are working very closely, Mr. Chairman, with Iraq's leaders to produce a set of security goals and objectives that ensure the

transition in that critical area is as smooth and seamless as possible. We are working with the Iraqi Government as well, and very successfully, on renewal of the United Nations mandate for coalition forces in Iraq. I am pleased to be able to tell the committee that in a letter sent yesterday to the President of the Security Council, the Iraqi Government explicitly reaffirmed both its desire for such a renewal and underscored the transitional nature of that extension. The Iraqis want more control. We want to give it to them. We hope the United Nations will in the days ahead approve that resolution.

On the political track, we are very pleased that the Iraqi presidency council agreed in mid-October to a detailed set of political goals and objectives. The Iraqi Government has already made some progress on these goals. It has passed a regions formation law, an investment law, and it has said just last week that it would introduce legislation that would reinstate thousands of former Baath Party members as part of a fundamental reform and revision of the de-Baathification process. These are hopeful signs that Iraq's leaders can find convergence, can find a middle ground on which to proceed.

But I want to underscore, much more work remains and the time for that work is now. Prime Minister Maliki has appropriately focused his attention on pursuing national reconciliation. There are numerous requirements for any national reconciliation process to be successful, all of which must be pursued simultaneously and rapidly. First, ISFs with coalition support must achieve security conditions under which Iraqis can feel free to make the difficult choices necessary to pursue a national compact, a political reconciliation deal.

Second, the Iraqi Government must reach out and engage all those willing to abandon violence and terror, including former members of the Baath Party, while credibly threaten to combat those insurgents and terrorists who remain wholly opposed to a reconciled democratic Iraq.

Third, Iraqis must establish a robust process aimed at disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating (DDR) members of armed groups into normal Iraqi society. For this to be successful, such a DDR process has to require agreement on an amnesty plan that comprehensively gives militants incentives to return to civilian life.

Fourth, Iraqis must pursue, and they must complete, a new modern and comprehensive national hydrocarbon law, both to ensure that the country remains united as well as to spur much-needed international investment that can only come, will only come, when Iraq's laws are fully established and clear to all.

On the international economic track, the Government of Iraq is moving forward aggressively. Iraq and the United Nations announced on July 27 they would jointly lead efforts to launch a new International Compact with Iraq. Such a compact will provide a new framework for mutual commitments between Iraq and the international community, particularly those in Iraq's neighborhood, in bolstering Iraq's economic recovery.

The goal of the compact is simple. It is for Iraq's Government to demonstrate to the international community, to the world, private and public sectors, its commitment to implementing needed social,

political, and economic reform. Iraq will commit to reforming its main economic sectors—oil, electricity, agriculture—and to establishing the laws and building the institutions necessary to combat corruption, assure good governance, and protect human rights, and in return the international community will provide the assistance necessary to support Iraq's needs over the next 5 years.

With the compact, Iraq is reaching out to the world. I am pleased to report that the world is beginning to reach back, though more commitment is certainly needed, particularly from Iraq's neighbors.

This compact is nearly complete. On October 31, Kuwait hosted a preparatory group meeting where a final text was neared. The compact we hope can be completed before the end of this year. Iraqis will be asking their friends and neighbors to consider what Iraq has pledged to do and what Iraq is doing and will ask them to come forward with concrete pledges, and we will help.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we will continue to support the Government of Iraq as it moves forward on the tracks that I have outlined. But I want to make one point very clear. Each of these tracks—security, political, and economic—is inextricably inseparably linked one to the other. While all must move forward together, a failure or significant setback in any one area will certainly affect progress in the others. Militias cannot be effectively confronted and demobilized in the absence of a larger political reconciliation agreement. Political reconciliation cannot survive if the government cannot agree on the distribution of oil revenue, if it cannot create jobs. Iraqis cannot modernize their economy or draw foreign investment if there is violence in the streets.

We believe that a successful path forward can still be forged in Iraq. As the transition continues to full Iraqi Government control, we will stand firmly behind the Iraqi Government. They have much work to do in the weeks and months ahead to resolve differences and reach compromises on issues that will determine their country's future.

The fate, the interests of our two countries, and beyond our two countries of the region and the world, are intertwined. Success is critical. Failure is unacceptable.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Satterfield follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR DAVID SATTERFIELD

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify before your committee today.

The situation in Iraq is very serious. The Iraqi people, as well as Iraqi and coalition forces, have suffered through several months of extreme, brutal bloodshed. The insurgency and al Qaeda terror are responsible for the majority of U.S. military casualties and remain lethal challenges to Iraqis. It is increasingly clear that al Qaeda's strategy to undermine the Iraqi Government by sowing sectarian conflict has created a dangerous cycle of violence.

Some Iraqis have turned to armed militias and other extra-governmental groups to provide security, while others have seized upon this security vacuum to pursue local political power or narrow sectarian interests. Sustained sectarian violence and the associated rise in armed militias and other extra-governmental groups are now the greatest strategic threat to a stable, unified, and prosperous Iraq.

Sectarian differences in Iraq are like tectonic plates. Historically, they have been stable. However, if pushed too hard they can lead to tremors and, ultimately, to a devastating earthquake. While average Iraqis want nothing more than sanctuary from violence and a normal life, if they believe that the only source of security is

their local sectarian militia, sectarian plates will shift, Iraqi national identity will erode, and hope for a united Iraq will crumble.

Such an outcome in Iraq is unacceptable. It would undermine U.S. national interests in Iraq and in the broader region. It would lead to a humanitarian disaster for the Iraqi people.

The goals of the United States in Iraq remain clear. We support a democratic Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, defend itself, and be an ally in the war against extremists. While we have not changed our goals, we are constantly reviewing, adapting and adjusting our tactics to achieve them.

At the Department of State, we have adapted over the last year by significantly increasing staffing levels at our Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) sites located throughout Iraq. Fifty-five State employees are currently on the ground working from U.S.- and coalition-led PRTs (up from 21 State employees at PRT locations in February 2006) providing support to local Iraqi officials and communities to improve governance on the grassroots level. Many of our PRT staff are operating at great physical risk, particularly at PRTs located in Anbar province and in Basrah. State has also changed its Foreign Service assignments policy. Filling positions quickly and with the most qualified officers in critical threat, unaccompanied posts, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, is now the Department's number one human resources priority. Fill rates for U.S. Mission Iraq for Summer 2007 are farther along now—just 3 weeks into the assignments cycle—than they were in February for summer 2006. As of last Friday, we had 101 out of 194 available positions mission-wide, committed—that is 52 percent.

THREE PILLARS/THREE TRACKS

Iraq's future is dependent upon the performance and commitment of three pillars of actors: first and foremost is the Iraqi Government and people. Second, is the United States and the coalition; and third, the international community, in particular, Iraq's neighbors. All these pillars need to act together to help make progress in Iraq possible.

Progress must occur along three key tracks—political, security, and economic—for a stable, united, peaceful Iraq to emerge. As the President, Amb. Khalilzad, and General Casey have all stated, it is critical that we, the United States, work with the Government of Iraq to set out measurable, achievable benchmarks on each of these tracks. In short, the Iraqis need to set and then achieve clearly defined goals.

SECURITY

On the security track, our current focus is on transitioning more control and responsibility to the Iraqis. Prime Minister Maliki wants this, and so do we. While I will leave the details to General Abizaid, we are in the process of transitioning more command and control to Iraqi commanders, divisions, and battalions. We have already moved Muthanna and Dhi Qar provinces to "Provincial Iraqi Control" and expect to move the rest of Iraq's provinces to that status over the next 16–18 months.

We are working closely with Iraqi leaders to produce a set of security benchmarks to ensure that the transition is as smooth and seamless as possible. We are also working with the Iraqi Government on renewal of the United Nations (U.N.) mandate for Coalition forces in Iraq for another year. In its letter sent yesterday to the security council, the Iraqi Government explicitly reaffirmed both its desire for such a renewal and the transitional nature of the extension. The Iraqis want more control and we want to give it to them. We hope the U.N. will approve the resolution.

POLITICAL

On the political track, we are pleased that the Iraqi Presidency Council agreed in October to a set of political benchmarks. The Iraqi Government has already made some progress. It passed a regions formation law, an investment law, and last week said it would introduce legislation that would reinstate thousands of former Baath officials as part of the de-Baathification process. These are hopeful signs that Iraq's leaders can find middle ground.

However, much more work remains. Prime Minister Maliki has appropriately focused his attention on pursuing national reconciliation. There are several requirements for reconciliation to be possible and the Iraqi Government must pursue all simultaneously.

First, the Iraqi security forces with coalition support must help achieve security conditions under which Iraqis will be more comfortable making the difficult choices needed to pursue political reconciliation.

Second, the Iraqi Government must reach out and engage all those willing to abandon violence and terror, including former members of the Baath Party, while credibly threatening to combat those insurgents and terrorists who remain wholly opposed to a democratic Iraq.

Third, they must establish a robust process aimed at disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating (DDR) members of armed groups into normal Iraqi society. To be successful, the DDR process will require agreement on an amnesty plan that gives militants incentives to return to civilian life.

Fourth, the Iraqis must pursue and complete a national hydrocarbon law both to ensure that the country remains united as well as to spur much-needed international investment that will come only when Iraq's laws are firmly established and clear to all.

ECONOMIC—INTERNATIONAL COMPACT

In the economic track, the Government of Iraq is moving forward aggressively. Iraq and the United Nations announced on July 27 that they would jointly lead efforts to launch a new International Compact with Iraq. The Compact will provide a new framework for mutual commitments between Iraq and the international community, particularly those in Iraq's neighborhood, in bolstering Iraq's economic recovery.

The goal of the Compact is for the Iraqi Government to demonstrate to the international community its commitment to implementing needed social, political, and economic reforms. Iraq will commit to reforming its main economic sectors -oil, electricity and agriculture—and to establishing the laws and building the institutions needed to combat corruption, assure good governance and protect human rights. In return, the members of the international community will provide the assistance needed to support Iraqi efforts to achieve economic and financial self-sufficiency over the next 5 years.

In short, with the Compact, Iraq is reaching out to the international community for help. I am pleased to report that the world is beginning to reach back, though more commitment is needed, especially from Iraq's neighbors.

The Compact is nearly complete. On October 31, Kuwait hosted a preparatory group meeting where members moved closer to a final Compact text. They intend to complete the Compact before the end of the year. Between now and then, the Iraqis will be asking their friends and neighbors to consider their goals and reforms, and to come forward with concrete pledges of assistance. We are urging Iraq's neighbors, in particular, to step forward and support Iraq's future.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we will continue to support the Government of Iraq as it moves forward on these three tracks. However, I want to make one point very clear. Each of these tracks—security, political, and economic—is inextricably linked to the other. While all must move forward together, a failure or setback in any one area hinders progress in the others. Thus, militias cannot be effectively demobilized in the absence of a larger political reconciliation agreement. Political reconciliation cannot survive if the government cannot agree on the distribution of oil revenue and create jobs. Iraqis cannot modernize their economy and draw foreign investment if there is sectarian violence in the streets.

We believe that a successful path forward can still be forged in Iraq. As the transition continues to full Iraqi Government control, we must stand firmly behind the Iraqis. They have a lot of work to do in the coming months to resolve their differences and reach compromises on issues that will determine their country's future. The fate and interests of our two countries are, for better or for worse, now intertwined.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I look forward to your questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for a very carefully and well-delivered statement, quite informative about the situation.

We will now proceed with a first round of questions, limiting to 6 minutes each for each Senator. I will open, General Abizaid, with you.

On August 3 you appeared before the committee and you stated as follows, "I believe the sectarian violence is probably as bad as

I have seen it in Baghdad in particular, and if it is not stopped it is possible that Iraq could move to a civil war." Using that as a baseline, would you restate that, add to it, or amend it?

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman, I am very encouraged by my most recent trip in that, while sectarian violence remains high and worrisome, it is certainly not as bad as the situation appeared back in August. There is more confidence being shown in the Iraqi Government, more independent action on behalf of Iraqi units, and in many of the neighborhoods where particularly U.S. forces are operating, a lot of the sectarian violence is down. It is still at unacceptably high levels. I would not say that we have turned a corner in this regard. But it is not nearly as bad as it was back in August, and I am encouraged by that.

Chairman WARNER. I made reference to the World War II period for the following reason. The United States mustered, trained, and sent to the foreign battlefields from a force, a total force at home and abroad, of 16 million soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. That is extraordinary, stop to think about it. Two major battlefronts and eventually victory was obtained on both fronts.

We are now approaching the same timeline. We have trained some 300,000 Iraqis. My understanding, there is a desire to raise that number and train more. Yet we are still as you come before us today, although you express greater optimism than August, confronted with an extraordinary situation of civil disruption, the inability of the government to fully exercise the range of sovereignty.

How do you explain that in simple terms to the American people?

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman, as we moved into January of this year it appeared to all of us that in light of elections there was optimism for being able to move forward with a national unity government. The attack on the mosque in Samarra, the inability of a government to form, the arguments of the various sects, and then the increase in sectarian violence made it very clear that optimism was not going to be seen in any terms of facts on the ground or reduction of U.S. troops. As a matter of fact, when we look at the troop size today, we have 15 brigades. At this point we had hoped to be well below that, somewhere between 10 and 12.

I think it is very clear that had we let the sectarian violence continue without applying the necessary military action and political action on the part of the Iraqi Government that things would have moved in a very bad direction. Like in any campaign, there are ups and downs. There are battles that go your way and battles that do not go your way. The period from February to August was a deterioration of the security situation brought about by severe sectarian tensions.

I believe everybody that has looked at that within Iraq understands how devastating it can be if allowed to continue. With the new government showing more experience and more confidence, and with Iraqi forces in particular tied to a government that shows confidence in them, I believe that we can move forward, although the work ahead will be tough.

Chairman WARNER. Do you have rising confidence in the ability of the Iraqi forces to continue to assume more and more responsibility for the military operations?

General ABIZAID. I have confidence that the Iraqi army is up to the job, providing the Iraqi Government shows the confidence in its own army and gives support to its own army to take the lead the way that they should. That has yet to be demonstrated, although today, for example, with Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Ministry of Defense (MOD) forces moving in to the Sadr City area to deal with the people that had perpetrated the kidnappings yesterday, I thought that they showed initiative and decisiveness that they will need to show in the days ahead. It was a good sign, but there needs to be more of it.

Chairman WARNER. General, I mentioned in my opening statement that I am concerned about the ability of two sovereign nations exercising a chain of command from their respective leaders, our President and the prime minister, down to the troops, that they can effectively operate these joint operations. Sadr City seemed to some of us to pose a greater challenge than we anticipated to that problem.

Could you give us your own professional judgment on the current ability to jointly operate so as not to put at risk either our forces, U.S. and other coalition, or the Iraqi forces, and what do you look to the future, particularly if this United Nations (U.N.) resolution has modifications in it giving greater authority as I understand it, Ambassador Satterfield, to the prime minister of Iraq?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, if I could just comment on the resolution. The resolution's text as proposed is very similar in all key elements to the existing mandate for the Multi-National Forces.

Chairman WARNER. We saw earlier statements to the effect that he wanted more authority.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. It is essentially the same authority. In our own dealings with the prime minister and his military commanders, we are discussing the transition to greater Iraqi control. But that is outside the context of the mandate.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Will you provide for the committee today that communication that you referred to?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We will certainly provide the letter from the prime minister to the Security Council.

[The information referred to follows:]

In the Name of Allah the Most Merciful the Most Compassionate
November 11, 2006

From the Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq to the Chairman of the United Nations Security Council

Greetings,

Iraq has fulfilled in the specified time the steps required for the completion of the political process, in particular the drafting of the permanent constitution and laying the foundations for building its political and legal institutions. In the month of May of this year, the constitutionally elected Council of Representatives formed a government of national unity. The steps for building the democratic, federal and united Iraq were consolidated by the commitment of the government to adopt the dialogue and national reconciliation scheme, secure a broad political participation, monitor human rights, establish the rule of law and economic development and provide services to the citizens.

Establishing security and securing the permanent stability is amongst the highest priorities of the Iraqi government's program so as to realize the desired peace and prosperity for the Iraqi people. However, the terrorists and the forces hostile to democracy continue to target innocent citizens and the various state institutions.

Security and stability in Iraq is the responsibility of the Iraqi government. The Security Council affirmed in its resolution No. (1546) on June 8, 2004 that the Iraqi Security Forces will progressively play a greater role in enabling the Iraqi government to assume this responsibility, diminishing and ending by this the role of the Multi-National Forces at the time in which the security responsibility of the Iraqi Security Forces increases and expands. From the experience of the past two and a half years, it was established that the Iraqi Security Forces which operated under the command of the Iraqi government has acquired new experiences and responsibilities and has grown in size, experience and capacity, demonstrating by this its increased abilities to assume the full responsibility in the security and defense fields.

We have started to reap the fruits of success when our forces assumed the security responsibility in the governorates of Al-Muthanna and Dhi Qar. In the month of September 2006, the Ministry of Defense assumed the operational command and control of the Ground, Naval and Air Forces Commands. It also assumed the operational command and control over two military divisions indicating an increase in the ability of the Iraqi Army to assume the leadership in providing security to the Iraqi people. The Iraqi government is also relentlessly working on building the necessary administrative and logistics system so as to make our Iraqi forces self-sufficient.

It is the intention of the Iraqi government to continue increasing the number of governorates that fall fully under the control of the Iraqi authorities during 2006 in order to reach a point where all (18) governorates are placed under the control of these authorities. When the security responsibilities are transferred to the Iraqi authorities in a certain governorate, the Multi-National Forces will be present in their bases and can provide support to the Iraqi Security Forces at the request of the Iraqi authorities based on an agreement that organizes the authorities and responsibilities between the two sides.

We have agreed to three common goals: first, Iraqi assumption of recruiting, training, equipping, and arming of the Iraqi Security Forces; second, Iraqi assumption of command and control over Iraqi forces; and third, transferring responsibility for security to the government of Iraq. We have formed a high level working group in order to provide recommendations on how best to achieve these goals. It has also been agreed to work towards the Iraqi authorities assuming the apprehension, detention, and imprisonment tasks on the basis of an agreement to be reached between the government of Iraq and the Multi-National Forces.

Hence, the Iraqi government requests the extension of the mandate of the Multi-National Forces in accordance with UNSC Resolutions (1546) of 2004 and (1637) of 2005 and the letters attached thereto for another (12) months starting on 31 December 2006, provided that this extension is subject to a commitment by the Security Council to end this mandate at an earlier date in case the Iraqi government so requests and provided that the mandate is subject to periodic review before June 15, 2007. The Iraqi government requests the termination of the UNMOVIC mission due to the completion of its tasks. The Iraqi government believes that the time has come to terminate the war compensations that were imposed on Iraq.

The Iraqi government realizes that the provisions of resolution (1546) which relate to depositing the revenues in the Development Fund for Iraq and the role of the International Advisory and Monitoring Board help to ensure the use of the natural resources of Iraq for the benefit of the people of Iraq. We recognize that the fund plays an important role in convincing the donors and creditors that Iraq is managing its resources and debts in a responsible way in service of the Iraqi people. This role is vital especially that Iraq is seeking to form a new partnership with the international community to build a vital network for economic transformation and integration in the economies of the region and the world through the International Compact with Iraq. We ask the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board for another 12 months and to review this mandate based on the request of the Iraqi government before June 15, 2007.

The people of Iraq are determined to establish a stable and peaceful democracy for themselves and the proper basis for building a vital economy. This vision for the future of Iraq can not become a reality except with the help of the International Community.

We realize that the Security Council intends to append this letter to the special resolution concerning Iraq that is being prepared. Meanwhile, I ask that copies of this letter get distributed to members of the Security Council and as soon as possible.

Noori Kamil Al-Maliki
Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq

11-11-2006

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
11 تشرين الثاني 2006

من رئيس وزراء جمهورية العراق الى رئيس مجلس الامن التابع للأمم المتحدة

نهديكم تحياتنا ،

لقد انجز العراق وفي الوقت المحدد الخطوات اللازمة لإستكمال العملية السياسية ، لا سيما كتابة الدستور الدائم ووضع الاسس لبناء مؤسساته السياسية والقانونية. وفي شهر ايار من هذا العام ، شكل مجلس النواب المنتخب دستورياً حكومة الوحدة الوطنية. وقد تعززت خطوات بناء العراق الديمقراطي الاتحادي الموحد بإلتزام الحكومة بتبني مشروع الحوار والمصالحة الوطنية ، وتأمين المشاركة السياسية الواسعة ومراقبة حقوق الانسان وتثبيت سلطة القانون والنمو الاقتصادي وتوفير الخدمات للمواطنين.

إن تحقيق الامن وتأمين الاستقرار الدائم من اهم اولويات برنامج الحكومة العراقية للوصول الى السلام والرفاهية المطلوبة للشعب العراقي ، إلا ان الارهابيين والقوى المعادية للديمقراطية تواصل إستهداف المواطنيين الابرياء ومؤسسات الدولة المختلفة.

إن الامن والاستقرار في العراق هم مسؤولية الحكومة العراقية. وكان مجلس الامن قد أقر في قراره المرقم (1546) في 8 حزيران 2004 بان القوات الامنية العراقية ستلعب تدريجيا دوراً اكبر في تمكين الحكومة العراقية لتحمل هذه المسؤولية مقلصة ومنهية بذلك دور القوات المتعددة الجنسيات في الوقت الذي تزداد وتتوسع فيه المسؤولية الامنية لقوات الامن العراقية. ومن خلال تجربة السنتين والنصف الماضية ، ثبت بان القوات الامنية العراقية التي عملت بامرة الحكومة العراقية إكتسبت خبرات ومسؤوليات جديدة كما إنها نمت بالحجم والخبرة والقدرة مظهرة بذلك قدراتها المتزايدة لتولي المسؤولية الكاملة في مجالي الامن والدفاع.

وقد بدأنا نحصد ثمرة النجاح عندما تولت قواتنا المسؤولية الأمنية في محافظتي المثنى وذي قار. وفي شهر ايلول 2006 ، تولت وزارة الدفاع مسؤولية القيادة والسيطرة العملياتية لقيادة القوات البرية والبحرية والجوية ، وكذلك تولت القيادة والسيطرة العملياتية على فرقتين عسكريتين ، مما يشير الى زيادة قدرة الجيش العراقي لإستلام زمام القيادة في توفير الأمن للشعب العراقي. كما تعمل الحكومة العراقية وبشكل دؤوب لبناء المنظومة الإدارية واللوجستية الضرورية لجعل قواتنا العراقية معتمدة على نفسها.

ان في نية الحكومة العراقية الإستمرار في زيادة عدد المحافظات الخاضعة كلياً لسيطرة السلطات العراقية خلال عام 2006 من اجل الوصول الى وضع جميع المحافظات ال(18) تحت سيطرة هذه السلطات. وعند نقل المسؤوليات الامنية في محافظة ما الى السلطات العراقية ستتواجد القوات المتعددة الجنسيات في معسكراتها ويمكن ان توفر الإسناد للقوات الامنية العراقية عند طلب السلطات العراقية وفق اتفاقية تنظم الصلاحيات والمسؤوليات بين الطرفين.

لقد إتفقنا على ثلاثة اهداف مشتركة: أولاً ، تولي الحكومة العراقية تجنيد وتدريب وتجهيز وتسليح قوى الأمن العراقية؛ ثانياً ، وتولي القيادة والسيطرة العراقية على القوات العراقية؛ ثالثاً ، ونقل المسؤولية الامنية الى الحكومة العراقية. وقد قمنا بتشكيل مجموعة عمل رفيعة المستوى من أجل تقديم توصيات بشأن كيفية انجاز هذه الأهداف على أفضل وجه. كما تم الإتفاق على العمل نحو تولي السلطات العراقية مهمات الحجز والإعتقال والسجن بناءً على اتفاقية ستعقد بين الحكومة العراقية والقوات متعددة الجنسيات.

وعليه فان الحكومة العراقية تطلب تمديد تفويض القوات متعددة الجنسيات حسب قراري مجلس الأمن (1546) لعام 2004 و (1637) لعام 2005 والرسائل الملحقة بهما لمدة 12 شهرا اخرى إبتداءً من 31 كانون الأول 2006 على ان يخضع هذا التمديد بالإلتزام من مجلس الأمن لإنهاء هذا التفويض في وقت ابكر في حال طلبت الحكومة العراقية ذلك وان يخضع التفويض الى مراجعة دورية قبل 15 حزيران 2007. وتطلب الحكومة العراقية انهاء عمل الأمنوفيك لإكتمال مهماتها. وتعتقد الحكومة العراقية ان الوقت قد حان لإنهاء تعويضات الحرب التي فرضت على العراق.

وترى حكومة العراق ان احكام القرار (1546) الخاصة بايداع العائدات في صندوق تنمية العراق ودور الهيئة الدولية للاستشارة والرقابة يساعد على ضمان إستخدام الموارد الطبيعية للعراق من اجل فائدة الشعب العراقي. ونحن ندرك بان الصندوق يلعب دوراً مهماً في إقناع المانحين والدائنين بان العراق يقوم بادارة مصادره وديونه بطريقة مسؤولة لخدمة الشعب العراقي. وإن هذا الدور حيوي سيما وان العراق يسعى لتشكيل شراكة جديدة مع الاسرة الدولية لبناء شبكة حيوية للتحول والاندماج الاقتصادي في اقتصاديات المنطقة والعالم من خلال العهد الدولي مع العراق. ونحن نطلب من مجلس الامن تمديد تفويض صندوق تنمية العراق والهيئة الدولية للاستشارة والرقابة 12 شهراً اخرى ولمراجعته بناءً على طلب الحكومة قبل 15 حزيران 2007 .

ان الشعب العراقي مصمم على ان يقيم لنفسه ديمقراطية مستقرة ومسالمة وان يضع الأسس الصحيحة لبناء اقتصاد حيوي وان هذه الرؤية لمستقبل العراق لا يمكن ان تصبح واقعاً الا بمساعدة المجتمع الدولي.

اننا ندرك ان مجلس الامن ينوي جعل هذه الرسالة ملحقاً بالقرار الخاص بالعراق الذي هو قيد الاعداد. وفي غضون ذلك ، نطلب ان تقدم نسخاً من هذه الرسالة الى اعضاء مجلس الامن وباسرع وقت ممكن.

نوري كامل المالكي
رئيس مجلس الوزراء في جمهورية العراق

١١ / ١١ / ٢٠٠٦

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Thank you.

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman, in the past 6 weeks we have had increasing success with joint Iraqi-U.S. forces moving into Sadr City, precisely targeting death cells and death squad leadership and taking them out. I believe that this will continue. It needs to be worked in consultation with the Iraqi Government. But I am

confident that the command and control arrangements are adequate for the current period, but they must be codified as we move ahead with Iraqi units taking more and more leadership in combat operations.

Chairman WARNER. By codified, what do you mean?

General ABIZAID. I think we need to have some very clear understanding of who moves forward, with what type of units, who has the lead, and as we anticipate moving into the next phase of the campaign it becomes pretty clear to us that Iraqi forces will be in the lead and that we will move forward to assist them when they need our additional combat power.

There will also be American military transition teams embedded with Iraqi units and it is our opinion that those military transition teams need to be substantially increased and given the capacity to operate more robustly with the Iraqis. Exactly what those arrangements need to be needs to be a subject of discussions and agreements between our staff and the senior Iraqi staffs.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Mr. Ambassador, you mentioned the three pillars that were essential and you referred to the region and the responsibility within the region to bring to bear with respect to forces, not military but deployment and otherwise, of the surrounding nations. There are individuals and groups considering that that would embrace some contact with both the Syrian Government and Iranian Government. Can you advise the committee as to the current thinking on those options as a part of a plan to bring in the greater community in the region to hopefully bring about the stabilization of the strife in Iraq?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, there is a vital role, an ongoing role, for the region to play in stabilizing Iraq. The Gulf states, our critical Arab partners in Egypt, Jordan, and elsewhere, have contacts with both the Iraqi Government and with elements of the Sunni community that are very important. We have been working closely with them to try to mobilize the greatest concerted effort to press those sides which are engaged in violence to stop and to provide support for the Iraqi Government. But more needs to be done.

Political support for the new Iraq, for a democratic post-Saddam Iraq, economic support, particularly in the form of Gulf state debt forgiveness, need to move forward, and the time to move is now. Our friends in the Gulf, in particular, speak and we listen to them when they express concern over the extension of negative Iranian influence in Iraq, the growth of al Qaeda and Islamic extremism in Iraq. These are valid concerns. We share them. We need their support in helping to confront these growing concerns, and the best way to do that is through active engagement, not isolation, not fence-sitting, on the part of these regimes.

Mr. Chairman, your question about engaging the negative actors in the region—Syria and Iran—is a very significant one. With respect to Syria, we do not believe that the issue involving Syria's negative behaviors towards Iraq, Hezbollah, Lebanon, Iran, or Palestinian radical groups is a question of lack of dialogue or lack of engagement. We believe the Syrian Government is well aware of our concerns and the steps required to address those concerns. But

Syria has made a series of choices and the last choice, the most significant and negative choice, was during the Lebanon war, when Syria cast its lot, as it remains today, with Iran, with Hezbollah, with forces of violence and extremism. When that changes, we will of course respond. The problem is not one of dialogue or engagement.

With respect to Iran, we are prepared in principle to discuss Iranian activities in Iraq. The timing of such a direct dialogue is one we still have under review.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much. So in summary, you would say at the present time negotiations with those two countries are not on the table?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We are prepared in principle for a direct dialogue with Iran. The timing of that dialogue is one that we are considering.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, you indicated in your statement that the changing security challenges in Iraq require changes to our own approach to achieve stability. What changes are you referring to?

General ABIZAID. Primarily referring to the need to increase our commitment to our military transition teams, to increase the number of people that are on each of these teams, to ensure that they are as robust as they need to be to give the Iraqis the capability to take the lead. I believe that that is essential for being able to change from us being in the lead to Iraqis being in the lead.

Senator LEVIN. You also say that new options are being explored and debated. Is one of the options that is being explored additional U.S. forces going to Iraq?

General ABIZAID. We have every option on the table and we will present them to the chain of command.

Senator LEVIN. Including that?

General ABIZAID. To include that.

Senator LEVIN. Including an announcement of a plan for possible reduction of forces some time down the road? Is that also on the way——

General ABIZAID. Yes, Senator, it goes all the way from increasing our U.S. forces, our U.S. combat forces, all the way down to withdrawing our U.S. combat forces.

Senator LEVIN. Are some of them down the road, in some planned way?

General ABIZAID. Right, and repositioning of forces in different ways, et cetera.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Ambassador, you testified that it is critical that we work with the Government of Iraq to set out measurable, achievable benchmarks on the three tracks that you mentioned—political, security, and economic. Apparently there were some benchmarks and timelines that were said by Ambassador Khalilzad to have been agreed upon by the Iraqi leaders. He made that announcement, then the next day Prime Minister Maliki rejected what apparently the Ambassador thought had been accepted.

Were we surprised Prime Minister Maliki rejected those timelines?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator Levin, the Iraqi Government has articulated a sense of goals and objectives on the political process and they have been actively engaged in articulating with the U.N. a very detailed set of goals and objectives on the economic side. On security, the discussions between our two sides continue. With respect to timelines, there is a timeline embedded in the political process outlined by the Iraqi Government, as well as on the economic steps now in the process of finalization.

Similarly on security, we think it is valuable, very valuable, for the Iraqis to articulate, certainly with our input, where they intend to move, how they intend to move, and over what timeline on security goals, as General Abizaid has outlined. But all of these processes are very much in train.

Senator LEVIN. Apparently there was a specific document which Ambassador Khalilzad was referring to when he said that certain timelines and benchmarks had been agreed upon. Is that true? Is there a document?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. There is a document on political benchmarks that is a document articulated and published by the Iraqi Government in mid-October.

Senator LEVIN. Did we present a different timeline and set of benchmarks to them from the one you just referred to?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. No, Senator. I think whatever confusion may have been reflected in Prime Minister Maliki's remarks has been resolved. I would not overplay the significance certainly at this point of those comments. We are very closely working on benchmarks and goals and objectives on the security process.

Senator LEVIN. So there was no document which we said that the Iraqis had agreed to, which in fact Prime Minister Maliki said had not been agreed to?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. No, Senator.

Senator LEVIN. There is no such document?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. I do not think that was the substance of the prime minister's remarks.

Senator LEVIN. All right. But that is not my question. My question is: was there a document?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. They have not repudiated any agreed document, no, sir.

Senator LEVIN. Was there a document presented, which was not accepted?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. No, sir. There are documents in discussion.

Senator LEVIN. Recent reports have been published about the ISFs being infiltrated by Shiite militias implicated in sectarian death squads, and there has been some evidence that has been true now of the Iraqi army. General, a recent, very devastating report in the New York Times last Sunday implicated the division commander of the Fifth Iraqi Army Division in Diyala Province of a campaign to drive the Sunnis out of that province. His actions reportedly led American officers to require that the general clear all operations with them, even though on July 3 there had been a transfer of lead authority to the Iraqis.

Are you familiar with that specific report?

General ABIZAID. I am familiar with the article that appeared in the New York Times.

Senator LEVIN. Is that accurate?

General ABIZAID. It is not completely accurate, no.

Senator LEVIN. Is it essentially accurate?

General ABIZAID. There is certainly concern that in some units there is infiltration by sectarian groups.

Senator LEVIN. Did the events that were described there occur?

General ABIZAID. Did the events described in the article occur?

Senator LEVIN. Did the event that was described there in that article occur?

General ABIZAID. I cannot really say that the article is exactly accurate. I can say in that division there were sectarian problems that were brought to the attention of our chain of command and were brought to the attention of the Iraqi chain of command.

Senator LEVIN. Was there a list of people that the Iraqi general wanted us to arrest and detain?

General ABIZAID. Wanted us, Americans, to arrest and detain?

Senator LEVIN. Right.

General ABIZAID. I do not know that that is true.

Senator LEVIN. Do you believe, General, that Prime Minister Maliki will move against the Sadr militia?

General ABIZAID. I think he must move against the Sadr militia if Iraq is to become a free and sovereign and independent state.

Senator LEVIN. You believe he will?

General ABIZAID. I believe he will and he will use the Iraqi army to do so, and he will use political activity to ensure the disarmament of the Jaysh al-Mahdi. I believe he must do that; otherwise the Jaysh al-Mahdi starts to become the curse of Hezbollah, except on an Iraqi scale as opposed to a Lebanon scale.

Senator LEVIN. I can ask this of either of you—do we believe that the grand ayatollah can influence Sadr's behavior?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, Ayatollah Sistani has significant influence in Iraq, an influence that extends well beyond Najaf and well beyond the Shiite community alone. He has been a sustained and consistent voice for moderation, for calm, and against sectarian violence. But he is challenged, as all moderates in Iraq are challenged, by the militias, by their sectarian violence, by the campaign of terror that foments and sustains that violence.

Certainly the Ayatollah has a vital role. It is a role we very much hope he will continue to play.

Senator LEVIN. Could he just declare a truce to sectarian violence or deliver a religious fatwa against that violence?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, I believe there will need to be concerted action by the political leadership of Iraq and by ISFs in order to bring about a meaningful drop and sustained end to sectarian violence.

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

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Levin.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: that Iraq is the central battlefront in the war on terror? General?

General ABIZAID. I agree with that.

Senator GRAHAM. Ambassador?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. It is a central battlefront. It is not the only battlefront.

Senator GRAHAM. Who would be the biggest winners and losers in a failed Iraqi state? General?

General ABIZAID. Al Qaeda and Iran.

Senator GRAHAM. Ambassador?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Absolutely.

Senator GRAHAM. Was General Shinseki correct when you look backward that we needed more troops to secure the country? General Abizaid?

General ABIZAID. General Shinseki was right that a greater international force contribution, U.S. force contribution, and Iraqi force contribution, should have been available immediately after major combat operations.

Senator GRAHAM. So both of you believe that more troops would have been helpful, that we are in the central battle, one of the biggest battles in the war on terror; is that correct? Both of you believe that, that this is a central battle in the war on terror, Iraq?

General ABIZAID. The central battle is happening in Iraq. That is by the definition of our enemies, and the question is——

Senator GRAHAM. Well, and you agree with their definition?

General ABIZAID.—do we need more troops? My answer is yes, we need more troops that are effective, that are Iraqi.

Senator GRAHAM. Do we need more American troops at the moment to quell the balance?

General ABIZAID. No, I do not believe that more American troops right now is the solution to the problem.

Senator GRAHAM. Do we need less American troops?

General ABIZAID. I believe that the troop levels need to stay where they are. We need to put more American capacity into Iraqi units to make them more capable in their ability to confront the sectarian problem——

Senator GRAHAM. So it is your testimony that we do not need any change in troop levels to get this right?

General ABIZAID. It is possible that we might have to go up in troop levels in order to increase the number of forces that go into the ISFs, but I believe that is only temporary.

Senator GRAHAM. If we withdrew troops to Okinawa, would that be a good idea?

General ABIZAID. No.

Senator GRAHAM. If we withdrew troops to Kuwait, would that be a good idea?

General ABIZAID. Not at this stage in the campaign.

Senator GRAHAM. People in South Carolina come up to me in increasing numbers and suggest that no matter what we do in Iraq the Iraqis are incapable of solving their own problems through the political process and will resort to violence and we need to get the hell out of there. What do you say?

General ABIZAID. I say the Iraqis are capable of fighting for their country, solving their political problems, and bringing their country towards stability with our help and support.

Senator GRAHAM. Having said that, do you see it possible to get political solutions to these difficult problems the Iraqis are facing with the current level of violence?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we see the need for action both on the political front and on the security front. The current levels of violence work against a political resolution and the failure to move forward a political process, a reconciliation process, feed and sustain those levels of violence.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree with this statement, that if the current level of violence is not contained or reduced dramatically the chance of a political outcome being successful in Iraq is almost zero?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. There is no question that if levels of sectarian violence, if the growth of militias are not addressed and brought down significantly, that the chances of a political resolution are significantly diminished.

Senator GRAHAM. Having said that, our troop posture will basically stay the same?

General ABIZAID. Senator, our troop posture needs to stay where it is as we move to enhance the capabilities of the ISFs, and then we need to assess whether or not we can bring major combat units out of there due to the increased effectiveness of the ISFs. My belief is that the Iraqi army, which has taken casualties at three times the rate of our own troops, is willing to fight. They need to be led properly by their own officers and they need to be supported by their own government.

The government needs not to support the sectarian militias. They need to disband the sectarian militias.

Senator GRAHAM. Why is the government not supporting the army—why are they supporting the militias over the army? That would be my last question.

General ABIZAID. I believe that the government understands that they must support the army over the militias.

Senator GRAHAM. Why are they not doing it?

General ABIZAID. I believe they are starting to do it.

Senator GRAHAM. No further questions.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

General Abizaid, the Shiite control the Government of Iraq at the moment and there seems to be, at least in my view, a conscious process of ethnic cleansing going on. Would you ascribe to that view?

General ABIZAID. There are certainly areas in Baghdad where Shiite death squads have moved in and tried to move Sunni families out of there by threatening them, murdering them, or kidnapping them.

Senator REED. Do you see that as something more than just coincidental, but organized and systematic?

General ABIZAID. I think it is organized by some of the Shiite militia groups, yes, I do.

Senator REED. It seems also to me that the Shiite Government recently passed legislation creating a super-region which would encompass the Kurdish area in the north, making it autonomous. In

effect, what seems to be happening or could be happening is that the Shiite plan, the government plan, is that they will end up with an oil-rich region in the south, much as the Kurds have in the north, that on the edges between Shiite and Sunni communities there is some deliberate action of ethnic cleansing going on and that that rationale might explain why there is not a lot of activity directed at disbanding militias, cooperating with United States forces, sharing intelligence, doing lots of things.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, in fact that has not happened. The manner in which the issue of moving forward on the constitutional provisions for the formation of federal regions was handled shows not a dominant Shiite unilateral agenda, but rather cross-sectarian alliances, in which Shiite in the political process expressed very different views on what ought to be the course forward, in which Sunnis participated very much in a decision, along with Kurds, that put off for 18 months any step by provinces to take advantage of the constitutional provisions to form a federal region.

We see this as a positive, not a negative outcome. Similarly, we have seen significant progress made on a national hydrocarbon law, which would provide for national distribution of revenues on a fair and equitable basis, which would reflect both local and national needs, and those are both encouraging signs.

Senator REED. Is it encouraging that there are significant revenues that they are not committing to reconstruction efforts? Tal Afar is one example among many where they are not committing their own resources to do what everyone argues has to be done.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, there are very significant Iraqi resources which are available and which need to be moved into Iraqi reconstruction, development, and growth. We are working with the Iraqis, as is the international community, on focusing them on the need to move those resources through better budget execution, through other means, to get them to the fight where they are needed.

Senator REED. General Abizaid, how much time do you think we have to bring down the level of violence in Baghdad before we reach some type of tipping point where it accelerates beyond the control of even the Iraqi Government?

General ABIZAID. I think it needs to be brought down within the next several months.

Senator REED. 90 days, 60 days?

General ABIZAID. 4 to 6 months.

Senator REED. 4 to 6 months.

You have said that your view is that the Iraqi Government and Maliki are committed to do that. The $300 billion question is when?

General ABIZAID. I think he is ready to do it now.

Senator REED. What is holding him up, is he ready to do it now?

General ABIZAID. I believe he has moved in a direction with national police reform, which has been a major problem, with dismissing officers that are showing sectarian values as opposed to national values, with committing the armed forces to independent operations that are necessary to quell the sectarian violence, in a

way that leads me to believe he is going to continue to be doing more. I talked to him about it just 2 days ago.

Senator REED. It was reputed, and I think in that conversation, General, that you said he must disband the Shiite militias and give the United States proof that they were disbanded. Is that accurate?

General ABIZAID. I would not say that is exactly accurate. I said he must disband the Shiite militias, absolutely.

Senator REED. Did you give him a notional timeframe of months?

General ABIZAID. I said very soon.

Senator REED. Very soon.

Ambassador Satterfield, do you think it is in the interests of the regional parties, including Iran and Syria, to have a destabilized Iraq?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. It is certainly not in the interest of any state in the region committed to peace and stability to see a destabilized, violent Iraq. Iran and Syria have both made their intentions very clear. Their role has not been constructive and, while their rhetoric supports stability in Iraq, their actions do not.

Senator REED. So you feel that they have a deliberate national policy of continuing to destabilize or attempt to help destabilize Iraq?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Their actions certainly reflect that.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator. We must move along. Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One of the things I believe we should talk about to get a really effective effort in Iraq is for all of us to understand who is responsible for what. I know our military has been carrying a heavy, heavy burden. They have suffered casualties and performed magnificently in my view. But some people seem to think they should be responsible for everything there.

Ambassador Satterfield, let me ask you, with regard to the management of the infrastructure, the electricity and water, the educational improvements, the relations with governments, the Government of Iraq, the reconciliation process, oil, law and order, is that the DOS's responsibility?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, it is the Iraqis' responsibility first and foremost, and we have to make that very clear. It is their country. They are responsible for their own fate. The consequences of their choices are very significant for us, extremely significant. But they, at the end of the day, must be seized with responsibility for all the sectors that you referred to.

Now, our mission in Iraq and our mission back here, the U.S. Government's mission, are closely interrelated. I have never seen an example of closer military-civilian cooperation, of a fully joint undertaking, than our embassy in Baghdad and our PRTs. Indeed, those PRTs are extensions of classic civil-military operations, with investment from the civilian community to augment our military's resources.

But at the end of the day, our efforts, whether in Baghdad or in the field, are supportive of what must be an Iraqi lead.

Senator SESSIONS. You stated that well. It is up to the Iraqis. But with regard to our effort to encourage them to achieve a common goal of a stable and peaceful and prosperous Iraq, these areas

of responsibility are really the ambassador's, the DOS's, are they not?

With the military as a supportive role, or are we confused about who is responsible?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We are not confused at all, Senator. It is a joint mission. All of the key issues that you have raised, and they are all critical, have elements which reflect both our military input, and our civilian input, not just from DOS, but from other Government agencies represented. But we act in tandem.

Our strategic plans are jointly developed. Our benchmarks and timelines—and we do have them—are jointly arranged and reviewed and they are jointly executed.

Senator SESSIONS. It is good that you are working well together. I hear that when I am in Iraq, both from the uniformed people and the people. But are you confident that the DOS, the Justice Department, the Commerce Department, the other Departments of this Federal Government, are contributing to this effort as their capability exists sufficiently when compared to DOS and the military?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, this is a very important issue for the President and for Secretary Rice, and we are very pleased, particularly over the last 6 months, at the outpouring from other agencies apart from the DOS and the DOD to provide qualified civilians to the fight in Iraq, including in those very dangerous, very exposed PRTs.

Senator SESSIONS. With regard to an issue that I spent most of my professional career dealing with crime, both of you, I would like your comments. I have heard from a parent who I have confidence in that his son, a soldier there, that they are apprehending dangerous people that are being released far, far too quickly. When we were there on my last trip to Iraq, we met with military people. They expressed great frustration that they are taking risks to arrest people and they are being released promptly.

I believe it was Robert Kagan writing in Atlantic Monthly talked about Mosul and he met with the mayors in that whole region, and after the pleasantries ended the first thing they complained about was too many of the people that had been arrested being released from the prison. That was their number one complaint.

I will just tell you as someone who knows a little bit about the crime thing, people have to have some stability. You noted it in your comments, Mr. Ambassador. Some Iraqis have turned to armed militias and other extragovernmental groups to provide security, while others have seized upon the security vacuum to pursue local power.

I guess what I am saying to you is, are you confident that you have enough prison spaces, that we are adequately adjudicating those who are involved in these bad activities, and do you recognize the importance of that to creating a stable Iraq?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, there are two issues here that you allude to. The first is how we, the U.S. Government, the U.S. military, handle our own detention process in terms of releases, and we do have a high level of confidence in that process.

But there is another area in which we do not have a similar level of confidence, and that is how Iraqis are proceeding to establish the rule of law, a transparent and effective judicial process. I will take

that to a very simple point. The Iraqi Government must establish consequences for bad actions, whether those actions are abuse of human rights or financial corruption, both of which sap the fabric of Iraqi society and the Iraqi state. Much more needs to be done.

Now, we are helping. We have an aggressive program to provide physical capacity, physical infrastructure, prisons, corrections officers. But that capacity is only as good as the judicial process that supports it on the Iraqi side. For a combination of reasons, including intimidation and threats, there are significant challenges ahead which we and the Iraqis need to continue to address.

But I would like to follow up on an earlier comment you made and express particular appreciation to the Attorney General for the support that the Department of Justice has offered us in Iraq and in our PRTs. It is a very robust and an absolutely critical presence. Thank you very much.

Senator SESSIONS. One of my assistant U.S. attorneys volunteered from the Department of Justice and is over there today. But that is a critical element, is creating a system of law, and that includes, sir, guilty people not being released. That is really a serious problem in this kind of culture.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

Before proceeding to Senator Bill Nelson, I will ask the indulgence of the committee.

[Whereupon, at 12:42 p.m., the hearing was recessed and the committee proceeded to other business, then reconvened at 12:45 p.m.]

Chairman WARNER. Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, I trust you. I must say that I come to this hearing with a great deal of skepticism because prior to this hearing there has been a great deal of obfuscation by the witnesses in front of this committee as to what the truth is, and I trust you, and you have been to me the most forthcoming witness as you have appeared in front of this committee over the course of time.

Now, I want to pick up on what Senator Graham was asking you about in the stability and the degree of the number of forces that we need. I draw attention to an article yesterday in USA Today in which, talking about Anbar Province, where we have had 40 Americans killed there in October. Marine General Zilmer says that he has enough troops to train Iraqis, but he does not have enough to defeat the insurgency. Then Marine General Neller says many police in Anbar Province have not been paid for 3 months.

Now, how do we reconcile that, if it is true, with your response to Senator Graham?

General ABIZAID. First of all, Senator, it is true. I was out talking to General Zilmer and his commanders just 2 days ago, and there is a problem in Al Anbar Province and there is a big problem with pay getting to the police in Al Anbar Province, and it has to do with on the one hand, the immaturity of the Iraqi Government, and on the other hand, suspicions within the national police organization that people in the Sunni areas are in particular not being paid in order to advance a sectarian agenda.

We have discussed this with the Minister of the Interior. He understands what the problem is. They must be paid. But what those

officers said is a problem is in fact a problem. On the other hand——

Senator BILL NELSON. The question is, our troop strength to get the job done, since this is a critical area for terrorism in the world.

General ABIZAID. Al Anbar Province is critical, but more critical than Al Anbar Province is Baghdad. Baghdad is the main military effort. I told the marines when I was out there that the main effort is clearly Baghdad. They understand that. That is where our military resources will go. On the other hand, I would tell you that the al Qaeda activity, which is highest in Al Anbar Province, is being very robustly challenged by our Special Operations Forces and our Marine Forces and we are having what I would call very good success out there.

Senator BILL NELSON. Both are critical. But the question is, because I am asked this question all the time, do we need more troops or should we withdraw? I say I want to leave it to the commanders, like General Abizaid. You have stated to Senator Graham that you do not need a change in the troops right now. But the commentary coming out of Anbar by General Zilmer and General Neller would indicate otherwise.

General ABIZAID. I understand that. I have talked it over with those commanders out there. I think our main effort is where it has been designated, which is in the Baghdad area. It is where it needs to stay. I think that we have made progress in Baghdad. We are going to continue to make progress in Baghdad, and that we do need more troops and the more troops we need are Iraqis.

The Iraqis understand that. They have increased the size of their armed forces. They have gone out to recruit more police. I believe that the 300,000-plus armed Iraqis, in addition to our current force strength, give us the opportunity to put the Iraqis in the lead, provided the Government of Iraq will get behind their armed forces. I believe that is a good bet.

Senator BILL NELSON. Okay. Let me ask you on the opposite side of the question, because I get this all the time: "We ought to withdraw; we ought to have a phased withdrawal." Can you tell us in your professional military opinion what does that involve? You have to consider the tactical questions, you have to consider the logistical considerations. Clearly you just cannot pick up and walk out. You are talking about plans over some period of time understanding that any kind of phased withdrawal depends on political, economic, and military conditions, what are the essential questions that you as a commander would need to have answered in order to set that timetable?

General ABIZAID. Clearly, the number one question we need if someone were to say withdraw is when. You have to understand that moving 140,000 troops from combat positions out of the country and then dealing with their withdrawal and all of the logistics apparatus that is entailed is a considerable endeavor.

We would have to know what the policy conditions and constraints are, what the rules of engagement would be during this period. It is an extremely complex and difficult operation.

I would also tell you, Senator Nelson, just to make sure that we are completely communicating here, I did release the Marine Expeditionary Unit that is under my control to the marines in Al Anbar

Province and it has already started its deployment up in the area to help address some of General Zilmer's concerns, with General Casey's concurrence of course.

Senator BILL NELSON. That is useful information.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid, is Al Anbar Province under control?

General ABIZAID. Al Anbar Province is not under control, Senator.

Senator MCCAIN. Yet we have enough troops to take care of the problem, which you say Baghdad is the primary area. Would it not make sense to say it might be well to get both Baghdad and Al Anbar Province under control before we have another battle of Fallujah and lose many more lives because the insurgents have taken control of a good part of Al Anbar Province?

General ABIZAID. Senator McCain, I believe that the marines have done an excellent job in securing the key areas of Al Anbar Province, Ramadi, and Fallujah. They are the three most decisive areas. I believe that you cannot have a main effort everywhere and that the preponderance of military activity needs to go into the Baghdad area.

Senator MCCAIN. I do not understand that tactic, General. You just told Senator Graham that General Shinseki was right that we did not have enough troops there after the initial military operation. Is that correct?

General ABIZAID. I believe that more ISFs that were available would have made a big difference. I believe more international forces would have made a big difference.

Senator MCCAIN. Would more American troops have made a difference?

General ABIZAID. I think you can look back and say that more American troops would have been advisable in the early stages of May, June, and July.

Senator MCCAIN. Did you note that General Zinni, who opposed the invasion, now thinks that we should have more troops? Did you notice that General Battiste, who was opposed to the conduct of this conflict, says that we may need tens of thousands of additional troops?

I do not understand, General, when you have a part of Iraq that is not under our control as Al Anbar Province is, I do not know how many American lives have been sacrificed in Al Anbar Province—but we still have enough and we will rely on the ability to train the Iraqi military, when the Iraqi army has not sent the requested number of battalions into Baghdad.

General ABIZAID. Senator McCain, I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the corps commander, and General Dempsey. We all talked together, and I said: "In your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?" They all said "no."

The reason is because we want the Iraqis to do more. It is easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future. They will win the insurgency, they will solve the sectarian violence problem, and they will do it with our help. If more troops need to come in, they need to come in to make the Iraqi army stronger. That is my professional opinion.

Senator MCCAIN. General Battiste also says that if there were congressional proposals for troop withdrawals, he says, "terribly naive." Do you agree with that comment?

General ABIZAID. Under the current circumstances, I would not recommend troop withdrawals.

Senator MCCAIN. So we have sufficient number of forces to clear insurgent sanctuaries, hold the territory with a combination of coalition and Iraqi forces, provide sufficient security in Iraq, so that economic reconstruction and political activity can take place, to arrest the momentum of sectarian death squads, disarm militias, to train the Iraqi army, and keep an American presence in Iraqi units, and place U.S. personnel in Iraqi police units? We have sufficient troops to carry out all those tasks?

General ABIZAID. We have sufficient troop strength, Iraqi and American, to make those tasks become effective.

Senator MCCAIN. Was it encouraging when in broad daylight that yesterday or the day before, that people dressed in police uniforms were able to come in and kidnap 150 people and leave with them and go through checkpoints, General? It is not encouraging to us. It is not encouraging to those of us who heard time after time that things are "progressing well," that we are making progress, et cetera, because we are hearing from many other sources that that is not the case. I am, of course, disappointed that basically you are advocating the status quo here today, which I think the American people in the last election said that is not an acceptable condition for the American people.

So I regret your position that, apparently against the recommendation of most military experts that we do not have sufficient troops—Al Anbar Province is a classic example of that—that you still are continuing to hold this position when numerically most of the attacks, most of the kidnappings, most of the others, continue to be on a rise in Baghdad itself, where, as you say, the majority of our effort takes place.

I respect you enormously. I appreciate your service. I regret deeply that you seem to think that the status quo and the rate of progress we are making is acceptable. I think most Americans do not.

General ABIZAID. Senator, I agree with you. The status quo is not acceptable and I do not believe what I am saying here today is the status quo. I am saying we must significantly increase our ability to help the Iraqi army by putting more American troops with Iraqi units in military transition teams, to speed the amount of training that is done, to speed the amount of heavy weapons that gets there, and to speed the ability of Iraqi troops to deploy.

It is a very difficult thing to do. Senator, I believe in my heart of hearts that the Iraqis must win this battle with our help. We

can put in 20,000 more Americans tomorrow and achieve a temporary effect, but when you look at the overall American force pool that is available out there, the ability to sustain that commitment is simply not something that we have right now with the size of the Army and the Marine Corps.

We can win with the Iraqis if we put our effort into the Iraqis as our first priority, and that is what I think we should do. I do not think that is status quo. I think that is a major change.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

Senator MCCAIN. Could I just say in response, Mr. Chairman. You say we need to do all these things—train the Iraqis. I do not know where those troops come from, number one; and many of us believe that, this may not be a long-term commitment, but at least a commitment to bring Baghdad under control, and that is not happening today, and that is in my view where you and I have significant disagreement.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Dayton.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, when you were confirmed by this committee you signed a questionnaire on June 14, 2003, that said yes to the question "Do you agree when asked before any duly constituted committee of Congress to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the administration in power?" I guess I would ask you if think you have been true to that commitment?

General ABIZAID. Yes, I do.

Senator DAYTON. Since I have not been campaigning for reelection in the last month, I had a chance to visit Iraq and also to read a couple of the books, State of Denial and Fiasco, about the past circumstances there. In State of Denial, there is a reference to you and Jay Garner where you turned, according to the book, to the policies on de-Baathification and disbanding the army. "Garner told Abizaid: 'John, I'm telling you, if you do this it is going to be ugly. It will take 10 years to fix this country and for 3 years you will be sending kids home in body bags.' Abizaid did not disagree. 'I hear you,' he said. On the video screen, Abizaid argued that they needed to bring back officers from Saddam's army."

That same contradiction is reflected in the other book as well, where Garner says: "We planned to bring the army back. Having an operating Iraqi army was a key element of the U.S. military planning. Abizaid was all for it, Tommy Franks, McKearnan."

I cannot find anywhere where you told this committee, sir, that you opposed the policy of either de-Baathification or the policy of disbanding the Iraqi army. In fact, in March 2005 when Senator Reed asked you specifically about de-Baathification, you did not indicate your disagreement with that policy.

General ABIZAID. De-Baathification issues are very, very serious and the degree to which the depth of de-Baathification has gone affects reconciliation of the Sunni community. I believe that if we go too deep, and that we initially went too deep, that it made it harder for reconciliation.

Senator DAYTON. Is it accurate or inaccurate, these accounts that say that you at the time of Mr. Bremer's order on de-Baathification

disagreed strongly with that policy? Did you express that disagreement before this committee or any other committee of Congress?

General ABIZAID. I would have to go back and check my testimonies on what I said and what I did not say. But I do know that I was never interviewed for the book. I do not know what other people said and I have not read the book. So you will forgive me for not commenting about it.

Senator DAYTON. In State of Denial, you are quoted as saying to Richard Armitage: "We've got a really bad situation over here," you told him in frustration one day in the summer of 2004. "Can't win it militarily."

Then in March 2005, before this committee you said that: "The strength of the Iraqi insurgency is waning as a result of momentum from elections," and you predicted that ISFs would be leading the fight against insurgents in most of Iraq by the end of 2005.

Then in one very widely reported comment in March 2006, according again to State of Denial, you were in Washington to testify before this committee. You painted a careful but upbeat picture of the situation in Iraq. Afterward—this is reading from the account—"He went over to see Congressman Murtha, the 73-year-old former marine who had introduced a resolution the previous November calling for the redeployment of troops from Iraq as soon as practicable, in the Rayburn House Office Building."

"According to Murtha,"—you—"Abizaid raised his hand for emphasis and held his thumb and forefinger a quarter of an inch apart from one another and said: 'We're that far apart.'"

Is that, Representative Murtha's account of that meeting, an accurate representation?

General ABIZAID. Senator Dayton, if you would look at my testimonies before this committee, I have never once said we should withdraw from Iraq precipitously, and I believe that is completely different from what Congressman Murtha believes. So as far as being on the record for what I said versus what people said I said, I would say my record is pretty clear.

Senator DAYTON. So you disagree with Representative Murtha's account of that meeting?

General ABIZAID. I agree that I have been doing this for a long time and I agree that the situation in Iraq has changed. I was very comfortable up until about February of this year that we were moving in a direction that was exactly as I said, where the Iraqis would move to the front, defeat the insurgency, and achieve stability. The sectarian violence that took place has been, quite frankly, a clear indication of how difficult this project is and how steadfast we need to be in order to make it work.

Senator DAYTON. I do not question for a minute the sincerity of your and our shared desire to win this conflict. I guess the accounts in these books—when I was traveling over and meeting with some 2,600 Minnesota National Guard men and women who are putting their lives on the line every day, as you meet with those individuals too, I do not recall in this committee you or any other leading general or military commander saying anything that substantially differed with the official administration policy as articulated by the President, the Vice President, and the Secretary of Defense.

I, frankly, while finding that I could not entirely believe their comments, always believed here in this committee that I could believe and trust what you were saying and what other leading generals were telling us. I find here—and again, I do not know whose accounts to believe, but I find here consistent contradictions of those upbeat statements and statements of agreement with in particular the Secretary of Defense about these major decisions.

It is being pursued here again today, the question of troop strength. Again and again, these books attest that you, sir, and the other military commanders, at least some of the others, believed that we needed more troops. I do not know what to believe, sir, when I hear these contradictions.

General ABIZAID. What you can believe is that when we evaluate what needs to be done on the battlefield, we make our recommendations, we have our debate, we make our decisions, and then we move on.

Senator DAYTON. But this commitment you made at the time of your confirmation says that you will express your personal views to this committee even if they disagree with the administration. I do not, in my view, believe, sir, that you or others have done that if these accounts are accurate.

General ABIZAID. I have given you my best judgment. I stand by the record. I think the record is pretty clear. If you want to infer that the Woodward book is correct, feel free to do so. But I cannot say that it is.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you very much, General.

Chairman WARNER. I wish to be recorded on the record that I have been at every one of these hearings and have had the privilege to chair them. I think you have been very forthcoming, and I opened this hearing with a very pragmatic statement you made on August 3, which was heard not only throughout this country but around the world.

Thank you very much.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Ambassador, in your testimony you noted that we need to move forward on three tracks—security, policy, and economics. The solution in Iraq depends not just on a military approach, but on an economic and political success as well. In that regard, the lack of adequate Sunni participation in the political process and in the governing bodies presents a major challenge to the long-term stability of Iraq.

The power imbalance is particularly acute in Baghdad, where the mayor's office, the governor's office, and the provincial council are all entirely in Shiite hands. Now, one way to remedy that imbalance is through additional elections. Yet I am told that provincial elections, which might help to remedy that power imbalance, have once again been delayed. I believe they were supposed to have occurred in September of this year. They were then postponed to March of next year, and now I am told that they are being postponed again until the fall of 2007.

That delay effectively perpetuates the lack of power for the Sunni population. What are we doing to try to remedy the imbalance po-

litically, because we are never going to have a stable and peaceful democratic Iraq if the Sunnis feel that they are excluded.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, Iraq has had two extraordinary elections, the constitutional drafting process and the referendum for the constitution, in which the overwhelming majority of Iraqis participated, including Sunnis. That was a major step forward. The council of representatives reflects, we think, in a fair and accurate fashion the balance of demographics within Iraq, and the reality is that in Iraq, as in many other states, demographics do shape the way voting patterns trend.

But that does not diminish from the fact that at a provincial level, at a local level, including in Baghdad, there do need to be new free elections held with full Sunni participation. The Sunnis largely boycotted those initial elections. They have come in at the national level. They now need to come in at the provincial level.

We want to see local elections take place as soon as possible and there has been no decision to postpone elections. There are several legislative steps and there are some organizational measures in which international organizations are involved and Iraqi nongovernmental organizations are involved that need to be put in place. But we believe the government is committed to moving forward with provincial elections as rapidly as possible. Frankly, I would hope that could still take place early in the new year.

Senator COLLINS. I certainly hope so. I think it is absolutely essential.

General, are any of the Iraqi army battalions operating independently, without U.S. support, at this point?

General ABIZAID. There are a large number of Iraqi battalions, 91 to be, in fact that are in the lead. But they have embedded U.S. training teams. Again, this is one of the key and important changes that we are recommending, that we make those teams more robust.

Senator COLLINS. I know we are making progress and that obviously has been the cornerstone of our strategy in Iraq, is to transfer security. I realize that there are additional army battalions every day that are taking the lead in operations, but are there any that are able to operate without support from the U.S., without embedded advisers, at this point?

General ABIZAID. That would operate completely independently?

Senator COLLINS. Right.

General ABIZAID. No, we are not doing that at this time.

Senator COLLINS. Do we have a timetable or a goal for having a significant number of Iraqi battalions operating without U.S. support? The reason I am pressing you on this is obviously our ability to start withdrawing our troops in large numbers depends on the ability of Iraqi army troops to operate without significant support.

General ABIZAID. We want to speed the transition. The transition ultimately is Iraqi units independently operating in the field under Iraqi command. But it requires more heavy weapons, more deployable types of equipment such as trucks, the ability to move around the battlefield, and more logistics. We need to speed this process.

When we can arrive at the point where Iraqi forces under Iraqi command can operate without U.S. military transition teams, it is hard to really say where that will be, but it is some months away.

I think you will start to see some divisions very capable of independent operations, especially down in the south and up in the north, very soon.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, and thank you for your service.

Chairman WARNER. For the information of colleagues, Senator Levin and I have conferred. The witness team before us has to appear before the House, but we will hopefully have sufficient time for each member present now to ask their questions within a 5-minute timeframe. I thank the indulgence of the committee.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

General and Ambassador, thanks for your service to our country. General, you said earlier that the status quo in Iraq is not acceptable. I think everyone agrees with that, and my hope is that we have a window of opportunity and really responsibility now, after the election to find a bipartisan consensus for being supportive of the efforts of our troops and our diplomats there to achieve success, because it is critical to our security to achieve success there, I believe.

You know that there has been a range of suggestions, from a congressionally-mandated forced withdrawal by a deadline, to what is now being described as phased redeployment, which I take it to be a general withdrawal but not a date yet by which it will happen, to the increasing of our troops there. I want to ask you a few questions about some of those alternatives.

If Congress ordered the beginning of a phased redeployment of American forces out of Iraq to occur within the next 4 to 6 months, what do you believe, General, would be the effect on the sectarian violence in Iraq?

General ABIZAID. I believe it would increase.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Why do you believe it would increase?

General ABIZAID. Because we are at this point right now where building capacity and confidence in the ISFs, along with building confidence in the Iraqi Government, needs to come together in order for them to be able to start taking the lead. It is very important that we keep our troop levels at the right level.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General ABIZAID. Despite discussions between Senator McCain and I, it is not that we are absolutely not considering force increases. We will, but it seems to me that the prudent course ahead is keep the troop levels about where they are, increase the number of forces that are with ISFs to make them better, more confident, and in conjunction with our colleagues on the diplomatic side move towards governance policies that will seek reconciliation.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Understood. So most importantly, you have told me that if we began, if Congress ordered a phased redeployment out of our troops in the next 4 to 6 months, sectarian violence would increase. If Congress ordered a phased redeployment of American troops out of Iraq in the next 4 months, what effect do you think that would have on the Maliki Government? Ambassador?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, it would be interpreted as a withdrawal of U.S. support. It would encourage even greater hedg-

ing behaviors by all actors in Iraq as they begin to negotiate for position, and that would be in an unhelpful, not helpful, direction after the fact.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate the answer.

Some of those who are recommending a phased redeployment begin in the next 6 months I think have essentially given up on our effort in Iraq. But I think others quite sincerely believe that it may be the only way we can convince the Maliki Government and the ISFs that they have to take over. I take it by your answer that you profoundly disagree with that conclusion?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, the U.S. presence in Iraq, our activities there, whether civilian or military, are gauged against specific missions. Those missions reflect our best assessment of dynamics in Iraq and outside Iraq. Adjustments in either of our presences in Iraq of any kind up or down, or changing in missions, that is part of a concerted strategy that thinks through the knock-on consequences of what we do, is one thing and that is something we are committed to examining and reexamining.

But a declaration that affects presence without linkage in a strategic sense to consequences and other issues we believe would be harmful.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I agree with both of you that a congressional mandate to begin a withdrawal from Iraq in a time certain would be a disaster for the Iraqis and more directly for the United States.

Let me ask you the other part of the question, picking up on what Senator McCain and Senator Graham asked you. General, I want to ask you: You have said that the military transition teams, the Americans embedded with the ISFs, are probably having a very significant positive effect on those forces and that our forces embedded with the Iraqis should be, I believe you said in your initial testimony, significantly increased. How can we do that without increasing the overall number of American troops in Iraq? In other words, I fear that the only other way to do it is to pull our troops out of other danger areas, like Anbar Province, and then they will fall into more chaos.

General ABIZAID. I cannot say for sure that we can do it without having to increase our overall troop levels. But I believe that there is a way to make the transition teams more robust from within the existing force structure inside Iraq.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I hope that you will take a look and not hesitate to most directly ask the Commander in Chief to give you authority to send more troops in if you really feel that the embedding—and I do strongly feel—that the embedding is working best to enable the ISFs to take over. It may be that a short-term increase in our forces there embedded with them will be the best way for us to more quickly get to a point where we can actually draw down our forces.

A final quick question——

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator. We are quite a bit over, and I appreciate that.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I will save it.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. General, thank you for your service. Mr. Ambassador, thank you for being here today.

With regard to the previously asked question by the Senator from Connecticut, they talk about 4 to 6 months. General Casey is now estimating it is 12 to 18 months before ISFs are ready to take control of the country, and I guess I would ask you, General, what your confidence level is in that latest assessment?

General ABIZAID. General Casey and I just had the discussion the other night about increasing the pace of transition to bring that 12- to 18-month period forward. I cannot exactly say how many months we could bring it forward. We are doing the staff work right now to make sure we understand how to do it. But it is important for the committee to understand and the people that are watching this to understand that we have not ruled anything out, that all the options are on the table.

But I think it is very clear that we have to do more to speed the transition, to get the Iraqis in the front, because the Iraqis being in the front is the key to victory.

Senator THUNE. A lot of the discussion today has focused on troop levels and I guess my follow-up question to that would be, you talk about speeding that up. If getting additional U.S. troops there, if the purpose is to get the ISFs trained and we can accomplish that more effectively and more quickly by embedding additional U.S. troops for that purpose, does that help you speed it up, that 12- to 18-month timeframe?

General ABIZAID. Additional U.S. troops, sir, in that period? Right now we have three more brigades than we had planned to have in Iraq and I think, as does General Casey, that the force structure is adequate to move Iraqi transition forward at greater speed. But look, again I cannot tell you for sure that there will not be some increase required, as I answered to Senator Lieberman's question.

Senator THUNE. I guess I was following up on that question as well, because that question has been asked a lot today about troop strength, whether or not the current levels are sufficient. But if the objective can be more effectively accomplished by getting more U.S. troops embedded with the ISFs in the short-term, if that enables us to eventually get our troops home in a shorter timeframe, that would seem to make some sense. I guess that is what I was getting at.

You recently met with, and there are some documented statements in the press recently by, Prime Minister Maliki wanting the United States to speed transfer of security operations to the Iraqi army and to relegate U.S. forces to bases. The defense minister has rejected that idea, saying his forces are not ready. Can you give us some insight into what the conflict is between the two leading officials there in Iraq?

General ABIZAID. I think there is some concern on the part of the defense minister that they are not ready to move as fast as the prime minister would like them to move. But I talked to both the defense minister and the prime minister and they both want to speed the pace of transition, and the question is what is the best way to do that? Again, I think making our transition teams more robust is the right way to do that.

Now, the other thing I would like to say, you have to understand that as we move towards more and more sovereignty in Iraq that the Iraqis have a view about more U.S. troops coming on their territory as well. I have asked them several times about how they would view a major increase in American troops in order to help with the security situation for a short period of time, and they are not very much in favor of that. They believe it undermines their gaining greater and greater authority and responsibility.

Senator THUNE. Is it possible that in your efforts to establish the stability and to get rid of or stem the rising sectarian violence, that while this permanent professional and trained police force is being developed, have you explored the possibility of bringing in some trained police units that might be contributed on a temporary basis from other Arab Muslim countries in the region, like Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or some of the Gulf countries where you would be having primarily Shiite-manned units donate?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I would defer that to Ambassador Satterfield, but I would tell you, Senator, that there have not been any real contributions in that regard from the neighboring states that have been forthcoming.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, Jordan hosts a training facility which has proved vital to the efforts to build Iraqi forces. But in terms of direct contributions of Arab security forces, whether police or other, I do not think that is a likely prospect, and it is not for any failure on our part to solicit. I do not think the willingness exists.

Senator THUNE. So that has been asked. It seems like some of those countries, particularly neighboring countries, have a real stake in making sure that this transition occurs.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. That stake is unmistakable. They do and it is a very significant one. But as General Abizaid said, we have seen little if any willingness to provide the kind of direct support, Senator, that you have referred to.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time has expired.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator Ben Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, let me add my appreciation for your service. You are certainly in a period of time and an era that will be recorded, so I appreciate what you are attempting to do. Mr. Ambassador, thank you.

I have said for a long time that—and I think I am hearing this today—when people are asked are we winning the war, that the answer is: We cannot win the war. The Iraqis have to win their own war. I have been asked, can we help quell the sectarian violence? The answer is: Perhaps provide support in that effort, but we do not even understand the 1,000 years-plus differences between these two groups.

So I agree with the embedding of military personnel, ours, in their military personnel. I agree, and I have heard it so many times that we are going to stand up their troops to stand down our troops. I understand the symmetry that goes with that and I think that is what you are saying, General Abizaid, perhaps better than I have.

But the continuing question will always be, how quickly are we moving, what is the progress, and what remains to be done. That is why I have been for 2 years asking if we can have conditions for staying, in other words measurable goals and outcomes that you can identify in advance and then measure success toward that.

Is that similar to what we are hearing in terms of benchmarks? Because I wrote a letter last September to Secretary Rumsfeld to follow up on that hearing that we had at that time, to follow up on the joint U.S.-Iraqi committee being established to address issues that I and the other members have raised regarding ISFs reaching levels that allow them to address sectarian violence and the insurgency. I asked as well whether there are any metrics or measurements that might exist to demonstrate the number of personnel and time required for Iraqis to secure and govern themselves.

I guess my question first is, what are our measurable goals? Is it standing up their troops? Is it weeding out the militias that are in the police force, forces around the country? Does that include also weeding out the militias and the sectarian differences in the military? If that is the case, then standing up and standing down is one phase of it, but the other phase is how soon can we weed out these elements that are obstructionist to the goals that we have?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, the critical elements of any set of goals and objectives and any timeline in Iraq today are on security, confronting sectarian violence, starting in Baghdad, confronting the growth of militias, starting in Baghdad, moving forward a political process that focuses on reconciliation and on consequences for gross abuses of human rights and financial crimes, growing Iraqi capacities on budgeting so they can use their resources to sustain themselves, and attracting foreign investment.

Senator BEN NELSON. That is on the economic side——

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Those are the key goals. No, those are on political and security as well, Senator. As General Abizaid and I have both said, the timeline is a diminishing one. What is critical here is whether there is a national agenda or a sectarian agenda being pursued on sectarian, on governance, on economics, whether the government can move in enough time to preserve and exploit the convergence that we believe still exists between Sunnis and Shiite before that convergence diminishes to the point it cannot be——

Senator BEN NELSON. The coexistence, the policy of coexistence.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator BEN NELSON. On a scale of 1 to 10, how certain are you that we are going to be able to help them do that or are they going to be able to do that on their own?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. I am very certain we can help them do that.

Senator BEN NELSON. Ten, nine?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Very certain we can help, but the question is will they take the difficult decisions. We support Prime Minister Maliki. The President has made that very clear. We believe he is a national leader, but leaders have to do more than simply say the right things. They need to do the right things.

Senator BEN NELSON. We are trying to move away from a cycle of dependence and that is why I understand what is being said.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Absolutely.

Senator BEN NELSON. I agree with that. But also, I am concerned about what is required for independence in terms of standing up troops and getting the prime minister in a position where he can lead. On a scale of 1 to 10, what do you think the chances are that he is going to be able to lead?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, significantly more progress on each of the areas I described needs to be made by the Iraqis.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Chambliss.

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

General Abizaid, no officer in the United States Army has faced a greater challenge than what you have before you today and what you have had for the last several months. You have not only done it professionally, in a professional way, you have done it in a very admirable way. We continue to be very impressed with the men and women who serve with you and serve under you.

Let me see if I have this straight in my mind, though, General, when we talk about additional troops. I hear you saying that we do need additional troops if we are going to be able to control the sectarian violence, but that the number of troops that we need to add to the current level of force structure that we have there should come from the Iraqis rather than coming from the United States, and I can appreciate that.

But if that is correct, if I am hearing you right, we have been at this for 4 years now and we were training raw recruits and we were training men and I assume some women in the Iraqi army who had no military experience. I have been there several different times and have seen those troops being trained and I have heard General Petraeus and General Dempsey talk about the fact that these people had never held a gun, they did not know how to shoot a gun. So certainly there has to be a timeframe which they have to go through to where they reach the ability to be able to fight and defend their country.

But we have been at it 4 years now. We take kids straight out of high school, we train them for 6 months, a year, I am not sure what the time period is now, and we send them to Iraq and ask them to fight. So what have we got to do to get the Iraqi army over that hump, General, to get them to the point to where they can take control? Because obviously it has taken us a lot longer than what we thought. What do we have to do to get them over that military hump for them to start being able to defend themselves without us?

General ABIZAID. First of all, Senator, I think that sometimes here in the United States we tend to believe that every Iraqi unit is not doing their duty. That is not true. Most Iraqi units are doing their duty. Most Iraqi units are going into the field and fighting for their country. No doubt that there are difficulties in some Iraqi units and in the national police there are more difficulties.

But what really needs to be done at this stage in the campaign is bring confidence to the army and the police that they can count on their government to back them up. You ask what the difference is between the United States soldier and the Iraqi soldier. The United States soldier swears an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic, and when he or she goes into combat they know that they have your support, the support of the American people, the support of the President of the United States, and that there is not some sectarian militia somewhere that will challenge their actions.

Iraqi soldiers have looked to the sectarian militias, especially the Jaysh al-Mahdi, and asked themselves, will they be backed up in the event of a showdown and do they have the capacity to deal with them with regard to force size, force capability, and combat actions? We need to make sure that the Iraqi army is the paramount force in the country to defend the country, so that people will not turn towards the militia for their support.

But it is a difficult thing to do because, especially on the Shiite side, they have long looked to their militias to give them protection. We have to change a way of thinking and it takes time. It is long, it is hard, it is difficult. But I believe that we can do it and we can do it by increasing our capacities to make their forces more robust and more capable.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Your point is well made, that they have to have the support of the government. So, Mr. Satterfield, that leads me to my basically same question to you. We have been at this for over 4 years now. This government has been in place, the current government has been in place, almost 12 months now. What do we as the United States Government have to do to get the Maliki Government over the hump to where those soldiers do have the confidence that they are going to have the force of that government stand behind them the same way that our troops have?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, this government has been in position just about 6 months exactly. But that is enough time for the government to take the lead, and that is what they need to do. Our policies need to be focused, as they are now, on putting them into the lead, on making clear to them that without their decisions, difficult as they are—we fully understand the pressures that are brought to bear on this government from within and from outside—that without their decisions on critical areas to back their forces in a national nonsectarian sense, to confront militias in a comprehensive manner, Sunni and Shiite, all Shiite militias, and to move forward on governance, on reconciliation, without those decisions this government cannot succeed, our help cannot be enough to make it succeed. The international and regional community's assistance, were it to come, would not be enough. The government must lead. That is our message.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you very much.

I have to say to both of you that I respect the difficult task you have coming before this committee and attempting to explain the situation in Iraq, which by any metric that I am aware of is not

improving. In fact, the testimony to follow you, which will be in the next panel, particularly by Lieutenant General Maples from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), very clearly sets out that the DIA assesses the conditions for further deterioration and in fact lists how the overall attacks have gone up. They are up in October, up on our soldiers, up on the ISFs, up on civilians. That the kind of benchmarks which Senator Nelson and Senator Chambliss and others of us have reported in the past just seem to recede further and further on the horizon.

Hope is not a strategy. Hortatory talk about what the Iraqi Government must do is getting old. I have heard over and over again, the government must do this, the Iraqi army must do that. Nobody disagrees with that. The brutal fact is it is not happening.

With respect to the kind of insurgency that we clearly are confronting, which in many ways is perhaps the most complicated that I am certainly aware of as you go back and look at other counter-insurgencies, we do not have a military force that is creating a secure environment and we do not have a government that is putting forth political programs and reforms that engender confidence in the population to support the government rather than seeking security behind militias and other nongovernmental forces.

So from the perspective of those of us sitting on the other side of the table and on both sides of the aisle, what I have heard today is that from General Abizaid that all options are on the table, but the Maliki Government does not want more troops. What I have also heard is that withdrawal by our troops would create even more disruption and sectarian violence, but that a phased redeployment putting conditions that can be enforced by actions taken by the American Government, which apparently are the only actions we have any control over, would not be a good idea.

So we are really left with very few strategic options than the continuation of hope on behalf of the Maliki Government to take control of a situation that is deteriorating.

General Abizaid, one of the ideas that has been proposed by a number of different sources is some kind of partition. Now, I understand the complexity of that, the difficulty of that. But is there any strategic argument to be made in favor of a partition that would at least give us territory that along with the Kurds, for example, could be controlled? That is the first question.

Ambassador Satterfield, the political decisions that have to be made keep getting kicked down the road by the Maliki Government. We have had testimony now for 4 years about what must be done and it does not get done. I see very little indication that there has been a resolution within the Iraqi Government that they want the sectarian violence to cease because people are still jockeying for positions.

In such a conflict it is unlikely to get to any political resolution until one or all sides decide that the killing should stop, that they are not going to get a greater advantage from pursuing violence than by pursuing political progress.

So with respect to partition, with respect to the political benchmarks, can you offer us more than the hope that the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi army will step up to the task that confronts them, and give us perhaps more strategic benchmarks or conditions

that we can look to and set forth those conditions so that we can judge whether there is progress being made going forward?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, with respect to partition, I would like to be very clear on this. Partition in Iraq could only be achieved at an expense of human suffering and bloodshed and force dislocation that would be both profound and wholly unacceptable, I believe, to the American people. It is wholly unacceptable to this administration. The mixed communities of Iraq are found throughout the country. There is no easy map that can be drawn, no easy political decision that can be taken, that would not involve death and suffering to achieve partition.

But more important than my views is that very few in Iraq wish to see partition as an outcome. Even the Kurdish leadership, who enjoy a federal status within Iraq, do not want to see partition. They view that as a threat to their interests because of the instability that it would produce on their borders. This is simply not an option. It is not a practical option, it is not a moral option.

With respect to your comments, which I respect, on the need for some greater degree of certainty, not hope—and I agree with you, hope is not a strategy—on moving the political process forward, we still believe Prime Minister Maliki is capable of effectively being a national leader. We still believe there is a sufficient degree of minimal convergence on the critical issues of ending sectarian fighting, confronting militias, dealing with al Qaeda, to make our continued best assistance, best help, warranted.

If that changes, then of course our basic assessment changes with it. But it continues to be our fundamental assumption.

Senator CLINTON. General?

General ABIZAID. Senator Clinton, I believe that partition is not viable for Iraq. I cannot imagine in particular how a Sunni state could survive. I believe it would devolve into an area where al Qaeda would have a safe haven, where they would export their terror to the surrounding countries. I believe that the Shiite state would be decidedly subject to the domination of Iran, and that that would not be good for the region. It would start to move the region into Sunni-Shiite tensions that the region has not seen for a long time.

With regard to hope not being a method, Senator, I agree with you, and I would also say that despair is not a method. When I come to Washington I feel despair. When I am in Iraq with my commanders, when I talk to our soldiers, when I talk to the Iraqi leadership, they are not despairing. They believe that they can move the country towards stability with our help, and I believe that.

This has been a very hard and difficult process and over the length of time we have learned some hard lessons. We have not misled people. We have learned some hard lessons. I believe that we can take the Iraqi armed forces, increase our level of commitment to them, continue to deliver the type of security force that our current troop levels give us, and in the period of the next 6 months clearly have a better understanding about the possibilities for success.

But all of us that are involved in this thing believe we can be successful. It is not a matter of professional pride. It is a matter

of seeing that the enemy cannot win. There will be some hard things on the horizon. They will have to do something in Al Anbar Province. We will have to commit forces to deal with the Jaysh al-Mahdi. Each of those things will be battles in and of themselves that we can win if we set the right political and military conditions, and I sincerely believe we can do that.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you.

Thank you very much, Ambassador, General Abizaid. Again, thank you for your service. As our chairman has pointed out, American troops have been battling there longer than they battled in World War II. They have shown extraordinary courage. They have done everything they have been asked to do. I think the real challenge is to try to honor their valor, is to get the policy correct. That is what you are all attempting here, recognizing the history and the current situation.

General, I must say I was interested in your response about the progress that is being made immediately, because those who have talked about some phased redeployment immediately get accused of having either the words "cut and run" or a "bloodbath" associated with their names or with their positions on it.

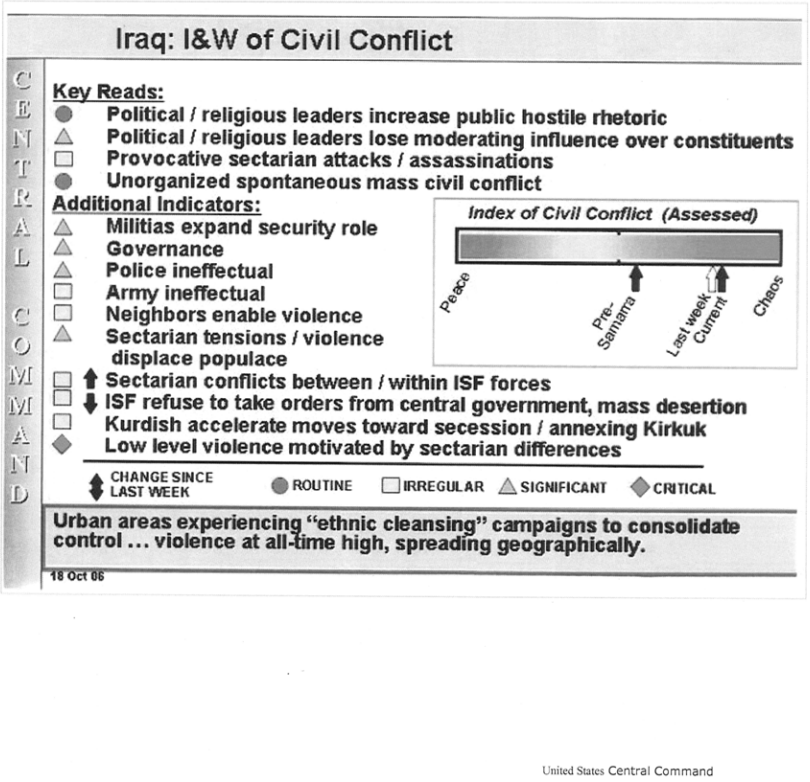
We have seen the United Nations reports that more than 6,500 Iraqis were killed in July and August, an increase of 1,000 over the number killed in the previous 2 months. As Senator Clinton pointed out, General Maples this afternoon is going to talk about the overall attacks increase. The bottom on page 3 of his opening statement he talks about sectarian violence, a weak central government, problems in basic services are causing more Iraqis to turn to sectarian groups, militias, and insurgents for basic needs, imperiling Iraqi unity.

The total number of Americans that are being killed or the casualties: August, 65; September, 71; and October, 106.

The CENTCOM report on civil conflict on October 18 shows the colors here, right on the border of chaos in Iraq. These are all your figures or the Pentagon's figures or U.N. figures, the Pentagon's own report.

[The information referred to follows:]

The New York Times
November 1, 2006



A slide titled "Iraq: Indications and Warnings of Civil Conflict" lists factors that are destabilizing Iraq.

Senator KENNEDY. So when we hear talk about some kind of a phased redeployment that we are going to have a bloodbath, many think there is a bloodbath going on today.

Let me ask you specifically: There were the series of benchmarks which the administration had supported and the Maliki Government had indicated that they support. As a matter of fact, the Maliki Government indicated in their joint press release the Iraqi Government—this is the joint statement of Maliki and the U.S. Ambassador—the Iraqi Government has made clear the issues that must be resolved, with timelines, to take the positive steps for the Iraqi people. That is, sharing the wealth, disbanding the militias, continuing on, which you have outlined here.

Why is it all right for the administration to say, we will take a timeline with regards to what you have to do here, we will take a

timeline on that, and then be so critical of others who say we also need to have a timeline in terms of the phased redeployment of American troops? Can you tell me that?

Then maybe you could make a comment about what happened yesterday in a major city, where a series of automobiles go on down and into the education department, take out hundreds of different students, teachers, and then bring them back through the checkpoints. Now, how, when we are talking about the progress that is being made, let alone the difficulty of the American Forces of trying to stop violence against Sunnis and men being labeled sympathetic to the Shiites, or if they do not stop it to being labeled sympathetic to the Shiites, the Sunnis on the one hand or the Shiites on the other. What is really the basis of, in terms of all of these reports and the actions that have been taken, evidently timelines for the Maliki Government to take—why is it all right for them to take timelines for progress in this if you are not to say that these timelines are going to be enforced, or are they going to be enforced, and when they meet these timelines we are going to be able to have the kind of phased redeployment of American troops?

General ABIZAID. Do you want to take the timeline?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, our comments here do not reflect a necessary advocacy for or rejection of increases, decreases, timelines, or transition times. That is part of an overall strategy towards Iraq. It is a strategy that we are reviewing now. What we are saying is to review military force levels, force dispositions in isolation from other aspects that affect that strategic goal of stability, self-sufficiency in Iraq, is mistaken.

There needs to be a very careful look at how one addresses the military component, the political component inside and outside Iraq, to get more progress, because progress right now is not satisfactory, not at all, towards success. We do not want military levels or dispositions viewed in isolation, and to take a step in isolation would not I think have a positive impact on any of our goals or any of our interests in Iraq.

General ABIZAID. As far as the incident yesterday, we have certainly tried to understand what happened there. People arrived in the education ministry area dressed in ISF uniforms, police uniforms, I believe. They said that they were there for an official purpose. They started to arrest people. I believe they took 70 out. Of course, that is of great concern, that people would impersonate national security personnel and kidnap people. This has been a problem that we have had now for several months.

On the other hand, I would tell you that the reaction of the ISFs under the direction of the prime minister, the interior minister, and the defense minister was decisive, that people were released, that other people that participated in the crime were arrested, and that some of the key police commanders were dismissed. So again, what happened is not a good thing. The fact that the government responded in an appropriate manner I think is encouraging.

Senator KENNEDY. Just before my time expires, General, is this the area that American troops had been withdrawn from as a result of the request of Sadr? Are these checkpoints that were in the general area of where the school was?

General ABIZAID. No, no, Senator.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Not at all.

Senator KENNEDY. Were there any American troops in that region, in that immediate area?

General ABIZAID. There are American troops in the Karada area, but it is a big city. I cannot say that American troops were in the vicinity when that happened. If they were in the vicinity and people came in and they appeared to be legitimate ISFs, we may have asked the question, but it is hard to say what we would have been able to do.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Talent, and to be followed by Senator Akaka and then Senator Bayh and then the hearing will be concluded.

Senator TALENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief.

I wanted to go into the question of embeds with General Abizaid and I know it has come up in the hearings. Are we embedding at platoon and company levels? If not, do you have plans along those lines? It seems to me that this is where they may be the most effective. How soon can we get them into the Iraqi army at those levels?

General ABIZAID. The embedding teams that we have in the battalion level I think is about 10 to 15 personnel each, and the idea is to increase the size of those forces. Again, I cannot tell you exactly how it would be done because the staffs are working on that. But the idea is to get down as far as we can.

I would not want to say what the size of units that might be that would go, or embeds might be, that go into the company and the platoon level. But clearly we need to have more ability to help with much more robust teams, and I think making the teams at the battalion level bigger will certainly be able to get down into the company level at least.

Senator TALENT. So there are plans definitely as you increase the size or the number of embeds at battalion level to reach down into the company levels?

General ABIZAID. In some areas, especially in the Marine Corps areas, they are working at the company level, through the battalion level, as I understand it.

Senator TALENT. I just think this is a battle of, in a sense, noncommissioned officers, and the lower we can get them into the Iraqi force structure the more effective they are quite likely to be. Do you agree with that in general?

General ABIZAID. I agree with that absolutely, as do our commanders in the field.

Senator TALENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Talent.

Senator Akaka.

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

General and Ambassador, thank you for being here. General, I want to express my pride in our Armed Forces and what they are doing in Iraq and other places in the world as well. We have just completed last weekend ceremonies and memorials for our veterans as well as for those who are in active service in our country, and I am very proud of our leadership and what they are doing.

There are some things that have been mentioned here by you, that we put the pressure on the Iraqi people to govern themselves. Let me ask, Mr. Ambassador, General Abizaid testified that we

need to get Iraqi troops to do more and instead of putting in more of our U.S. troops, and by doing that we would encourage the Iraqi troops as well as their government to stand up to what they are facing there.

We have been talking about the military. Ambassador, I am looking at the civilian side of this. Should we be cutting back on our aid and assistance programs there? As was mentioned, there are several tracks there. Besides security and political, there is also economic. My question also includes what are we doing there now in these other than military areas? Rather than U.S. officials, U.S. contractors, and U.S. money doing the work of the Iraqi Government, should we not stand down and have them stand up to it?

How do we get the Iraqi Government to do their job? That is my question. Let me just say, for example, Senator Sessions described a catch-and-release justice system that has become a swinging door for death squads. So my question to you is how do we get the Iraqi Government to do their job?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, your questions on the economic side are very well-taken, and the whole thrust of our policy in terms of how our money is spent, what we are doing with our projects over the past 17 months, has been precisely to put Iraqis in the lead and to shift away from U.S. contractors to Iraqi contractors, something we have done at a very dramatic pace.

It is to build capacity, not buildings, in Iraq. It is to give the Iraqis the tools that they will need to lead themselves in terms of economic development and delivery of essential services. This is exactly the line on which we will continue.

As we look at capacity development, we do assess what you raise and what the General has raised on the military side: Are you fostering a culture of dependency or are you building self-sufficiency? We try to tailor our programs and constantly readjust what we are doing to avoid dependency and to build the capacity and self-sufficiency on the part of the Iraqis, because they must assume the lead in terms of caring for their own people and addressing their own national lead.

On your general question, how do we get the government to lead, it is a combination of putting them in the lead, if you will, taking off the wheels, letting them make decisions. When Prime Minister Maliki asserts a desire to have greater lead, when he takes decisions, as he did with respect to the checkpoints around Sadr City, that is positive because he is taking decisions and the responsibility for those decisions. Will all of them be decisions we would have taken? No, that is not the case. We will disagree with some of them.

But as long as they move broadly in the direction of national unity, of confronting violence, of prosecuting the war on terror, those are decisions which Iraqis should take and we should encourage them to continue to make. That is a positive development.

It is how we work with Iraqi leaders to allow them to take the lead in a constructive sense that we are both about here and our own strategy has to be focused on in the time ahead.

Senator AKAKA. General Abizaid, I have been concerned about the people, about the Shiites and the Sunnis who believe that we are not providing adequate security. My question to you is what

steps are we taking to ensure the Iraqi people feel that they are receiving fair and impartial treatment? How are we going to curb sectarian violence if the Sunnis and Shiites do not believe we are working adequately to address this matter?

General ABIZAID. Senator, I believe the key to success in Iraq is to make a nonsectarian armed forces that is loyal to the central government, that is effective on the battlefield, and that supplants the militias. That is the key to moving Iraq forward. A government of national unity plus an armed forces that respects the rights of its people and represents all of its people will stabilize Iraq.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

General ABIZAID. I believe they can do that with our help.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Bayh.

Senator BAYH. Gentlemen, thank you for your presence today and thank you for your service to our country. There are strong differences of opinion about what to do with Iraq, but no one questions your sincerity or your service to the country. I just want to say that up front.

General, my first question is for you. You mentioned that you agree with something that the President has said from time to time, that Iraq is the central front in the war on terror. You referenced something that he also says from time to time, that our adversaries say that it is the central front in the war on terror, therefore it must be so.

Is it not possible that our adversaries define it as the central front in the war on terror because that serves their interests, not ours? Is it not possible that al Qaeda defines it as the central front because they know our expenditure of resources there detracts from our ability to stabilize Afghanistan and that the Iranians know we cannot serve as a robust enough deterrent to them as long as we are in presence the way we are in Iraq?

So my question, General, and I must say I am a little troubled by the fact that we let our adversaries define what is in the national security interest of the United States, is that not a dangerous place to be?

General ABIZAID. Senator, when you look at the broader fight, the fight against al Qaeda, which is not just a fight in the CENTCOM AORs, it is a fight that is global, but where you see where the most military activity takes place, where the most suicide bombers are fielded, where the most al Qaeda troops are fighting, it is clearly inside Iraq where the most foreign fighters flow to. It is inside Iraq. So in the fight against al Qaeda, our number one battlefield is inside Iraq.

Senator BAYH. But my question is why are we letting them define the battlefield for us? Might it not be in their interest to have us there, but not in ours?

General ABIZAID. The enemy, al Qaeda will fight us wherever we are. If we are in Iraq they will fight us in Iraq. If we are in Afghanistan they will fight us in Afghanistan. If we are in the United States they will fight us in the United States. That is what they intend to do, and our intention is to keep them from fighting us in the United States.

Senator BAYH. My second question, gentlemen, and it is for both of you, but General, I will start with you again. I think, General, you indicated you are optimistic about our ability to stabilize Iraq, and I think you had, Ambassador, some faith that we could accomplish that objective. Let me ask you both, and it was following some of your answers: What would it take—what would shake your faith and optimism? What would make you pessimistic about our chances?

General ABIZAID. Certainly what would make me very pessimistic is if the Government of Iraq fails to disarm the illegal militias. That would be my number one concern.

Senator BAYH. Let me follow up on that, General. The last time you were before the committee you indicated, and I think you indicated again today, that what is driving the insurgency are unresolved political disputes among Iraqis in large part. We have some outsiders to be sure, but that really it is for Iraqis to get a hold of this situation.

We just had an election in our country in which the American people expressed less than total confidence in the effectiveness of our own Government. We look at the functioning of the Government in Iraq and I have to tell you that too often they appear to be operating as members of their tribe or their sect or their ethnic group first, rather than as Iraqis first.

They say the right things, but when the going gets tough and they have to make the hard decisions, they retreat into their corner and they are just not able to find that common ground. I find that troubling. Why should we have confidence in their ability to reconcile those differences in the face of their behavior?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, you pose a very good question, and there are key indicators on the negative. The abandonment of any efforts to construct a national dialogue, the pursuit of exclusively sectarian agenda by Shiite and by Sunnis, the rejection of our assistance and our presence as no longer relevant to those sectarian agendas or contradictory to those sectarian agendas, all of which would be marked by a continued rise in militia presence, a continued rise in sectarian violence and force displacement, that would indicate that indeed hope for success had largely vanished.

But we do not see ourselves at that point. More importantly, we do not see Iraqi leaders at that point today. But the critical challenge we all face, the Iraqis who are committed to a moderate outcome and us, is that the space that still exists, the political space for convergence, for reconciliation, be acted upon before it vanishes.

Senator BAYH. My final question, gentlemen, would be simply this. We all want them to succeed. We all want them to be able to stabilize their country, with the assistance that we have provided them. Too often they seem unable or unwilling to do that. So my question to both of you, and my time has expired, is: Is there anything else we can do to move them in the direction of making the hard decisions that only they can make?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, the President has asked for a review by all national security agencies of exactly what the challenges are, how best using our resources and assets, current or potential, in Iraq, outside Iraq, how the region factors in, how we can best move forward toward success. It is exactly the question you

pose, how best can we get the kind of progress in the areas where progress is needed now in Iraq, and on a timeline that is relevant and meaningful to what is happening in that country.

Senator BAYH. My final observation, it is a question that is just hanging in the air. With all of our assistance, all of our blood and treasure and sacrifice there, at some point we have to ask ourselves the question: do they have it in them to forge one country in a common destiny or is that beyond their capabilities?

General ABIZAID. Let me answer that. I have been dealing with the Iraqis for a long time. Yes, they have it in them. They can forge one country. They are fighting and dying for their country. They can overcome these problems. But it is not an easy thing to do, just like it was not an easy thing for us to forge our own destiny after the revolution. We had a lot of fighting and a lot of difficult times ahead of us after that period.

Iraq is a young country. It is a country that is different from any other country in the Middle East and it is a country that can make a difference in the Middle East. I believe that we must stick with them until such time that they show us that they cannot do it.

As far as those of us that have been fighting—and I do not include myself; I include the commanders and troops in the field—those among us who fight bet on the Iraqis, and as long as they are confident, I am confident.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator BAYH. Thank you for service, gentlemen.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, General Abizaid, for that concluding comment. I think that summarizes very well your own professional and personal feelings, and you have devoted much of your life to hoping that this conflict can be resolved along the lines that you so stated.

Thank you again for excellent testimony. Ambassador Satterfield, this was your first appearance before this committee. I believe your reputation as a man who will testify straight and to the point and precise will be known by many committees and you will be inundated with invitations. You have done a wonderful job. Thank you very much.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Thank you.

Senator BAYH. To his great misfortune, Mr. Chairman. [Laughter.]

Chairman WARNER. Yes.

General ABIZAID. Mr. Chairman, may I just say one word?

Chairman WARNER. Yes.

General ABIZAID. Thank you, sir. I know you are stepping down as the chairman. Those of us that have served with you, God bless you for your service to the Nation. Thank you, sir.

Chairman WARNER. I thank you very much, General. We are adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN

TROOP LEVELS IN IRAQ

1. Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, in a November 15, 2006, New York Times article, General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC (Ret.), former head of U.S. Central Command, argued that any substantial reduction of American

forces in Iraq over the next several months would be more likely to accelerate the slide to civil war than stop it. Speaking of Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki, General Zinni said, "You can't put pressure on a wounded guy. There is a premise that the Iraqis are not doing enough now, that there is a capability that they have not employed or used. I am not so sure they are capable of stopping sectarian violence."

Instead of taking troops out, General Zinni said it would make more sense to consider deploying additional American forces over the next 6 months to "regain momentum" as part of a broader effort to stabilize Iraq that would create more jobs, foster political reconciliation, and develop more effective Iraqi security forces (ISFs).

Do you agree that a substantial reduction of American forces over the next several months would be ineffective in pressuring the Iraqi Government to "do more" and may even be counterproductive? Please explain.

General ABIZAID. I agree that a substantial reduction of American forces would be ineffective in pressuring the Iraqi Government to do more and would be counterproductive. The current troop levels are needed for controlling the sectarian violence and applying the resources required to accelerate ISF capacity and capability for taking the lead in security operations. ISFs are continuing to make significant improvement, but more training, equipping, and reforming parts of those forces are still required. Iraqi leaders are actively seeking more control, and as conditions are met, we are transferring more security responsibilities to them. In time, the Iraqis loyal to the national government will demonstrate the ability to conduct independent operations. However, more security responsibility for ISFs will only work if there is commitment to use of these forces as instruments for national unity.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. The Department of State (DOS) defers to the Department of Defense (DOD) on troop levels. At the same time, the President laid out a revised military approach when he addressed the Nation on January 10 and announced his new strategy, 'The New War Forward,' in Iraq. U.S. force strength adjustments continue to be made in support of ISFs with the aim of assisting the Iraqi people in gaining control of the security situation. However, a change in military force strength will not reduce violence by itself. Stabilization of Iraq also requires political and economic solution that includes action by Iraq's political, religious, business, and civic leaders. We will continue to work closely with and support Prime Minister Maliki and the Iraqi Government particularly to foster political reconciliation.

2. Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, do you agree that we should deploy additional forces as one component of a broader effort to stabilize Iraq? Please explain.

General ABIZAID. I have stated that all options are on the table subject to conditions and requirements that may develop. We will do whatever is required to stabilize the situation in Iraq, but temporarily surging American forces to decrease sectarian violence will not provide a sustainable effect by itself, and may have a longer range negative impact if conducted unilaterally rather than as part of an overall, integrated effort that includes economic and governance enhancements. Based on discussions with my commanders in Iraq, additional American forces, by themselves, would increase Iraqi dependence, shift the focus away from transitioning security responsibility, and fail to solve the broader issues of extremism which actually fuels the violence. A sustained increase in force levels is required for stabilization in Iraq; but these increases must ultimately come in the form of ISFs that can defeat the insurgency and deal with sectarian violence, and must also be matched with efforts from nonkinetic means of support as well. Additional troops, if sent, should reinforce success of the Iraqi army by providing operational training and mentorship through the employment of transition teams. A strong, nonsectarian Iraqi army will provide the foundation for success by ultimately defeating the insurgency and extremists, stabilizing the country, and allowing the Iraqi Government to embrace meaningful national reconciliation.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Military efforts, while a critical part of the solution, will not by themselves reduce violence. Stabilization of Iraq also requires a political and economic solutions that include Iraqi political, religious, business, and civic leaders. U.S. force strength adjustments and employment decisions continue to be made in support of ISFs to ultimately assist the Iraqi people in gaining control of the security situation. The President laid out a revised military approach when he addressed the Nation on January 10 and announced his new strategy, 'The New War Forward,' in Iraq. The DOS defers to the DOD on troop levels.

3. Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, there are many who believe that we face a number of tasks in Iraq: to clear insurgent sanctuaries and hold the territory with a combination of coalition and Iraqi forces; to provide

sufficient security in Iraq so that economic reconstruction and political activity can take place; to arrest the momentum of sectarian death squads; to disarm militias; to train the Iraqi army and keep an American presence in Iraqi units; and to place U.S. personnel in Iraqi police units. Do you agree that we need to do these things? Please explain. Do you believe that we have, today, sufficient force levels in order to accomplish all these tasks? Please explain.

General ABIZAID. These tasks certainly need to be accomplished in Iraq, but not necessarily completed exclusively by the United States or our coalition partners. For example, a key task for the Iraqi leadership and their security forces is taking on the militias and death squads. In the last 3 or 4 months the Prime Minister, and his ministers, in particular the Minister of Defense and the new Minister of Interior, have shown a desire to move against the militias, death squads, and extremists that foment sectarian violence. They know dealing with illegal armed groups is largely their task, and that sectarian violence can be fatal to Iraq if it's not checked. Stabilizing Iraq will continue to require Iraqi sacrifice, courage, and responsibility, along with the support of the United States and our allies. As I have stated, this very well may require more troops, but they must ultimately be ISFs to have a lasting impact.

We now have trained and equipped over 325,000 Iraqi soldiers and police; and at the Prime Minister's request we are adding an additional 37,000 personnel so as to ultimately exceed 362,000 members in the ISFs. The increasing number of personnel is critical to the Government of Iraq's plan for self security. In addition, the quality of their forces is also constantly improving. Over recent weeks, we have witnessed substantial improvement in ISF responsiveness, command and control, and ability to address unlawful activity. Still, the government must get behind its army and give it confidence that it can operate independently of a sectarian agenda. Again, all options remain on the table. Sending more American troops into Iraq to help stabilize the situation and to embed transition teams in Iraqi units to help build organizational capacity is a possibility. In doing so, we would accept the risk of delaying full transition to Iraqi security control at a point in the campaign where Iraqis increasingly in the lead is both desired and necessary.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. The DOS defers to the DOD on troop levels. However, all of the actions mentioned above constitute elements of U.S. strategy and tactics in Iraq. An oft overlooked issue with regards to troops in Iraq is how to calibrate all elements of national power and resources over time to enact the various political, economic, and security related tasks.

Each track is inextricably linked to the other. While all move forward together, a failure or setback in any one area could hinder progress in the others. This is why the President announced an increase of not only troops, but also civilian Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in his "new way forward."

TROOP WITHDRAWAL IN IRAQ

4. Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, some members of the Senate have proposed what they refer to not as a withdrawal of American forces from Iraq, but rather what they call a "redeployment" or an "over-the-horizon force" that would, in their minds, continue to exert military influence on Iraq after withdrawal from much of the country. The idea seems to be that U.S. forces would remain on bases in Iraqi Kurdistan, Kuwait, or elsewhere in the region and support the Iraqis with "rapid reaction forces." I'd like to ask several questions about the wisdom of such a proposal.

How could we supply a huge forward operating base in the Kurdish region if we abandon all of Iraq to the south? Would the Turks be likely to allow us to supply it from their territory or would we be forced to fly in all required supplies?

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. DOS defers to the DOD.

5. Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, if a quick reaction force is based in Kuwait, how would the forces get to Iraq when needed—after all, it is a several days drive by military convoy from Kuwait to Baghdad. Would progress not be arrested by improvised explosive devices (IED) and a lack of any ground-level intelligence from U.S. forces? Please explain.

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. DOS defers to the DOD.

6. Senator MCCAIN. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, if a force based in Kuwait or Kurdistan instead flies to engage in combat in Iraq, would it not need

to secure an airstrip, establish an interim base, transport fuel and supplies, and so on? If that is the case, how quickly would such a force in fact be able to deploy? Would it ever be relevant for tactical emergencies? Even for higher level emergencies, would it be at all feasible to move in large quantities of heavy equipment by air?

General ABIZAID. Iraq does not play a role in the U.S. Integrated Global Defense Posture and there is no requirement for enduring bases in Iraq, to include the Kurdistan region, after the Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) mission is completed. Any post-OIF presence in Iraq would be the subject of bilateral/multilateral agreements between the U.S. Government, or any other nation's government, and the Government of Iraq.

Reliance upon forces based in Kuwait or only a few locations in Iraq such as Kurdistan would occur when coalition forces have transitioned to strategic overwatch. At that point the Government of Iraq would be responsible for sustaining its defense forces, maintaining domestic order, and reacting to tactical emergencies. Coalition forces would be postured to support Iraq in response to threats of a strategic nature, where strategic warning would be provided. Prior to shifting to a posture of strategic overwatch, coalition forces would establish agreements with the Government of Iraq regarding the use of specific facilities in Iraq in order to facilitate rapid response to support operations. Should there be a requirement to deploy by air coalition forces would conceivably utilize secure facilities maintained by ISFs.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. DOS defers to the DOD.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS

MILITARY SUPPLIES

7. Senator SESSIONS. General Abizaid, I have recently been informed that soldiers serving in the 272 MP Company, currently stationed at Forward Operations Base Whasi Quwa, Afghanistan, are operating on minimal rations with some receiving only one meal per day. What is the current ration cycle for these troops? Is there a supply problem in Afghanistan or Iraq? Are we limiting rations, water, or other supplies to our soldiers in theater?

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN ENSIGN

COUNTERDRUG

8. Senator ENSIGN. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, given the many problems in Afghanistan associated with the cultivation of poppies there, would it be worth instituting a program similar to what the United States did in Turkey in the 1980s whereby we purchased the poppies to keep them off the open market? Please elaborate on the pros and cons of undertaking such a program for Afghanistan.

General ABIZAID. The DOD role in counternarcotics is to support the DOS and lead Federal drug law enforcement agencies in the execution of the U.S. Government's international counterdrug program. The Office of the National Drug Control Policy determines U.S. policy on drug control programs based on the President's guidance. If U.S. policy for the counterdrugs/counternarcotics effort in Afghanistan changes to include licit uses for the Afghan poppy crop, the DOS and DOD will coordinate on the appropriate role of the DOD based on current legal authorities.

Afghanistan today in no way resembles Turkey in the 1980s. For example, there are concerns with the Government of Afghanistan being able to extend its influence very far from Kabul. A strong central government is an absolute necessity to provide the type of security required to license and monitor licit opiate suppliers. Absent this level of security, opium will end up in the hands of traffickers. Additionally, legalizing some cultivation would undermine the use of moral and religious persuasion to deter growing. Legalizing any amount of the opium market in Afghanistan would send the message that there is something legitimate to growing poppy. This is absolutely contrary to the message that President Karzai is sending to the Afghan people. Finally, the world demand for licit opiates represents approximately 5 percent of the poppy growth in Afghanistan. Distinguishing between the licit and the illicit crop would be very difficult, if not impossible. By example, both Peru and Bolivia have unsuccessfully dealt with the problem of licit versus illicit coca cultivation for years.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Proposals to legalize and license the cultivation and production of opium poppy in Afghanistan or to buyout the crop do not present any advantages. Such suggestions are infeasible and counterproductive.

In 1981, the U.S. Government issued a final rule specifying the source of narcotic raw materials (it is commonly referred to as the "80/20 rule"). The rule states that Turkey and India must be the source of at least 80 percent of our narcotic raw materials (used for medical and scientific purposes), and that 20 percent could come from other suppliers. This rule was established based on traditional import amounts and on a U.N. resolution which called on member states to support traditional sources that have been reliable suppliers and have taken effective measures to curtail diversion. To participate in the licit opiate market, countries must meet strict requirements to ensure that their licit opium industries are tightly controlled and regulated to prevent slippage onto the black market (the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) monitors these programs).

Proponents of similar programs in Afghanistan argue that different schemes to legalize and license the cultivation and production of opium poppy would reduce the amount of opiates entering the illicit market and create a legal economy for impoverished Afghan farmers. A European nongovernmental organization (NGO), the Senlis Council, has also touted the legalization and licensing as a means to meet increased demand for opium-based pain medications in the third world. Similarly, some have suggested that the Government of Afghanistan and the international community should simply buyout the Afghan opium poppy crop. These suggestions are not viable and although they have been discussed by the U.S. Government, the Government of Afghanistan, and the international community, they have been rejected and would prove detrimental to our efforts to control poppy cultivation.

Proposed programs to license the cultivation and production of opium poppy in Afghanistan for medicinal purposes are infeasible. As mentioned earlier, proponents argue that legalizing opium in Afghanistan could help meet increased demand for pain medications in the third world (which are needed to address the increased need of people suffering from HIV/AIDS and cancer). However, the INCB—whose job it is to maintain the balance between the supply and demand for narcotic raw materials—believes that world demand is currently satiated.

If Afghanistan's huge supply of opium were to be introduced into the licit market, prices would crash making the already more profitable black market even more attractive to Afghan farmers. The only practical effect would be that opium ultimately destined for the black market would have the veneer of legality, making our efforts to control cultivation and production that much more difficult.

Shortages in the third world and developing countries are unfortunate, but the issue is not supply. It is a lack of proper economies and systems of distribution. Increasing the supply of one drug without addressing the overarching distribution, licensing, and financial impediments to availability will not solve the larger problem, which is not created by a shortage of opiate raw materials. Furthermore, we believe current world stockpiles of raw materials could meet the increased need if it weren't for the aforementioned impediments.

In addition, Afghanistan does not have the means to ensure that production under a licensing system would not be diverted onto the black market. Afghanistan would have to have the necessary structures in place to license opium farmers, plan crop size, monitor growth, prevent diversion, and control harvesting. They do not have the ability to do so because of financial, security, and other impediments such as a lack of infrastructure. Given that Afghanistan's inability to extend the rule of law in poppy growing regions has resulted in an explosion of the current crop, it is unlikely that a licit opiate industry which relies on legal controls could work. Even in India (the only major licit opium producer to manually harvest opium gum from poppy—the method Afghan farmers use), where the level of development is higher and opium cultivation is tightly controlled and monitored, it is estimated that between 20 to 30 percent of the crop is diverted to the illegal production of dangerous drugs.

The latter suggestion to simply buyout the opium poppy crop is flawed for several reasons. First, if we ensure a market for opium poppy, more Afghans will grow in order to take advantage of a guaranteed source of income, creating a surge in planting. Only 12 percent of Afghanistan's population is currently engaged in poppy cultivation and this suggestion would increase the number of Afghans growing poppy and participating in the drug trade. Second, such a program would prove prohibitively expensive. The crop is currently worth $755 million to Afghan farmers per year (more than $2.8 billion total). By way of comparison, Afghan trust fund commitments are only $80 million after 2 years. We do not see a commitment by the international community to expend the funds, or permit the more robust eradication

measures needed to make a buyout program a realistic or sustainable option to limit opium production.

There are no shortcuts to fighting opium production in Afghanistan. Both economics and the practicality of such systems in Afghanistan argue against proposals to license or buyout Afghanistan's opium poppy crop. Based on many years of experience in other nations and an appreciation for Afghanistan's historical and cultural context, the U.S. Government supports a mix of deterrence, prevention, and alternatives in order to bring this problem under control and allow rule of law to flourish. The Government of Afghanistan itself strongly opposes the legalization of opium poppy as does the INCB and U.S. Government.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM

TROOP LEVELS

9. Senator GRAHAM. General Abizaid, in your testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee you indicated that we could not increase troop levels in a meaningful way in Iraq and be able to sustain that force for any length of time given the size of our own forces. Please quantify with specifics the increase we would we need in the Army and Marine Corps in order to increase U.S. military forces in the Iraq theater and be able to sustain that force (assuming rotations continue on the current timetable).

General ABIZAID. If the commanders in the field believe that they need more troops, then they will recommend both the size and type of force necessary. If such an increase exceeds the existing force structure, then it is the Services' responsibility in their role as force providers to determine what, if any, force structure increases are required.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY

NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

10. Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador Satterfield, American NGOs are on the front lines in Iraq promoting and supporting democracy, and they deserve full support of this country. Despite their significant contribution and the enormous risks their employees take by working in Iraq, the administration has made no long-term commitment to provide funding for their work in Iraq. Is there a plan to fund these organizations in the long-term? Don't they deserve a commitment from our Government that is matched by adequate resources?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Building democracy in Iraq, the Middle East, and the world at large has been one of the main goals of this administration. The Department has funded a wide range of democracy programs, and we recognize the significant contributions and enormous risks these groups and their employees take by working in Iraq. In particular, however, program costs in Iraq, including program costs for democracy building, have changed overtime, especially as the need for security has changed. This has caused a number of companies and organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit, to reallocate funds for security expenses, reducing the amount they have been able to spend on other parts of their programs. The Department will continue to work with the organizations involved in promoting democracy, and our other contractors and grantees, to ensure that essential U.S. Government policy objectives are met.

IRAQI REFUGEES

11. Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador Satterfield, the war in Iraq has created hundreds of thousands of refugees who, virtually unknown to the rest of the world, are seeking sanctuary in Syria, Iran, Lebanon, Jordan, and other neighboring countries. More than 3 million Iraqis are refugees in neighboring countries or are internally displaced. One thousand are being forcibly displaced each day and an estimated 40,000 are leaving Iraq each month and hundreds of thousands of others are teetering on the edge of displacement. It is likely that neighboring governments such as Jordan and Syria will increasingly restrict Iraqi refugees' ability to enter, stay, and gain access to social services.

Iraqis are being forced to leave their communities because of threats, assassinations, kidnappings, armed conflict, forced displacement, and generalized violence driven by sectarian agendas. Countless other Iraqis fear persecution because of their political views, ethnic affiliation, or affiliation with the United States.

The President's report to Congress on proposed refugee admissions for fiscal year 2007 indicates that the U.S. program is once again open to receiving new referrals of vulnerable Iraqi cases from the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees. The President's proposed regional ceiling for refugees from the Near East and South Asia (primarily vulnerable Iraqis, Afghans, and Iranian religious and ethnic minorities) is 5,500. In fiscal year 2006, the United States admitted only 202 Iraqi refugees for resettlement.

I believe the United States has a duty to assist Iraqi refugees who can't return home, particularly the ones who are facing persecution because of their affiliation with the United States. What efforts has the administration made to convince Jordan, Syria, and other countries to keep their borders open to Iraqi refugees?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. The United States is very concerned about the situation facing Iraqi refugees and we are working to ensure that their assistance and protection needs are addressed appropriately. We recognize how very important it is for neighboring countries to keep their borders open to Iraqi refugees, and we believe the best way to ensure this is by providing humanitarian assistance through our international partners to Iraqis both inside and outside Iraq. The United States is assisting Iraqis who, at present, are unable to voluntarily return to Iraq. We fund United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and NGO programs for the most vulnerable Iraqis in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon and because needs are increasing, we hope to expand these programs in 2007 if we receive additional funding. We have accepted 466 vulnerable Iraqi refugees into the U.S. resettlement program since fiscal year 2004 and are expanding our capability. These protection and assistance programs are designed to serve all Iraqis facing a well-founded fear of persecution. Refugees who have worked with the United States will have equal access to protection and assistance in the region. We are working to obtain significantly greater access for those who face persecution because of their work for us to the U.S. resettlement program and to immigration into the United States.

Both Jordan and Syria have been generous hosts of Iraqis. We are working with these governments and UNHCR to relieve some of the humanitarian burden and help these countries keep their borders open to asylum seekers.

12. Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador Satterfield, does the DOS plan to increase assistance to neighboring countries burdened with the high number of Iraqi refugees?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. The United States is very concerned about the situation facing Iraq refugees and we are working with our international partners such as UNHCR and several NGOs, as well as host governments, to ensure that their assistance and protection needs are addressed appropriately.

The DOS indeed hopes to increase assistance to host countries neighboring Iraq. We recognize the increasing demands vulnerable Iraqis are placing on host countries. We want to ensure that Iraqis do not overburden the public services of neighboring countries by increasing humanitarian assistance so that these countries can continue to offer refuge to Iraqi asylum seekers. We hope to generously respond to UNHCR's 2007 appeal to significantly expand their protection and assistance activities for Iraqi refugees in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Turkey. We also plan to expand existing NGO programs that identify and assist the most vulnerable refugees in Jordan and Syria as well as IDPs in Iraq if we receive additional funding.

13. Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador Satterfield, how can the United States better assist Iraqis displaced internally to obtain adequate food and shelter and other humanitarian needs?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We are assisting many internally displaced persons through U.S. Government funded programs that deliver humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable families and individuals. Many of the newly displaced inside Iraq have joined extended families, and we want to ensure that they can successfully integrate into their host communities until they can return to their homes. For this reason, we also consider it a priority to look beyond immediate relief commodities to ensure that water, sanitation, health, and education services in hosting communities are not overburdened. Our programs are designed in such a way that we can quickly respond to emerging needs as they arise.

14. Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador Satterfield, given the human suffering caused by this massive Iraqi refugee crisis, isn't it just and proper that the United States dramatically increase the number of Iraqis it takes in for resettlement drawing on all priority categories?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. The United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRP) is committed to considering for resettlement all Iraqi refugees referred to us, either as individuals or in groups, by UNHCR. Our embassies may also refer

an Iraqi case for consideration. In addition, Iraqis with close family members in the United States may be eligible for the USRP family reunification program. To address growing assistance and resettlement needs among Iraqi refugees, we fund UNHCR's general budget for the near east region, and provide extra targeted funds specifically to support resettlement activities in the region. These funds will help address humanitarian assistance needs of this growing population and will boost UNHCR's capacity to register and refer to us and other countries vulnerable Iraqi cases in need of third country resettlement.

15. Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador Satterfield, can't you draw on the 20,000 unallocated reserve to increase the 5,100 target for the near east and south Asia?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Yes. There is no specific limit on how many Iraqis can be included in the program. The current Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions in fiscal year 2007 permits the admission of 70,000 refugees allocated by regions with 5,500 for the near east and south Asia. The 5,500 was developed as a planning figure for the region. If necessary, and if sufficient funding is available, we can draw on the unallocated reserve numbers.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

TROOP LEVELS IN IRAQ

16. Senator AKAKA. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, Secretary Rumsfeld has indicated that more U.S. forces will be needed to provide security in Iraq. At this point in time, how can more troops best be utilized to contain the escalation of attacks by insurgents?

General ABIZAID. [Deleted.]

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. The DOS defers to the DOD on troop levels and on the military aspects of the President's new strategy, "The New Way Forward" in Iraq. However, together with the additional troops will be increased civilian efforts to support moderates and improve the performance of government at the national, provincial, and local levels, thereby weakening the extremists. Iraq. Specific questions this plan should be addressed to the DOD.

17. Senator AKAKA. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, is or will the Iraqi Government assist in this effort or are they preventing U.S. military forces from truly getting the violence under control? For example, the U.S. forces were told to remove check points in Sadr City by Prime Minister Maliki.

General ABIZAID. I believe the Iraqi Government and Prime Minister Maliki are committed to bringing down the level of violence. I believe Prime Minister Maliki has moved in a direction with national police reform, which has been a major problem, with dismissing officers that are showing sectarian values as opposed to national values, with committing the armed forces to independent operations that are necessary to quell the sectarian violence, in a way that leads me to believe he is going to continue to doing more.

In the past 6 weeks we have had increasing success with joint Iraqi-U.S. forces moving into Sadr City, precisely targeting death cells and death squad leadership and taking them out. I believe this will also continue.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Solutions to the growing violence in Iraq must be the result of concerted decisions by the Iraqi political leadership and ISFs. Prime Minister Maliki has repeatedly stated his desire for increased control over ISFs. As the Iraqi Government assumes more security responsibility, operational decisions will be made by the sovereign leaders that may not be the best course of action from a U.S. perspective.

Prime Minister Maliki's decision regarding Sadr City check points clearly indicates his desire to take action. The President laid out a revised military approach when he addressed the Nation on January 10 and announced his new strategy, 'The New War Forward,' in Iraq. The President has made it clear that America's commitment is not open-ended and will hold the Iraqis to clear security, political, and economic benchmarks and milestones.

EMERGENCY HOTLINE

18. Senator AKAKA. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, it is my understanding that there are some Iraqis that believe we are to blame not only for the attacks but also for planting IEDs at night while we impose curfews. What efforts are underway to better our standing within various communities, especially since

we have spent a pretty penny on a campaign encouraging Iraqis to call the hotline in cases of emergency?

General ABIZAID. First, the National 130 Tips Hotline has never been branded as an emergency number, but a tips line. The Iraqi public's confidence will not be won through advertising alone, but through effective and timely responses to their calls. We have developed two documentaries explaining the process of what happens when a call comes in. In addition, we have added the tag line at the end of commercials telling viewers if they can't get through to keep trying. I can assure you, people are still calling. When Iraqis are in a situation where they feel they are in immediate danger, they can call other emergency operations centers that have the mission of effecting coordination with local police stations and emergency response units, as the Tips Hotline is focused on terrorism related reporting. The types of reports received by Tips often require surveillance and operational planning prior to any police or military action taking place. Any time that you visit the Tips facility, the phones are always ringing off the hook. Based on our most recent polling data, the significant majority of Iraqis understand the purpose of the hotline (73 percent), and are motivated through the advertising campaign to utilize the hotline number (88 percent). A growing confidence in the program is apparent with a majority of the populace (83 percent) confident in the hotline's operation. At the same time, record numbers of tips received have been set. During a visit to the Tips Operations Facility, one New York Times reporter noted, and this was ultimately published in the newspaper, that he had calculated one telephone call every 2 seconds during his stay there. The message is getting out to the Iraqi public, which continues to call in ever increasing numbers.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. While we do not maintain a public hotline for emergencies as part of our outreach efforts, the DOS, Embassy Baghdad and our PRTs have devoted a great amount of energy and resources to reaching Iraqis of all ages and backgrounds through our efforts to both assist Iraqis in the safeguarding and rebuilding of their country, as well as communicating and interacting directly with Iraqis through our various public diplomacy programs. PRTs, in particular, build relationships with local government officials and community leaders throughout Iraq and help them improve their self-governance.

Outreach, to the media and others, is a critical component of our public diplomacy efforts in Iraq. Whether in the form of the support for an Iraq Web site or Iraq-focused publications or the DOS and our embassies engagement with Arab and regional press, often in Arabic, we are all purposefully engaged in outreach to promote our objectives in Iraq. In addition to interviews and press briefings, our outreach to the media includes digital video conferences, chat rooms, and other important initiatives.

The DOS has increased outreach to Arab and regional media with appearances by Secretary Rice and other senior department officials to communicate U.S. policy. During the fall quarter, NEA/PPD Director Alberto Fernandez conducted 118 interviews, 101 in Arabic, discussing Iraq and other regional issues.

Embassy Baghdad has also stepped up media events and greatly facilitated engagement with international, pan-Arab, and Iraqi media. Ambassador Khalilzad now gives weekly interviews with Arab media outlets and the embassy spokesman often travels into the Red Zone to meet key media contacts. The embassy also holds regular roundtables for Iraqi press to provide background on economic and infrastructure topics in which the United States is playing a substantial role, e.g., transportation, energy, and government capacity development.

Educational and cultural programs in Iraq, from Fulbright to international visitors programs to cultural preservation, have also played a significant role in strengthening positive perceptions of the U.S. role in Iraq with the Iraqi people. Iraq's International Visitors Leadership Program, for example, is the third largest in the world, after China and Russia. The Fulbright Student Scholarship Program in Iraq is now the largest in the Middle East/North Africa region. There are numerous other exchange opportunities currently administered by our embassy which cater to Iraqis of various backgrounds, ages, and expertise. These include, but are not limited to: various scholarship programs; youth exchange programs; educational institutes; language programs; and professional training opportunities.

Our public diplomacy efforts also include a variety of other programs which engage Iraqis directly on the ground. In view of the problems that American officers have in moving around Baghdad and most of the rest of Iraq, the programs are limited in scope and size but we nevertheless continue to expand our outreach efforts to the maximum capacity security and other restrictions allow. These programs include, but are not limited to: American corners; DVC outreach in academic and other professional areas; book publishing; improvement of universities; and media communications projects.

19. Senator AKAKA. General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, this hotline was suppose to help provide our forces with information regarding the insurgents—however, when many Iraqis did call, they were unable to get through. I understand that the program has gotten better with regards to operators answering the phone but what have we done to win back their confidence of this program?

General ABIZAID. First, the National 130 Tips Hotline has never been branded as an emergency service number; it has always been a tips hotline. The intent of the hotline is to provide a 24-hour, 7-day a week phone-in reporting service that empowers Iraqi citizens to provide information to the Government of Iraq and coalition forces on terrorist and criminal activity. Often hotline tips require surveillance and operational planning before any police or military action can occur.

We gain confidence in the program when the Iraqi people see good results from their calls. We have developed two documentaries explaining the process of what happens when a call comes in. In addition, we have added the tag line at the end of commercials telling viewers if they can't get through to keep trying. I can assure you, people are still calling. Any time that you visit the tips facility, the phones are always ringing off the hook. Based on our most recent polling data, the significant majority of Iraqis understand the purpose of the hotline (73 percent), and are motivated through the advertising campaign to utilize the hotline number (88 percent). At the same time, a growing confidence in the program is apparent with a majority of the populace (83 percent) confident in the hotline's operation. This tells us that the message is getting out and we are on track.

The Iraqi confidence level is also apparent in the recent and significant increase in tips/actionable tips received. This increase is based on several factors. First, management and leadership presence: The Iraqi Ministry of Interior designated a Brigadier General as on-site manager. Since his arrival in September 2006, this officer has reinforced to his subordinates the importance of correctly responding to calls in a timely manner. The hotline workers/operators now have a better understanding of the importance of the calls they receive, process, and disseminate, as the lives of many Iraqis depend on their actions.

Second, life support improvements. Coalition assets have been addressing some life support requirements such as water provision, communications hardware and infrastructure repairs, and maintenance, to mention the main ones.

Third, institutionalizations of best practices, creation of standard operating procedures, and a formal training program have resulted in the optimization of Tips Hotline Program operations. The growing interest in Tips is a welcomed sign. If the facility had new state-of-the-art equipment and a professional dedicated staff of IT technicians, the response and data processing time would be significantly improved. Any assistance you can provide in this area would be welcomed.

Fourth, appropriate work ethics and a sense of esprit-de-corps have been instilled within the workforce.

Finally, the presence of coalition advisors reassures the Iraqi operators that theirs is an important operation. The combined implementation of these five variables has resulted in an upward trend of actionable reports that are sent to both coalition and ISF elements. Tips program is undergoing a transition process that will result in full Government of Iraq control of Tips operations by June 2007.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Iraqi citizens are becoming more comfortable making direct contact with the National "Tips" Hotline because of the anonymity it provides. National Hotline calls are at an all time high in part as a result of Iraqi citizens use of the call center for personal emergencies in the absence of a trustworthy 911 type of emergency services alert center. The Multi-National Forces-Iraq command reports over 2,800 calls received in December, 300 more than the previous month. The hotline continues to provide tips that lead to significant captures and weapon seizures. Specific questions regarding this Multi-National Force-Iraq program should be addressed to the DOD.

IRAQI DEATH SQUADS

20. Senator AKAKA. Ambassador Satterfield, it is my understanding that, even within the Iraqi Government, there are different approaches regarding how to curtail the violent attacks conducted by insurgents and/or death squads. Are we working with the Iraqi Government to try and alleviate these tensions?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Dealing with sectarian violence by death squads, insurgents, and illegally armed militias is the greatest challenge Iraq faces. A military solution alone will not reduce violence. A reduction in sectarian violence will require a comprehensive political solution that includes Iraqi political, civil, and religious leaders working together to implement reconciliation initiatives, economic policies,

security-sector reform, and federalism. By implementing such policies, the government would move itself into a position to better influence groups that instigate violence, and persuade those who try to use violence for political gain that their objectives are better served through the political and national reconciliation processes. Prime Minister Maliki continues to oversee efforts by the Government of Iraq to deal with these issues. The United States will continue to closely advise and assist the Government of Iraq as it continues to establish and implement the political solutions necessary for success. Ultimately, these solutions are—and must continue to be—Iraqi solutions carried out by Iraqis.

[Whereupon, at 2:08 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE CURRENT SITUATION AND U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2006

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:41 p.m. in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator John Warner (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Warner, McCain, Inhofe, Roberts, Sessions, Ensign, Talent, Chambliss, Graham, Cornyn, Levin, Kennedy, Lieberman, Reed, and Dayton.

Committee staff members present: Charles S. Abell, staff director; Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk; and John H. Quirk V, security clerk.

Majority staff members present: William M. Caniano, professional staff member; Regina A. Dubey, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Sandra E. Luff, professional staff member; Derek J. Maurer, professional staff member; Elaine A. McCusker, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, counsel; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; Sean G. Stackley, professional staff member; Scott W. Stucky, general counsel; Kristine L. Svinicki, professional staff member; Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member; and Richard F. Walsh, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Democratic staff director; Jonathan D. Clark, minority counsel; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Evelyn N. Farkas, professional staff member; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Gerald J. Leeling, minority counsel; Peter K. Levine, minority counsel; Michael J. McCord, professional staff member; William G.P. Monahan, minority counsel; and Michael J. Noblet, research assistant.

Staff assistants present: David G. Collins, Micah H. Harris, and Jessica L. Kingston.

Committee members' assistants present: Christopher J. Paul and Richard H. Fontaine, Jr., assistants to Senator McCain; John A. Bonsell, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Libby Burgess, assistant to Senator Roberts; Arch Galloway II, assistant to Senator Sessions; Mark Winter, assistant to Senator Collins; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Adam G. Brake, assistant to Senator

Graham; Arjun Mody, assistant to Senator Dole; Bob Taylor and Stuart C. Mallory, assistants to Senator Thune; Sharon L. Waxman and Mieke Y. Eoyang, assistants to Senator Kennedy; Frederick M. Downey, assisant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Richard Kessler and Darcie Tokioka, assistants to Senator Akaka; William K. Sutey and Alea Brown, assistants to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric Pierce, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Luke Ballman, 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. Good afternoon. The Senate Armed Services Committee resumes its sequence of hearings on the current situation in Iraq and Afghanistan. Part one of the hearing was excellent this morning. The committee received, as it expected, the very frank and candid assessments from General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield.

In part two of the hearing the committee will receive testimony from General Michael Hayden, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Lieutenant General Michael Maples, Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). Both of them have appeared before Congress, but this is General Hayden's first appearance in his capacity as Director of the CIA.

The panel's appearance here today is very important. The relationship between intelligence and policymakers has been the subject of discussion over the past few years. In the session this morning I described five events that will converge in the next few weeks and months to help formulate the views of Congress, most particularly the Senate, on such changes as we may deem as necessary, the five being: this series of hearings; followed by, presumably in the first week of December, the hearing with Bob Gates, nominated to be the new Secretary of Defense; followed by a hearing with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and his report; then hopefully we will have the Jim Baker of the Iraq Study Group, with Lee Hamilton, testify; and lastly, I think very valuable work is now underway to extend the U.N. resolution under which our forces are operating in Iraq today that expires on December 31, 2006.

Senator Levin.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Senator LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the continuation of this very important hearing. It is critical that we have the independent and objective testimony of our Directors of the CIA and DIA to help us understand the situation in Iraq and in Afghanistan. We look forward to that testimony and in the interest of time I will not present a full statement.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator Levin.

General Hayden.

STATEMENT OF GEN. MICHAEL V. HAYDEN, USAF, DIRECTOR, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

General HAYDEN. Thank you, Senator. Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee:

The overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, when combined with our determined pursuit of al Qaeda worldwide, essentially inaugurated a new era of both risk and opportunity for our country in its engagement with much of the Muslim world. We are now face-to-face with whole societies that are in profound and, frankly, volatile transitions and whose fate will directly affect our fate, whose fate will directly affect the security of the United States.

With American forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, and with the United States leading the global war on terrorism, we are now actors to an unprecedented degree in supporting states, including Iraq and Afghanistan, which are attempting to create and sustain a stable new order. Arrayed against this endeavor are significant new forces. They are political and ethnosectarian forces that, frankly, were previously hidden or subordinated, and are now competing to shape the identity of these states.

Now, some of this competition is taking place within a legitimate political and democratic process. But in other cases we have radical groups like al Qaeda and its affiliates sponsoring terrorists, insurgents in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, that seem to be able to preempt governments and eclipse the moderate actors in the region. Then at the regional level you have opponents of the United States like Iran seeking to capitalize on the instability of this transitional period to expand their own influence and, frankly, to contest the vision we have for this region.

With these trends in mind, let me begin by focusing on Afghanistan, where we have made some important progress in the face of some substantial challenges. Afghanistan's future depends heavily on the international community's willingness to continue to deliver concrete resources to the Afghan Government. It depends equally on international willingness to help protect that government from the Taliban and other extremists who are waging a bloody insurgency, especially in the south and east of that country.

Now, neither of these tasks are simple. Neither of them are going to be completed soon. But the past few years have been a story of success for the Afghan Government and people, as well as the international community. That country has made remarkable political progress. The international community and the Afghan Government under the leadership of President Karzai have built some national level political institutions—a new constitution, an elected president, a democratically elected parliament. These are remarkable achievements when you hold them up against the backdrop of the ruinous decades of war that Afghanistan experienced before 2001.

But the successes of the last few years have not lessened the need for international involvement in this country. It has only provided the foundation upon which we can now build. Now we need to bolster the Afghan Government's ability to provide sound governance at all levels of government.

Ambassador Neumann recently said that this effort will take a long time, and if you ask my view it will take at least a decade and it will cost billions of dollars. I will add one more time that the Afghan Government will not be able to do it alone. The capacity of the government needs to be strengthened to deliver basic services to the population, and of course that begins with security.

These problems span Afghanistan, but they are especially prevalent in rural areas. Quality-of-life for millions of Afghan citizens, spread across a desolate land in isolated villages, has not advanced very much, and in many areas the Afghan Government is simply nowhere to be found.

This situation will get worse if it is not addressed. Right now more than half of the Afghan population is under the age of 19. That means millions of young Afghans will enter the labor force over the next decade, adding to an unemployment rate that is already hovering around 40 percent. I think we all know that the illicit drug trade is a significant hurdle to the expansion of the central government's authority and it undercuts the international community's and the government's efforts to rebuild the economy. It fuels provincial and local corruption. According to the International Monetary Fund, the Afghan opiate gross domestic product (GDP) in 2005 was $2.5 billion, roughly a third of what the country's licit GDP was.

The key to making progress is security. There are simply not enough properly trained, equipped, well-paid security forces and, even though the Afghan National Army continues to become larger, stronger, and more experienced, progress has been slow and there has been a lot less progress made in constructing an effective Afghan national police.

The Taliban has clearly built momentum over this past year. The level of violence that they have inflicted has increased significantly. The group has clearly become more aggressive. The Taliban almost certainly refocused its attacks in an attempt to stymie the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) efforts in southern Afghanistan.

Kabul's ability to provide sound governance to these kinds of areas will be key to preventing the Taliban and other extremists from intimidating the population into acquiescing with its activities. Kabul needs help because it lacks capacity, not because it lacks will, and not because it lacks popular support. I have spoken with President Karzai. He understands this and he recognizes his government's responsibilities.

Now Iraq. It provides another example of how the forces of change are reshaping the Muslim world. The deep fissures that I know you have talked about earlier today with General Abizaid and Ambassador Satterfield, they are among the groups fighting in Iraq and were not created by the coalition's overthrow of Saddam's dictatorship. Throughout Iraq's modern history there has been a Sunni minority ruling with the support of the military, and Saddam made this worse. His cult of personality tragically reinforced this pattern by using extreme violence to suppress the vast majority of Iraq's inhabitants. He killed tens of thousands of Kurds and Shiite in a short period from 1988 to 1991, brutally suppressing Shiite and Kurdish revolts. He ruled during his last years with vio-

lent repression and by favoring a small elite within the Sunni community centered on his hometown of Tikrit. He deliberately diverted resources to his power base, deprived much of the rest of the country of economic and educational opportunities, and in the case of the Shiite majority, basic religious liberty.

Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) completely upended the Saddamist state and his version, its version of Iraqi society in every respect—political, social, and economic. OIF instituted a sea of change in the way Iraq is governed. The dissolution of the Iraqi military, the Baath Party, swept away the tools that a small group in power had used to terrorize Iraq, and the subsequent vacuum of authority gave vent to deep-seated hatreds that had simmered for years beneath the surface in a totally brutalized society.

The Shiites today now focus on assuring that Iraq's new government reflects the will of the majority Shiite population, making sure that the Baathists never regain power. I know many of you have visited Iraq. I have too recently. This fear of a return to Baathism is almost palpable among Shiite elites.

Sunnis, on the other hand, view the Shiite as Iranian-controlled and the current government as predatory, or at least many Sunnis do. The Kurds for their part want to keep and strengthen the substantial autonomy they have exercised for more than a decade.

We need to note, though, that the Shiite and the Kurds and some Sunnis have crafted a democratic constitution that can provide the structure to allow Iraqis to settle their differences peacefully. For this to happen, Iraqi leaders of all stripes—Shiite, Sunni, Kurd—are going to have to flesh out that document with some of the activities that Ambassador Satterfield talked to you about this morning and do it in a way that all parties accept as legitimate.

We are all acutely aware that Iraq today is far from peaceful. Let me say that no single narrative is sufficient to explain all the violence we see in Iraq today. There remains in Iraq today an active insurgency. There remains in Iraq today a broad and vicious al Qaeda offensive targeting us and innocent Iraqis. In Iraq today there is criminality and lawlessness on a broad scale. In Iraq today there are rival militias competing for power.

Since the bombing of the al-Askari Mosque in Samarra last February, violence between Arab Shiite and Sunnis has grown and grown to such an extent that sectarian violence now presents the greatest immediate threat to Iraq's stability and future. Any Iraqi leader, no matter how skillful, is going to be hard-pressed to reconcile the divergent perspectives that I have mentioned, divergent perspectives that Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds bring to the table and also, unfortunately, very often bring to the streets, and to deal with that against a backdrop of an intentional al Qaeda campaign of almost satanic terror. To strengthen the common ground that all Iraqis can share, the government of Prime Minister Maliki will have to overcome formidable obstacles. Internal divisions, power struggles among the Shiite, make it difficult for Shiite leaders to take the actions that actually might ease Sunni fears. Radical Shiite militias and splinter groups stoke the violence, while brutal Sunni and al Qaeda attacks make even moderate Shiite question whether it is possible to reconcile.

The Iranian hand is stoking violence and supporting even competing Shiite factions. Even if the central government gains broader support from Iraq's various communities, implementing the reforms needed to improve life for all Iraqis will be difficult. Current violence is eating away at the state's ability to govern. The security forces are plagued by sectarianism. They have maintenance and logistics problems. Ministerial capacity, limited ministerial capacity, is limiting progress on key issues. The civilian bureaucracy is buffeted by inefficiency and partisan control.

Only if the Iraqi state asserts its authority across the board can the government in Baghdad begin to turn its goals into concrete realities. As I mentioned earlier, complicating these historic forces, difficult enough in their own right, is the pernicious effect of al Qaeda's presence in Iraq. Despite Zarqawi's death, al Qaeda continues to foment sectarian violence, seeks to expel coalition forces. An al Qaeda victory in Iraq would mean a fundamentalist state that shelters jihadists and serves as a launching pad for terror throughout the region and against our own Homeland.

Let me talk just for a minute, Mr. Chairman, more broadly about al Qaeda. It sees its war against us as a continuation from their perspective of decades, perhaps century-old, struggle to defend Islam from political and cultural domination by a Judaeo-Christian alliance that they now perceive as being led by the United States and Israel. Since bin Laden declared war on us in 1998, al Qaeda has focused primarily on attacks aimed at weakening and punishing the United States and its immediate allies. They see us as the main obstacle to realizing their vision of an extreme fundamentalist social and political order throughout the Muslim world.

Although the group has suffered significant losses since their attacks on our Homeland, it has shown resilience and it remains thoroughly dedicated to mounting new attacks on our Homeland and on our interests abroad. Understanding al Qaeda is essential to defeating it. With regard to the central organization headed by Osama bin Laden, in the face of our substantial success against it the group's cadre of seasoned, committed leaders has allowed it to remain fairly cohesive, it has allowed it to remain focused on its strategic objectives, again despite having lost a number of veterans over the years.

Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri continue to play a crucial role. They inspire jihadists and their very presence promotes unity. Their demise would not end the threat, but it probably would contribute to the unraveling of the central organization. The loss of a series of al Qaeda leaders since September 11 has been substantial, but it has also been mitigated by what is, frankly, a pretty deep bench of low-ranking personnel capable of stepping up to assume leadership positions.

Though a number of these people are new to the senior management, they are not new to jihad. My point here, Senator, is this threat has taken a long time to build; it will take some time to unravel it. These new leaders average over 40 years of age and 2 decades of involvement in global jihadism.

The second critical factor is their physical safe haven along the Afghan-Pakistan border. That safe haven gives them the physical and even psychological space they need to meet, train, plan, and

prepare new attacks. Many locals in that region have ties to al Qaeda dating back to the 1980s wars against the Soviets and rooting them out from that region is complicated by rugged terrain and a local culture that is intensely suspicious of and at times hostile to outsiders, including their own government's forces.

A third important factor is Osama bin Laden's extremist ideology and strategic vision, which continues to attract recruits, inspire like-minded groups, help our enemies weather setbacks. In addition to planning attacks of its own, al Qaeda supports terrorist activities by other groups and seeks to encourage Muslims worldwide to take up the cause. It spreads its propaganda through taped statements, some of them with very high sophisticated production values.

As a western nation, we have limited tools to counteract that kind of propaganda. We need to make sure our own message is clear, but we also need to work with our Muslim allies.

Finally, I need to emphasize that the asymmetric nature of al Qaeda's style of warfare gives it certain advantages. Our open societies present an almost endless source of targets and the enemy has demonstrated its ruthlessness through a willingness to attack the innocent.

Mr. Chairman, in all aspects of today's global struggle, and the three pieces I have mentioned—Iraq, Afghanistan, and al Qaeda—are all intricately and intimately interrelated—we are dealing with deep historical forces and it will require patience and wisdom as well as just power to deal with them. This will unfortunately be a long struggle.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Hayden follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY GEN. MICHAEL V. HAYDEN, USAF

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee: The overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and of Saddam Husayn in Iraq as well as our determined pursuit of al Qaeda worldwide have inaugurated a new era of risk and opportunity for the United States in its engagement with much of the Muslim world. We are now face-to-face with whole societies which are in profound and volatile transitions and whose fate will directly affect the security of the United States. With U.S. forces deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan and with the United States leading the global response to the threat of terrorism, we are now actors to an unprecedented degree in supporting states—especially Iraq and Afghanistan—which are attempting to create and sustain a stable new order.

- Against this endeavor significant new forces are arrayed. Political and ethno-sectarian forces previously subordinated are now competing to shape the identity of states. Although some of this competition is taking place within the legitimate democratic process, in other cases radical Islamic groups—including terrorists and insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan—are able to preempt governments and eclipse more moderate actors.
- At the regional level, opponents of the United States—like Iran—are seeking to capitalize on the instability of this transitional period to expand their own influence and contest the vision sustained by the United States and its allies.

AFGHANISTAN

With these trends in mind, let me begin by focusing on Afghanistan where we have made important progress in the face of substantial challenges.

Afghanistan's future depends heavily on the international community's willingness to continue delivering concrete resources to the Afghan Government. It depends equally on international willingness to help protect the Afghan Government

against the Taliban and other extremists who are waging a bloody insurgency in the south and east of the country.

Neither of these tasks will be simple, and neither will be completed soon, but the past few years have been a story of success for the Afghan Government and people, as well as the international community. The country made remarkable political progress through the completion of the 2001 Bonn Accord—the political roadmap for rebuilding the country. The international community and the Afghan Government, under the leadership of President Karzai, have built national-level political institutions—including a new constitution, legitimate presidential elections, and a democratically elected parliament.

- These are all remarkable achievements given the ruinous decades of war Afghanistan experienced prior to 2001.

The success of the past few years hasn't lessened the need for international involvement in the country—it has only provided a foundation upon which to build. Now, we need to bolster the Afghan Government's ability to provide sound governance at all levels of government. Ambassador Neuman recently said the effort would take a long time—in my view, at least a decade—and cost many billions of dollars. I would add that the Afghan Government won't be able to do it alone.

The capacity of the government needs to be strengthened to deliver basic services to the population—especially security. The problems span Afghanistan, but they are especially prevalent in rural areas. The quality-of-life for millions of Afghans—spread across desolate land and isolated villages—has not advanced and in many areas the Afghan Government is nowhere to be found.

- The social situation will get worse if it is not addressed. Right now, about 55 percent of the Afghan population is under the age of 19; millions of young Afghans will enter the labor force over the next 5–10 years, adding to an unemployment burden that is already hovering around 40 percent.

The illicit drug trade is a significant hurdle to the expansion of central government authority and it undercuts efforts to rebuild the economy. The drug trade also fuels provincial and local corruption. According to the International Monetary Fund, the Afghan opiate gross domestic product (GDP) in 2005 was $2.6 billion—roughly a third of the country's $7.3 billion licit GDP.

Key to making progress is bolstering security. Even in areas of the country where the insurgency is not active, security is falling short.

- There are not enough properly trained, equipped, or well-paid security forces. Even though the Afghan National Army continues to become larger, stronger, and more experienced, progress has been slow and little progress has been made in constructing an effective Afghan National Police force.

The Taliban has built momentum this year. The level of violence associated with the insurgency has increased significantly and the group has become more aggressive than in years past. The Taliban almost certainly refocused its attacks in an attempt to stymie the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) efforts in southern Afghanistan.

- Kabul's ability to provide sound governance and badly needed aid to these areas will be key to preventing the Taliban and other extremists from intimidating the population into acquiescing in its activities.
- Kabul needs help because it lacks capacity—not because it lacks political will or lacks support. President Karzai understands this and recognizes his government's responsibility.

IRAQ

Iraq provides another example of how the forces of change are reshaping the Muslim world. The deep fissures among the groups fighting in Iraq were not created by the coalition's overthrow of Saddam's dictatorship. Throughout Iraq's modern history, a Sunni minority ruled with the support of the military; Saddam's cult of personality tragically reinforced this pattern by using extreme violence to suppress the vast majority of Iraq's inhabitants. Saddam killed tens of thousands of Kurds and Shiite in the short period from 1988, when he launched the Anfal campaign against the Kurds, to 1991, when he brutally suppressed Shiite and Kurdish revolts:

- Saddam ruled during his last years through violent repression and by favoring a small elite within the Sunni community from his home region of Tikrit—to the dismay of other Sunnis.
- Saddam deliberately diverted resources to his powerbase, depriving much of the rest of the country of economic and educational opportunities, and in the case of the Shiite majority, basic religious liberty.

Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) completely upended the Saddamist state and Iraqi society. In every respect—political, social, and economic—OIF instituted a sea change in the way Iraq is governed. The dissolution of the Iraqi military and the Baath party swept away the tools that a small group in power had used to terrorize Iraq, and the subsequent vacuum of authority gave vent to deep seated hatreds that had simmered for years in a brutalized society:

- The Shiite now focus on assuring that Iraq's new government reflects the will of the majority Shiite population and making sure the Baathists never regain power. This fear of a return to Baathism is almost palpable among Shiite elites. Sunnis view the Shiite as Iranian controlled and the current government as predatory. The Kurds, for their part, want to keep and strengthen the substantial autonomy they have exercised since 1991.
- It is also noteworthy, however, that the Shiite and the Kurds, with some Sunni participation, crafted a democratic constitution that could provide a structure to allow Iraqis to settle their differences peacefully. For this to happen, Iraqi leaders—Shiite, Sunnis, and Kurds alike—will need to flesh out the document through extensive legislation in such a way that all parties, and particularly the Sunni public, accept as legitimate.

We are all acutely aware that Iraq today is very far from peaceful. No single narrative is sufficient to explain all the violence in Iraq today. There remains in Iraq today an active insurgency; a broad al Qaeda offensive targeting use and Iraqis; criminality and lawlessness on a broad scale; rival militias competing for power. Since the bombing of the al-Askari Mosque in Samarra last February, however, violence between Arab Shiite and Sunnis has grown to such an extent that sectarian violence now presents the greatest immediate threat to Iraq's stability and future.

- Last year violence was mostly limited to Sunni insurgent attacks on coalition and Iraqi targets, but now Shiite militia attacks against Sunnis and coalition forces are an integral part of the pattern of violence.
- The Kurds live in a fairly homogeneous region under self-government. Yet in the seamline where Kurds, Arabs, and others meet, we see worrying signs—such as a recent surge in violence in the city of Kirkuk—that the legacy of Iraq's repressive past continues to shape both the Arab/Kurd and the Sunni/Shiite fault lines in Iraqi society.

Any Iraqi leader, no matter how skillful, would be hard pressed to reconcile the divergent perspectives that Shiite, Sunnis, and Kurds bring to the table—and also to the streets. To strengthen the common ground that all Iraqis can share, the government of Prime Minister Maliki will have to overcome several formidable obstacles:

- Internal divisions and power struggles among the Shiite make it difficult for Shiite leaders to take the actions that might ease Sunni fears of domination. Radical Shiite militias and splinter groups stoke the violence, while brutal Sunni attacks make even moderate Shiite question whether it is possible to reconcile the Sunnis to the new Shiite-dominated power structures. The Iranian hand is stoking violence and supporting even competing Shiite factions.
- The Sunnis are even more divided. Many see violent opposition as the only way to overcome the democratic rules that, due to demographic realities, place a ceiling on Sunni political influence.

Even if the central government gains broader support from Iraq's communities, implementing the reforms needed to improve life for all Iraqis will be extremely difficult. Iraq's endemic violence is eating away at the state's ability to govern. The security forces are plagued by sectarianism and severe maintenance and logistics problems; inadequate ministerial capacity is limiting progress on key issues; and the civilian bureaucracy, buffeted by corruption, inefficiency and partisan control, is not currently up to the challenge of providing better services to the Iraqi people. Only if the Iraqi state asserts its authority across the board can the government in Baghdad begin to turn its goals into concrete realities.

Complicating these historic forces is the pernicious effect of al Qaeda's presence in Iraq. Despite Zarqawi's death, al Qaeda continues to foment sectarian violence and seeks to expel coalition forces. An al Qaeda victory in Iraq would mean a fundamentalist state that shelters jihadists and serves as a launching pad for terrorist operations throughout the region—and in the United States.

Turning next to al Qaeda . . .

Al Qaeda sees its war against the West as the continuation of a decades, perhaps centuries-old, struggle to defend Islam from political and cultural domination by a Judeo-Christian alliance now led by the United States and Israel. Since Osama bin

Laden declared war on the United States in 1998, al Qaeda has focused primarily on attacks aimed at weakening and punishing the United States and its immediate allies.

- The group sees the United States as the main obstacle to realizing its vision of an extreme fundamentalist social and political order throughout the Muslim world.
- Although the group has suffered significant losses since September 11, it is resilient and thoroughly dedicated to mounting new attacks on the U.S. Homeland and our interests abroad.

Understanding the source of al Qaeda's resilience is key to defeating it. With regard to the central organization headed by bin Laden, that resilience stems from several factors:

First, the group's cadre of seasoned, committed leaders has allowed it to remain fairly cohesive and stay focused on its strategic objectives—despite having lost a number of important veterans over the years.

- Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri continue to play a crucial role in inspiring jihadists and promoting unity. Their demise would not spell the end of the threat, but probably would contribute to the unraveling of the central al Qaeda organization.
- The loss of a series of veteran al Qaeda leaders since September 11 has been mitigated by the group's "deep bench" of lower-ranking personnel capable of stepping up to assume leadership responsibilities. Although a number of individuals are new to senior management in al Qaeda, they are not new to jihad: they average over 40 years of age and nearly 2 decades of involvement in jihad.

A second critical factor is the group's physical safehaven in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area. This safehaven gives al Qaeda the physical—and psychological—space needed to meet, train, expand its networks, and prepare new attacks.

- Many locals have ties to al Qaeda dating back to the 1980s war against the Soviets in Afghanistan.
- Rooting out al Qaeda elements there is complicated by the rugged terrain and a local culture that is intensely suspicious of—and, at times, overtly hostile to—outsiders, including government security forces.
- The safehaven not only gives al Qaeda and the Taliban a venue for terrorist plotting, but also serves as a jump-off point for its guerrilla forays into Afghanistan.

A third important factor is Osama bin Laden's extremist ideology and strategic vision, which continue to attract recruits, inspire like-minded groups, and help our enemies weather setbacks and reconcile themselves to a long struggle.

- In addition to planning attacks of its own, al Qaeda supports terrorist activities by other groups and seeks to encourage Muslims worldwide to take up the cause of violent jihad.
- Al Qaeda spreads its propaganda through taped statements—sometimes featuring relatively sophisticated production values—as well as books and websites.
- As a western nation, we have limited tools to counteract this propaganda. We need to make sure our own message is clear and we need to work with our Muslim allies.

Finally, it's important to note that the asymmetric nature of al Qaeda's style of warfare gives it certain advantages.

- Our open society presents an almost endless source of targets, and the enemy has demonstrated its ruthlessness through a willingness to attack civilians—including other Muslims—a preference for spectacular, high-casualty operations, and its own adherents' desire for martyrdom.
- As September 11 showed, even a handful of committed attackers, with relatively modest resources, can inflict terrible damage.

Mr. Chairman, in all aspects of today's global struggle, we are dealing with deep historical forces and it will require patience and wisdom as well as power for us to deal with them. This will be a long struggle.

Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, General.

General Maples.

STATEMENT OF LTG MICHAEL D. MAPLES, USA, DIRECTOR, DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

General MAPLES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee. I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I have submitted a statement for the record and I have shortened that statement for my opening statement, but would be more than pleased to address the contents of my statement that I have submitted.

Chairman WARNER. Both statements will be submitted into the record.

General MAPLES. Thank you, sir.

The testimony that I am about to present represents what we know and judge to be the state of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and is the product of the dedicated men and women of the DIA. Many of them today are executing their missions in remote and dangerous areas in Iraq and Afghanistan. I thank them for their service and the exceptional work that they are doing for our Nation.

I would also like to thank you for your continued support of them and for your continued support of the DIA.

In Iraq, the conflict is unquestionably complex and difficult. The fight to define post-Saddam Iraq has been primarily an intra-Arab struggle to determine how power and authority will be distributed. Iraqi nationalists, Baathists, former military, angry Sunni, jihadists, foreign fighters, and al Qaeda provide an overlapping, complex, and multipolar Sunni insurgent and terrorist environment. Shiite militias, Shiite militants, and extensive criminal activity further contribute to violence, instability, and insecurity.

We have seen some recent developments that give us hope for progress. They include the verdict against Saddam Hussein, efforts to address problems associated with the deBaathification, increased cooperation between Sunni Arab tribes and the government in al Anbar Province, arrest warrants for Ministry of Interior personnel accused of abuses, and the expulsion of rogue elements from al-Sadr's movement.

We note the continued development and increased capability of Iraqi security forces (ISFs) and the police. The ISFs will meet manning, training, and equipment milestones and improved unit capabilities. Nevertheless, the ISFs will remain dependent on coalition support. It will also be essential that ISF leaders reject militia influence and instill discipline in their formations to gain legitimacy with the population.

The conflict has changed in character, in scope, and the dynamics and is increasingly a sectarian struggle for power and the right to define Iraq's future identity. The perception of unchecked violence is creating an atmosphere of fear and hardening sectarianism which is empowering militias and vigilante groups and reducing confidence in government and security forces.

Despite ongoing Iraqi government and coalition operations against terrorists, Sunni Arab insurgent groups, and Shiite militias, violence in Iraq continues to increase in scope, complexity, and lethality. The Sunni Arab-based insurgency has gained strength and capacity despite political progress and security force developments.

Attacks by terrorist groups like al Qaeda in Iraq account for only a fraction of the insurgent violence. Yet the high-profile nature of these operations have a disproportionate impact on the population and on perceptions of stability. Al Qaeda in Iraq has capitalized on the current cycle of sectarian violence. Its strategy has fueled by appealing to perceptions that its operations are defending Sunni interests. Al Qaeda in Iraq also poses a threat outside Iraq as it is the only terrorist group in the country with known aspirations for external attacks.

Baghdad remains the center of the conflict as Shiite and Sunni Arabs fight for territorial control and political influence. Sectarian attacks constitute most of the violence in the mixed ethnicity areas in and around the capital, while the coalition remains the primary target in the Shiite south and the Sunni west. Recent coalition and ISF operations in Baghdad have achieved limited success. In August levels of violence temporarily decreased, primarily in Sunni Arab neighborhoods. However, as armed groups adapted to the coalition presence and the ISFs were unable to exert authority once coalition forces moved on, attacks returned to and even surpassed pre-operational levels.

The Iraqi government is making progress, but is likely to remain fragile owing to different challenges, lack of experience and capacity, mistrust, and constitutional constraints. Iraqi government officials continue attempts to achieve national reconciliation, but attacks against civilians, a key driver of ethnosectarian conflict, continue to increase.

Sectarian differences limit the effectiveness of government as groups maintain a hard-line stance on contentious issues. Shiite militias are a growing impediment to stability. The Ministry of Interior and the police are heavily infiltrated and militias often operate under the protection or approval of Iraqi police to attack suspected Sunni insurgents and Sunni civilians.

DIA judges a coalition presence is the primary counter to a breakdown in central authority, which would have grave consequences for the people of Iraq, stability in the region, and U.S. strategic interests. No major political figure in Iraq has endorsed the notion of civil war or partition and most political and religious leaders continue to restrain their communities. Moreover, DIA judges that Iraqi Arabs retain a strong sense of national identity and most Iraqis recall a past in which sectarian identity did not have the significance that it has today.

Although leaders across the political spectrum who are participating in the government continue to talk and search for a positive way forward, the challenges to bringing stability and security with a cohesive, unified, and effective government remain significant.

Turning to Afghanistan, in Afghanistan the Taliban-led insurgency, aided by al Qaeda, is incapable of directly threatening the central government and expanding its support networks and areas of influence beyond strongholds in the Pashtun south and east. Despite having absorbed heavy combat losses in 2006, the insurgency has strengthened its capabilities and influence with its core base of Pashtun communities. If a sustained international military and Afghan security presence throughout the volatile Pashtun south and east is not established alongside credible civilian administra-

tions, central government control over these areas will be restricted.

In 2007, insurgents are likely to sustain their use of visible, aggressive, and lethal tactics. Al Qaeda remains committed to reestablishing a fundamentalist Islamic government in Afghanistan. In 2006 al Qaeda appears to be attempting to reinvigorate its operations from safe havens in the Afghan-Pakistan border region.

Since 2001 the Afghan Government has successfully established national level political institutions by drafting a new constitution, holding a legitimate presidential election, and creating a democratically elected national assembly. However, local government institutions receive limited resources from Kabul and struggle to provide effective governance. Unrealized expectations at local levels are likely contributing to an erosion of support for the government. Nevertheless, President Karzai remains the most powerful political figure in Afghanistan and retains the widest support.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee, thank you again for this opportunity to discuss with you our assessment of the current security situations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our Nation is engaged in a long war against terrorism and violent extremism. Providing support to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and civilians engaged in fighting insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan and the global war on terrorism is our first priority. Thank you for your continuing support.

[The prepared statement of General Maples follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY LTG MICHAEL D. MAPLES, USA

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. The testimony I am about to present represents what we know and judge to be the state of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and is the product of the dedicated men and women of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). These outstanding military and civilian intelligence professionals provide our warfighters, defense planners, and national security policymakers with information and knowledge essential to our efforts around the world, but especially to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many of them are executing their missions in remote and dangerous areas of Iraq and Afghanistan. I thank them for their service and the exceptional work they are doing for our Nation. I would also like to thank you for your continued support of the DIA.

IRAQ

We have seen some recent developments that give hope for progress. These include the verdict against Saddam Hussein, efforts to address problems associated with de-Baathification, increased cooperation between Sunni Arab tribes and the government in al Anbar Province, arrest warrants for Ministry of Interior personnel accused of abuses, and the expulsion of radicals from Muqtada al-Sadr's movement.

We note the continued development and increased capability of the Iraqi security forces (ISF) and police. The ISF will meet manning, training, and equipment milestones, improving unit capabilities. Nevertheless, the ISF will remain dependent on coalition support. It will also be essential that ISF leaders reject militia influence and instill discipline in their formations to gain legitimacy with the population.

The economy has seen moderate growth despite the security situation, with continued improvement in basic services, economic reforms, and institution-building.

The conflict is unquestionably complex and difficult. The fight to define post-Saddam Iraq has been primarily an intra-Arab struggle to determine how power and authority will be distributed. Iraqi nationalists, ex-Baathists, former military, angry Sunni, Jihadists, foreign fighters, and al Qaeda provide an overlapping, complex and multi-polar Sunni insurgent and terrorist environment. Shiite militias and Shiite militants, some Kurdish Peshmerga, and extensive criminal activity further contribute to violence, instability, and insecurity.

The U.S. presence obscured the true nature of this fight between and among competing groups for power as observers focused on insurgent attacks and rhetoric directed at the United States. Today, DIA assesses the conditions for the further deterioration of security and instability exists within this ongoing, violent struggle for power. Although a significant breakdown of central authority has not occurred, Iraq has moved closer to this possibility primarily because of weak governance, increasing security challenges, and no agreement on a national compact.

The conflict has changed in character, scope, and dynamics and is increasingly a sectarian struggle for power and the right to define Iraq's future identity. Overall attacks averaged approximately 180 per day in October 2006, up from approximately 170 the previous month, and 70 in January 2006. Daily average of attacks against ISF in October more than doubled the number reported in January, approximately 30 compared to 13. Daily average of attacks on civilians in October was four times higher than reported in January, approximately 40 compared to 10. The perception of unchecked violence is creating an atmosphere of fear and hardening sectarianism which is empowering militias and vigilante groups, hastening middle-class exodus, and shaking confidence in government and security forces. Sectarian violence, a weak central government, problems in basic services, and high unemployment are causing more Iraqis to turn to sectarian groups, militias, and insurgents for basic needs, imperiling Iraqi unity.

Despite ongoing Iraqi government and coalition operations against terrorists, Sunni Arab insurgent groups, and Shiite militias, violence in Iraq continues to increase in scope, complexity, and lethality. The Sunni Arab-based insurgency has gained strength and capacity despite political progress and security force developments. Nationwide, insurgents still conduct most attacks against the coalition and ISF and retain the resources, capabilities, and support to sustain high levels of violence.

Attacks by terrorist groups account for only a fraction of insurgent violence throughout Iraq, yet the high-profile nature of these operations and the tactics they use have a disproportionate impact on the population and on perceptions of stability. Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), formerly led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and currently headed by Abu Ayyub al-Masri, is the largest and most active of the Iraqi-based terrorist groups. AQI's targeting strategies have not changed significantly in the wake of al-Zarqawi's death on June 7, and attacks against Iraqi government targets and coalition forces continue apace. In addition, AQI is one of the most visible perpetrators of anti-Shiite attacks in Iraq—a hallmark of its strategy since 2003—and has capitalized on the current cycle of sectarian violence by increasing perceptions that its operations are defending Sunni interests. AQI also poses a threat outside Iraq, as it is the only terrorist group in the country with known aspirations for external attacks, including possibly against targets in Europe and the U.S. Homeland. Because of his involvement with al Qaeda-linked terrorists since the early 1980s, Abu Ayyub may have increased ties to al Qaeda senior leaders; these could enhance AQI's external attack capabilities. AQI operates with relative freedom in Iraq's Sunni-dominated territories, and as long as this remains true, the group will pose a threat to Iraq's internal stability and to Western interests abroad. Ansar al-Sunna, the second-most prominent terrorist group in Iraq, also poses a threat to Iraqi stability and has longstanding ties to AQI and external al Qaeda elements.

Baghdad remains the center of the conflict as Shiite and Sunni Arabs fight for territorial control and political influence. Sectarian attacks constitute most of the violence in the mixed-ethnicity areas in and around the capital, while the coalition remains the primary target in the Shiite south and Sunni west.

Recent coalition and ISF operations in Baghdad have achieved limited success. In August, levels of violence temporarily decreased, primarily in Sunni Arab neighborhoods. However, as armed groups adapted to the coalition presence, and the ISF was unable to exert authority once coalition forces moved on, attacks returned to and even surpassed preoperational levels. Among a range of factors, the government's reluctance to conduct operations in Shiite militia strongholds also decreased the effectiveness and potential for success of the Baghdad efforts.

The Iraqi government of Prime Minister Maliki is making progress but is likely to remain fragile owing to very difficult challenges, lack of experience and capacity, mistrust, and constitutional constraints. Iraqi government officials continue attempts to achieve national reconciliation, but attacks against civilians, a key driver of ethno-sectarian conflict, continue to increase. Political leaders' inability to resolve key issues such as federalism, de-Baathfication, amnesty for insurgents, and militia integration also contribute to continued Sunni Arab discontent, fueling support for terrorist and insurgent groups. Sectarian difference limit the effectiveness of government as groups maintain a hardline stance on contentious issues.

Shiite militias are a growing impediment to stability. The Ministry of Interior and the police are heavily infiltrated by members of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRIs), Badr Corps and Muqtada al-Sadr's Jaysh al-Mahdi. The Jaysh al-Mahdi often operates under the protection or approval of Iraqi police to detain, torture, and kill suspected Sunni insurgents and innocent Sunni civilians. Sadr continues to refuse any discussion of disbanding his militia. Some clandestine Jaysh al-Mahdi cells likely operate outside Sadr's direct guidance and conduct operations against the coalition.

The Iraqi economy has experienced moderate growth despite the security situation, which continues to impede and increase overall costs of reconstruction. However, the inability to realize significant improvements in the oil and fuels sector and in electricity production and distribution creates drag on the economy while undermining the average Iraqi citizens' support for the central government and the coalition.

DIA judges the continued coalition presence as the primary counter to a breakdown in central authority, which would have grave consequences for the people of Iraq, stability in the region, and U.S. strategic interests. No major political figure in Iraq has endorsed the notion of civil war or partition, and most political and religious leaders continue to restrain their communities. Moreover, DIA judges that Iraqi Arabs retain a strong sense of national identity and that most Iraqis recall a past in which sectarian identity did not have the significance it does today. Although leaders across the political spectrum who are participating in the government continue to talk and search for a positive way forward, the challenges to bringing stability and security with a cohesive, unified, and effective government remain significant.

AFGHANISTAN

In Afghanistan the Taliban-led insurgency, aided by al Qaeda, is incapable of directly threatening the central government and expanding its resilient support networks and areas of influence beyond strongholds in the Pashtun south and east as long as international force levels are sustained at current levels. Nonetheless, DIA judges that, despite having absorbed heavy combat losses in 2006, the insurgency has strengthened its capabilities and influence with its core base of Pashtun communities. Violence this year is likely to be twice as high as the violence level seen in 2005. Insurgents have significantly increased their use of suicide operations. If a sustained international military and Afghan security presence throughout the volatile Pashtun south and east is not established alongside credible civil administrations, central government control over these areas will be substantially restricted. In 2007, insurgents are likely to sustain their use of more visible, aggressive, and lethal tactics in their continued effort to undermine the willingness of the international community to support military and reconstruction operations in Afghanistan and to highlight the weakness of the central government.

Al Qaeda remains committed to reestablishing a fundamentalist Islamic government in Afghanistan and has become increasingly successful in defining Afghanistan as a critical battleground against the west and its regional allies. In 2006, although the Taliban continues to drive the insurgency, al Qaeda once again appears to be attempting to reinvigorate its operations in the country from safe-havens in the Afghan-Pakistan border region. These efforts are characterized by an evolution in al Qaeda's increasingly cooperative relationship with insurgent networks. Without a fundamental, comprehensive change in the permissiveness of the border region, al Qaeda will remain a dangerous threat to security in Afghanistan and to U.S. interests around the globe.

Since 2001, the Afghan Government has successfully established national-level political institutions by drafting a new constitution, holding a legitimate presidential election, and creating a democratically elected national assembly. However, local government institutions receive limited resources from Kabul and struggle to provide effective governance. The Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police are also struggling to promote security, particularly in the volatile south and east. They remain hindered by a shortage of skilled personnel, tribal and ethnic rivalries, and corruption. Nearly 5 years after the Taliban's fall, many Afghans expected the situation to be better by now and are beginning to blame President Karzai. These unrealized expectations are likely contributing to an erosion of support for his administration. Nevertheless, President Karzai remains the most powerful political figure in Afghanistan and retains the widest body of support. He will need concrete successes in the months ahead to convince Afghans his administration still has momentum and to provide an effective counter to Taliban advances.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, Senator Levin, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to discuss with you our assessment of the current security situations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our Nation is engaged in a long war against terrorism and violent extremism. Providing support to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines engaged in insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan and the global war on terrorism is our first priority. Thank you for your continuing support for the men and women of the DIA.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, gentlemen, for excellent opening statements.

I would start with a question and I will direct it to both of you. There are discussions today, and I think it is important that discussions be held and they are being held at all levels of our executive branch here today, on the very subjects that each of you have covered. Part of those discussions relates to looking at the possibility of having some form of negotiations with both Syria and Iran. My question to you is what can you advise us with respect to the viability of persons or an entity of government in each of those countries that can, in a responsible way, engage in such discussions should they be undertaken?

General Hayden?

General HAYDEN. Senator, that is a difficult question and one on which a lot of things will hinge. If I can just perhaps characterize what we view to be the issues in Iraq to the west and to the east—Syria and Iran. As I said in my opening statement, an awful lot of the issues in Iraq are inherent to the structures of Iraqi society and their history. That said, the problems there are made worse by activities done by Iraq's neighbors, particularly Iran. I mentioned specifically in my comment that the Iranian hand appears to be powerful and I would offer the view it appears to be growing. Iranian ambitions in Iraq seem to be expanding.

With regard to Syria, it is sometimes hard to judge the distinction between incompetence and malevolence with regard to what goes on in Syria that may affect the situation in Iraq. Clearly both governments could do more. That I think is clear. If our dialogue with them could convince them to do more and convince them that their interests are not served by a fracturing of Iraq, then I would say that might be useful.

Again, it is a complex question. It is fraught with other policy considerations. Talking to Iran about Iraq cannot be isolated, I believe, from the broader nuclear question. Talking to Syria about Iraq cannot be isolated from Lebanon, Hezbollah, and the Palestinian territories. So there are a lot of things to balance there.

Right now, the positions of both governments are not useful, particularly the Iranians. But an awful lot of what is going on in Iraq is endemic to the circumstances in Iraq, Senator.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

General Maples?

General MAPLES. Sir, I believe that we do have a regional issue that needs to be addressed, and I believe that there are activities that are currently undertaken by both of those countries, Iran and Syria, that have an adverse impact on what we are trying to achieve in Iraq. The activities range and have been discussed in the past in terms of support for militias within Iraq and also the transiting of foreign fighters and members of al Qaeda. So that ter-

ritory and activities that are conducted in those two nations are having a significant impact on the conflict.

Your question was the viability of discussions with persons in those two countries and I believe that in both cases the governments of those two countries are very centralized and that the control of the central governments in each of those cases would have an ability to impact the activities going on within their countries and to influence the outcomes in Iraq as well.

Chairman WARNER. A question to both of you. I detect, and I am just going to speak for myself, there is a strong resolve both in the executive branch and Congress as we work our way through a matrix of options here with regard to possible change, substantial change in strategy. There is a resolve to try very hard to continue to seek the goal of enabling the government in Iraq to fully grow in strength and size and influence such that it can exercise the full range of sovereignty, and that includes of course their own personal security, of their nation.

But should that fail despite the best attempts by ourselves and other nations, what would you project as being the consequences, General Hayden, as it relates to the region and indeed that part of the world?

General HAYDEN. Yes, Senator. I would judge it catastrophic, first of all for the people of Iraq, because I think it would plunge them even deeper into chaos and the road out of it would be longer and more steep. With regard to the region, it would be almost as bad as it would be for the people of Iraq, because I think you would see a fracturing of Iraqi society along some of those seam lines that I suggested earlier. The temptation of neighbors to intervene may become irresistible, and, of course that could prompt other sorts of activity.

With regard to us, failure in Iraq, failure to create a viable Iraqi state, I think would embolden the worst of our enemies, certainly al Qaeda. It would provide them with a safe haven rivaling the one they had in Afghanistan prior to October 2001. I think it would also embolden other adversaries in the region, particularly Iran, whom I would suggest to you right now, not totally warranted, seems to be conducting a foreign policy with a feeling of almost dangerous triumphalism. I think that would make it even worse. So I do not see any happy outcomes that would come from our not being successful.

Chairman WARNER. You certainly did not suggest there would be any happy outcome. I think you very carefully summarized your own professional opinion.

Now, General Maples?

General MAPLES. Sir, I would make four points. The first is that we would embolden the jihadist movement throughout the world. They would see this as a victory and would move on to other areas that would threaten our national interest.

The second is, it would establish Iran, I believe, as a regional power. That would not be in the best interest of the United States.

The third is, I think there would be a great economic consequence potentially to this as well, most specifically from the threat to the production of oil and the impact that would have on economies.

The fourth point I would make is that I think it would also bring about instability in other countries in the region.

Chairman WARNER. My last question, again to both of you. The most difficult challenge in many respects in the Afghan situation—and you indicated a decade, General, if I understood you, to bring about a stabilized country in terms of internal security such that their economy can begin to prosper and care for their people. But therein requires a resolution of this drug situation, which by any reasonable estimate is better than half of their gross national product, which is permeating throughout not only that region, the ill effects of it, but much of Europe, who apparently receive a lot of the drugs.

Who is doing what, and what must be done if it is not being done to begin in a reasonable period of time eliminate that aspect of the restoration of the nation of Afghanistan?

General HAYDEN. Sir, I think you characterize the problem quite correctly. It is a massive portion currently of the real GDP of Afghanistan, and unfortunately that may not be by explicit choice, but many people in Afghanistan are pushed into that as the only viable economic opportunity they might have. So I would suggest to a first order rebuilding the infrastructure and providing the people of Afghanistan with alternative means of livelihood, be it farming, extraction industries, and the like. That will require some investment on our part.

I have talked to the Afghan leadership in a recent visit. They understand this. But it is almost the devil's own problem, Senator. Right now the issue is stability and a powerful anti-drug program going into, say, Helmand Province, which is probably the worst province there is right now in terms of opium production. Going in there and attacking the drug trade actually feeds the instability that you want to overcome. That is not a reason for not doing it. It just makes it even more challenging.

Senator, there are a few other notes I would add, but perhaps in closed session I could add some of the other activities.

Chairman WARNER. General Maples?

General MAPLES. Sir, I would agree with General Hayden. The real issue is the conflict that you have in terms of the economics at the local level and what alternative crops, what alternative means of subsistence you could provide to the local populace. Attacking the problem directly in terms of the drug trade at the same time would undermine the attempt to gain popular support in the same regions—a real conflict, I think.

In terms of your question, there is a program that is going on in terms of ground eradication and there are several institutions that have been put together by the government of Afghanistan in order to try to begin to address the drug problem. There are related issues, of course, associated with drugs. It goes into corruption, it goes into support to the Taliban. So there are a number of issues that are associated there.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Levin, I wonder if we might recognize Senator Reed to recognize a distinguished group of visitors we have here.

Senator REED. Mr. Chairman, I notice that we have some West Point cadets here, who are probably here——

Senator MCCAIN. I object. [Laughter.]

Senator REED.—who are probably here to observe my classmate, General Maples, who is a much more positive role model. I am pleased that you are here, and just listen to what General Maples says and you will learn a great deal.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. I wonder if you are willing to give us a hint as to your age, as to when you were in West Point?

Senator REED. When I was in West Point?

Senator LEVIN. Yes, what years?

Senator REED. 1967 to 1971. I know General Maples looks much younger, but this job ages you a lot. [Laughter.]

Senator LEVIN. Congratulations to you. It is great to have you all here, cadets.

General Maples, you have said in your statement that violence in Iraq continues to increase in scope, complexity, and lethality, and that the Sunni Arab-based insurgency has gained strength and capacity. Has that been true over the last few months?

General MAPLES. Sir, it has been true over the last few months. We saw in the summer the violence levels starting to increase substantially. We certainly saw that, and in my statement for the record I provided some statistics that showed the levels of violence that we saw, particularly in the August, September, and October timeframes. Post-Ramadan we have seen a slight decrease in the levels of violence, but we are only about halfway through the month right now. We are seeing a bigger difference this month than we did see in the last 2 months.

Senator LEVIN. What is your current assessment of the course that we are on? Are we on a course of success currently in Iraq?

General MAPLES. A very difficult question because it is a very complex issue. There are many variables that will determine our success or failure in Iraq. I would say that I think we are making progress in terms of ISFs, which I think are key. But we need to empower them to a greater degree. We do have to disarm the militias. I think there are many areas of the country that we still need to gain control of, and I think that there are a number of problems that are associated with reconciliation between the parties that need to be addressed directly.

So it is a very tough course ahead of us.

Senator LEVIN. Can you give us an assessment as to the current course, as to whether or not on balance, it is leading upwards, sideways, or downwards?

General MAPLES. Sir, I think we are making progress, but the progress is slow right now. I think we still have the opportunity for success, but it will be a very difficult process to get us to where we want to be, both from a security standpoint and from a political standpoint, in Iraq.

Senator LEVIN. Is a political settlement by the Iraqis essential in your judgment, if failure is to be avoided in Iraq?

General MAPLES. Absolutely. I believe that in fact the parties have to be brought together and it has to be a political approach and the government of Iraq has to be in the lead in doing that.

Senator LEVIN. What are the pressure points on that government to do that? Why have they so far not reached settlement over resources, over power, over the militias? We have now had 3½ years of losses there. What can be brought to bear? What pressure can be brought to bear on the political leaders to make them carry out compromises that you just described they need to make?

General MAPLES. Sir, I think continuing with the prime minister is certainly essential to this process. I think his recent move to realign his cabinet to bring in leaders who he has greater faith in, who can make a difference, is a substantial move forward. I believe that there are a number of matters related, as I mentioned, to reconciliation, in particular with respect to the Sunni Arab population, that need to be addressed.

Senator LEVIN. They need to be, but what is going to press, what is going to produce the change in the political leadership to accommodate each other? They have not done it so far. They came up with an October 3rd agreement which was supposed to end the sectarian violence. They have not carried out their commitment to make constitutional changes, or at least consider them, that they were supposed to have considered long ago. What will change this dynamic so that their political leaders can make a settlement which you acknowledge is essential if we are going to have success in Iraq?

General MAPLES. Sir, I think that is a policy decision that is under review right now. But very clearly I think we have to use probably a combination of approaches towards the leadership in Iraq. I think that enabling is very important. I think that being forceful in where we are trying to go and what we are trying to achieve is also very important. In that line, I believe that we have to make it known to the leadership in Iraq that there are expectations that need to be followed through on.

Senator LEVIN. If they are not?

General MAPLES. Sir, that would be a decision that would be reached elsewhere.

Senator LEVIN. General Hayden, in your testimony you have indicated that since the bombing of the mosque in Samarra last February, violence has grown to such an extent that you assess sectarian violence is now the greatest threat to Iraq's stability in the future.

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir.

Senator LEVIN. Is that the current situation?

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir, it is. To be clear, it is the greatest immediate threat and it is the one that has to be overcome in order for us to begin to deal with all the others I mentioned. I suggested one single narrative does not explain it. It is a really tough and complex problem.

Senator LEVIN. Do you agree that a political settlement by the Iraqis is essential if there is going to be a chance of success in Iraq?

General HAYDEN. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator LEVIN. Do you have any assessment as to the direction, the current direction, as to whether it does not change, as to whether it leads to success or not?

General HAYDEN. Clearly, as General Abizaid suggested this morning, the Iraqi government has to step up to some responsibility. I believe specifically he mentioned the army is gaining in capability. It needs the political leadership from the central government in order to carry out its tasks.

Senator, if I could just offer one additional thought, I know it is commonplace to say how complex, and so on, it is. We are asking these individuals, these new leaders in Iraq, to overcome their own personal histories. You have Sunnis who have never been in this circumstance, Shiites who have never been in this circumstance, and each of them thinking the other presents an existential threat to them. It is going to require, as General Maples suggested, all the tools we have to motivate them to make decisions that are clearly in their best interests for the long-term.

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

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Generals, for being here, and thanks for your outstanding service. Let me give you a couple of proposals, General Hayden and General Maples. One is that we announce that in 4 to 6 months we are going to start removing troops from Iraq. What do you think of that idea, General?

General HAYDEN. Senator, it is difficult for me to predict what that means with the situation being so volatile. I would attach it to a strategy. As I said this morning, things are changing. There may be places when we should be pushing where we have been pulling, running when we should be walking. But I would not want to just say, if we change this then what else would happen. I would rather work it from the other way around: what is the effect we are trying to create?

Senator MCCAIN. General Maples?

General MAPLES. Sir, I believe that the coalition forces right now are the element that is keeping Iraq together and that their presence is important for that factor alone. Four to 6 months from now, I do not know. There are so many things that need to happen, so many things that will happen, in the next 4 to 6 months. But the impact of removal of the forces I think will lead us to a greater level of violence perhaps in Iraq than what we are seeing now.

General MAPLES. How about we partition Iraq into three different nation states? What do you think of that idea?

General MAPLES. Sir, I think that is particularly problematic. In particular, I would see a problem in the western part of Iraq. As you partition that, the lead in the western part of Iraq would fall to jihadist groups. That would give them the base to conduct the kinds of external operations that they have said that they want to conduct.

General HAYDEN. Senator, I do not even know how you would do it, given that a third of the population is in mixed urban areas. I just do not know how a partition could work.

Senator MCCAIN. You mentioned, General Hayden, as did General Abizaid this morning, it is time for the government to step up. What do we think when an American soldier is kidnapped, our military sets up checkpoints and barricades Sadr City, and then the prime minister orders us to stop that? Is that not a bit dispiriting?

General HAYDEN. Senator, I am looking at it from a distance, so I do not know the tactical situation. On the face of it, I understand the question and I understand the response. We are dealing with a sovereign Iraqi government. We want them to step up. We want them to be independent, but independent in a way that expresses an Iraqi government rather than a government that is anchored in one of the factions.

Senator MCCAIN. The suspicion is that this is the case, and that is obviously very disturbing.

General Maples, is Anbar Province under control?

General MAPLES. No, sir, I do not believe it is.

Senator MCCAIN. What about Ramadi and Fallujah specifically?

General MAPLES. I think we have greater control in those two cities.

Senator MCCAIN. But in the province in general?

General MAPLES. In the province in general, I would say not.

Senator MCCAIN. How would we fix that problem, since it has been in and out of control four or five times in the last 3½ years that I know of?

General MAPLES. Sir, I think it is going to take a combination of additional security forces. I think it is going to take leadership out of the tribal sheiks who are in that province. I think we need to interdict those elements that are influencing activities in Anbar Province from external sources to Iraq.

General HAYDEN. Senator, I would reinforce one point——

Senator MCCAIN. I am sorry, go ahead.

General HAYDEN.—that General Maples brought up, and that is convincing the local sheiks, the local tribes, that their interests are not coincident with the interests of al Qaeda.

Senator MCCAIN. We are not doing that now, right, General Maples? We are not doing that now?

General MAPLES. Sir, there are some efforts that are underway with the tribal sheiks. In fact, there have been some recent successes along that line.

Senator MCCAIN. So do you expect us to gain control of Anbar Province any time soon?

General MAPLES. No, not over just the two successes. It is going to take a combination of things for us to gain the control.

General HAYDEN. Senator, if you look at that tactic, which I agree with, it shows the complexity of the problem. To the degree you empower the tribal sheiks to do that in al Anbar, what have you done to the authority and the sovereignty of the government in Baghdad?

Senator MCCAIN. This of course brings me full circle, a sufficient number of troops. I will not belabor you with that any more.

How would you describe, General Hayden and General Maples, today, in light of this really striking event of the kidnapping of 150 people in broad daylight in Baghdad today? When something like

that happens it really is an attention-getter, obviously. Go ahead, General.

General HAYDEN. Sir, I think one of the words I thought you were going to come up with was "inexplicable." Our station in Baghdad has a strong view on this. Their view of the battlefield is that it is descending into smaller and smaller groups fighting over smaller and smaller issues, over smaller and smaller pieces of territory. That event could probably best be explained by circumstances that are well beyond our view at the national level. That is the product of the lack of governance and somewhat of the chaos that we are seeing there now.

Senator MCCAIN. Of course, the thing that is so disturbing is they were dressed in police uniforms apparently. Did you ever think about maybe just disbanding the police and using the military instead, instead of police? That is the case in some countries, where the army does all that kind of work.

General HAYDEN. Sir, I do know if you just look at the tactical situation, we are using the Iraqi army for functions that are police functions in other areas.

Senator MCCAIN. Is it most disturbing that—I understand the al Qaeda effect and I appreciate both of your comments. But is it not most disturbing that what seems to be a rising level of violence, of sectarian violence?

General HAYDEN. Absolutely frightening. There are historical forces that have been unleashed by what I referred to earlier, Senator, as the satanic level of violence al Qaeda has inflicted on particularly the Shiite population.

Senator MCCAIN. Another probably uninformed comment. In Turkey many years ago we bought up the opium crop, the poppies. Have we thought of that?

General HAYDEN. I have not been privy to any of those discussions.

General MAPLES. I am not aware.

Senator MCCAIN. Because it certainly is pervasive today and it could turn it into a narco-state. But a lot of us are in it together, that is the good news, right?

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

Thank you, gentlemen, for coming. Could I ask, of those that are being killed out here in this violence, what percent of those are foreigners? General Maples or General Hayden?

General MAPLES. In terms of foreign fighters?

Senator KENNEDY. Yes, the fraction.

General HAYDEN. It is a small fraction, Senator.

Senator KENNEDY. I had heard figures of 2 or 3 percent. Is that about the figure?

General HAYDEN. That is probably about—maybe slightly higher, but not much.

Senator KENNEDY. So the foreign fighters represent 2 or 3 percent and the rest of those that are involved in the fighting are the sectarian fighters? I am just trying to get some sense about who is involved in these.

General HAYDEN. I would agree that the rest of the fighters are from Iraq. Sectarian as opposed to al Qaeda may be a distinction that would be important to make.

Senator KENNEDY. What do you say are the 2 to 3 percent? Are they the leaders of the 97 percent of the rest, or are they foot soldiers?

General HAYDEN. Two categories, Senator. A significant portion of the leadership of al Qaeda in Iraq is foreign and an overwhelming percentage of the suicide bombers are foreign, so they have an impact well beyond their numbers.

Senator KENNEDY. So the ones, the 2 to 3 percent, that includes the suicide bombers?

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir.

Senator KENNEDY. So we have the suicide bombers that are part of it. But the rest of it therefore is the sectarian killings or conflict?

General HAYDEN. Again, it is fighters——

Senator KENNEDY. Indigenous effectively to Iran?

General HAYDEN. The fighters are from Iraq.

Senator KENNEDY. Iraq, rather, indigenous effectively to Iraq.

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir.

Senator KENNEDY. Iraqis against Iraqis?

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir.

Senator KENNEDY. Sunnis against the Shiite and the other groups.

Now I am going to direct your attention to the National Intelligence Estimates (NIE). The last one was done on Iraq and was completed in July 2004, 2 years ago. August 3, the Senate approved an amendment that I offered with Senator Reed to the Department of Defense (DOD) appropriations mandating an updating of the NIE. This is to include the overall intelligence assessment. This includes the prospects for controlling sectarian violence, the civil war prospects, the ethnic, religious, and tribal divisions, the prospects to disarm and demobilize the militias, likelihood of the government success in response to the Sunnis, a wide range of different kinds of requirements that you are all too familiar with.

On August 4, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) agreed to task the Intelligence Community (IC) to prepare it. They had said there had been numerous developments in Iraq since the last NIE in mid-2004, to include three political transitions. DNI believes it is timely to prepare an updated estimate giving the options and questions concerning Iraq.

Two days ago we received a letter from the DNI informing us the National Intelligence Council, working with the IC, has been finalizing the terms of reference for the NIE and is beginning, it uses the word "beginning," to work on the report, beginning to work on it.

Is there any way that you can explain why the IC is dragging its feet on a new assessment of Iraq? We have the President now announcing that he is going to have his own assessment. You have the Hamilton-Baker Commission doing its assessment. We have a new Secretary of Defense coming in that will want the best in terms of intelligence. Why is there such dragging of the feet effectively in developing the NIE, which was so important really in

terms of the community and the policymakers' decisions about Iraq policy?

General HAYDEN. Senator, I am going to go first and then I am sure General Maples will have a comment, because we both sit on the board that approves the NIEs.

I would not, in all fairness, characterize it as dragging our feet. In fact, in terms of how NIEs are crafted, this one is more or less on a pretty fast track. I recognize the need for your committee, the rest of Congress, the Baker-Hamilton Commission, and others to have the benefit of the IC's thinking. That is happening in parallel. I can tell you, for example, that much of my remarks have been crafted on our participation in the working groups that are already under way to craft the final NIE. So although the final product, I am not sure when Ambassador Negroponte projected it, but if the final product is in January it does not mean that the thinking that has gone into that product will not be available, portions of it, a lot of it, prior to that date.

Senator KENNEDY. General Maples, anything?

General MAPLES. Sir, no.

Senator KENNEDY. Just to add, these are the critical times, as we have been pointed out—major discussions in the Nation, the elections, new Secretary of Defense, the Baker-Hamilton Commission making recommendations, the President doing his own kind of assessment on this. It is against the background, as has been talked about in the hearing, of these seizing of the Department of Education.

I returned after our hearing just at about 2 o'clock and turned on CNN. CNN said 50 more bodies were found, bullet-ridden bodies, today. The Minister of Education has just resigned because of this, what is happening. There is a sense of urgency that is out there. This does provide the best in terms of the IC for the policymakers. To the extent that you can give a greater sense of urgency in the preparation of it, I think the country would be well-served.

General MAPLES. Understand, Senator, and we certainly will. Our analysts are already engaged in helping to prepare that. I have reviewed the terms of reference as well and made suggested changes to that, to the terms of reference. We certainly understand how significant this is to the Nation.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much for your service.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator INHOFE [presiding]. Thank you, Senator.

This morning I did not attend. I could not attend because I was chairing a hearing at the same time, and so I have more of my thoughts really that would be more appropriate for the first panel. Let me just try this on you. I think when it is suggested, as we have heard it suggested many times, that we change our strategy in Iraq and bring a lot of our troops down to Kuwait, have them deployed then to go back up there to put out fires. General Abizaid felt this would not work.

You both agree with him on this, his answers?

General HAYDEN. Yes, Senator.

Senator INHOFE. The other thing that came up this morning—and I was not here, but they told me about it—was the idea of increasing our embedding. Now, a minute ago we were talking about

Fallujah. I had occasion to be there three or four times, during all the elections, I might add. When General Madhi was in charge there, a guy, a general who really did not like Americans to start with, until we started, they started their embedded training with the Marines—and you can remember the story, that he said when they rotated them out they all got together and cried. They became very close.

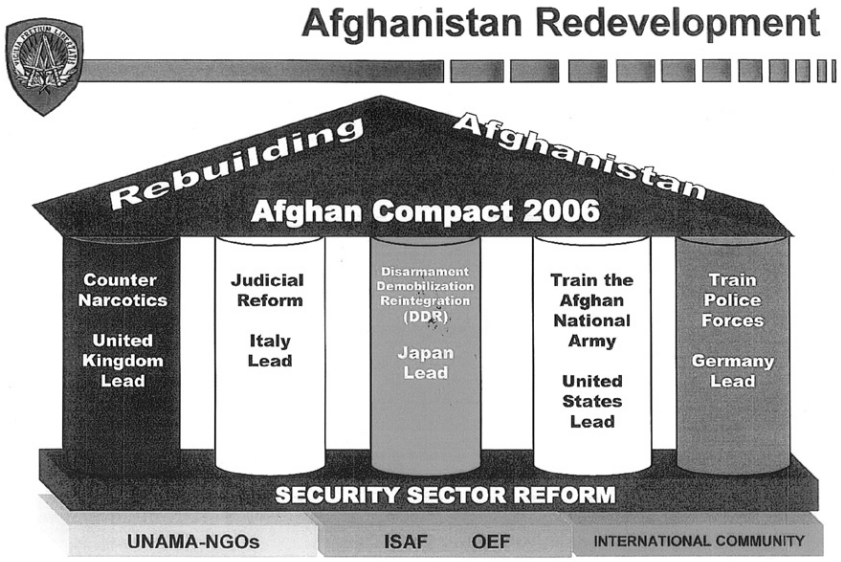
They thought that was a very successful program. Now, that is kind of a model in my mind of embedded training. When you say you might want to increase embedded training, are you talking about increasing the ratio of our troops or coalition troops or increasing the whole numbers to get more embedded training?

General MAPLES. Sir, I believe the proposal is to increase the size and the capability of our military transition teams that are embedded with ISFs. I do believe that that is important to build greater capability for the ISFs in the near-term.

Senator INHOFE. I agree with that. I just returned from my 12th trip to that region and I was in, mostly in Afghanistan during this time, with a rather larger group. As you will recall, General Jones had a group of the private sector over there, and we went to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams to see what the successes are.

General Jones has a way of showing what has happened in Afghanistan. I think that is very good. He uses this chart that hopefully some of our members up here have seen and of course you are very familiar with.

[The information referred to follows:]



Senator INHOFE. His observation is, and I agree, when you look at the tasks—he had counternarcotics—the U.K. was supposed to be doing that—judicial reform, that was Italy with the lead; disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, that was Japan; training

police forces was Germany. But our function was to train the Afghan National Army (ANA).

I would have to only give us a good grade on that. I do not think any of the other four pillars are being done and being done right. I was over there when we first turned over the training of the ANA to the Afghans and I saw a great deal of pride and I thought they were really doing the right thing.

Do you agree on those five functions that we have done a pretty good job, that we are the only ones by comparison who have done a good job, compared to what the other nations have or have not done?

General HAYDEN. I know our formal assessment is that the ANA is the best national institution in the Afghan Government.

Senator INHOFE. I certainly think that General Jones agrees with that. He even made comments that really the military function is more over than some of the other functions.

General Hayden, I wrote down that you said you understand that understanding al Qaeda is the key to defeating it. What do we least understand right now about al Qaeda?

General HAYDEN. Actually, Senator, I think we know a lot, and obviously this is a work in progress and every day we understand it better. I think we understand the hierarchical structure that attacked us in 2001, and because of that we have attacked it and been very successful. We are building our understanding of what the President last October called those groups affiliated with al Qaeda and how they are connected. We now have underway—and this may be the long-term project and the one that is ultimately the war-winner—how do you understand the "inspired by al Qaeda." Those are the groups that do not have a formal connection. You do not see the movement of people or money or supplies. You see the movement of ideas. How do you identify that and how do you counteract it?

Senator INHOFE. Yes.

General Maples, you said that Prime Minister Maliki must dismember the militia. I look at someone like al-Sadr and I would assume that is one of the major militias that he would be talking about. You said in your statement that they are confused between them and the police. How are you going to correct that? Maybe what was suggested by Senator McCain might not be a bad idea, just get rid of the police and then at least everybody knows. Is that something you——

General MAPLES. Sir, I think there are major reforms that are needed in the Ministry of Interior and with the Iraqi police, and I think many of those actions are underway right now. But I think we have a significant problem with the Iraqi police, and as a result of that we have a problem with security, and local residents then turn to local groups, whether they be a watch or a militia, to provide that security and basic services for them. That is what we have to overcome.

If the ISFs, and I think they probably are, are our best means to achieve that, by continuing to build their capability and their capacity to establish security, it will enable us to start having less of a reliance on watches and militias.

Senator INHOFE. I agree with that, and that reminds me that on several trips over there in talking to our military as well as their military and some of their leaders they have stated that if we get to the point where we have what would be comparable to 10 divisions of trained and equipped ISFs, which would be about 325,000, that we would then be in a position to start looking at the possibility that they would be able to take care of their own security.

I know you cannot—it is a trap to walk into something to say so many, it has to be a specific number and that would equate to 10 divisions. But we are getting close, and every time I go over there and I see the quality of the training is so much better than you hear it is on the media—do you think we are getting closer now to the point where in terms of shear numbers, if we had them trained properly that that might be getting close to the numbers that we need for providing their own security?

General HAYDEN. Senator, I will defer to General Abizaid and General Casey for the fine print, but yes. All the metrics in terms of training are all headed in the right direction.

Senator INHOFE. If we had even thought that we would be this close—I understand right now the number is some 312,000.

General HAYDEN. Beyond the raw military capacity, these armed men have to think of themselves as Iraqi rather than some other identity, and they have to be responsive to a government that identifies itself as being a unity government for Iraq.

Senator INHOFE. A couple weeks ago when I was in Afghanistan—Mr. Chairman, this will be my last question—there is this perception, this reality I guess, that al Qaeda is, getting back to Afghanistan, having a much larger presence there and they do that in terms of using their three favorite techniques: the improvised explosive device (IED), the rocket-propelled grenades, and suicide bombs. They have escalated just rather abruptly, which leads me to believe that there is a greater presence.

Some believe that a lot of those are coming actually from Iraq. Any military group is finally going to wear down over a period of time and there are several who are speculating that might be happening and that is why many of them are coming home and you are seeing a larger presence of al Qaeda in Afghanistan than we used to. Do you have any thoughts on that?

General MAPLES. Sir, I have not seen any direct linkage to Iraq. We have seen from an al Qaeda standpoint increased al Qaeda activity, particularly in the eastern provinces, in Afghanistan.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, yes, I know that is true.

Thank you very much.

General HAYDEN. Sir, I would just add that the connective tissue between the fight in Iraq and the fight in Afghanistan is al Qaeda. Although we may not see arms or individuals transitting from west to east, certainly the tactics and the lessons learned in Iraq are being applied in Afghanistan.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you.

Senator Reed.

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

Thank you, gentlemen, for your testimony. When I was last in Iraq in October, I got the impression from some of our American commanders that the ISFs were not sharing all the intelligence

they had with respect to the situation on the ground, the militias, insurgents. Is that an accurate assessment, General Hayden, General Maples?

General MAPLES. I think we are receiving intelligence from the ISFs. I do not know that their intelligence systems are mature enough at this point that we are receiving all the intelligence that they could provide to us. I know that at the national level with my counterpart that we need to develop some capacity and procedures with him. In fact, I have invited him to come back and to work those issues with us, to see if we cannot develop increased intelligence-sharing.

I think that they have a lot of information that would be very valuable to us. We need to establish the means of our forces receiving that intelligence.

General HAYDEN. Senator, my relationship with my counterpart could serve as a model for what we want to do inside the Iraqi Ministry of Defense with our DOD forces. The sharing is direct, intimate, and immediate.

Senator REED. Do you have evidence of systematic ethnic cleansing in parts of Iraq? General Maples, General Hayden?

General MAPLES. I have not seen necessarily systematic ethnic cleansing in that term. But I do think there have been directed attacks in multi-ethnic neighborhoods with an intent to probably drive families out of those neighborhoods. So whether I would categorize it as ethnic cleansing, I am not sure. But clearly there are attempts to gain advantage from a territorial standpoint as a result of the sectarian violence that is going on.

Senator REED. General Hayden, is that your impression?

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir. I would not characterize it in such broad terms as ethnic cleansing. Clearly, at the local level there are attempts to move populations out of neighborhoods. We see that. To say that is a part of a broader plan of orchestrated and synchronized activity, I think that would be too far.

Senator REED. Recently in October the assembly passed legislation that Ambassador Satterfield pointed out would take 18 months to go in effect, that would allow essentially super-regionalization of the country. Do you think that is a positive development?

General HAYDEN. All the devils are in the details with regard to that, Senator. I know the Shiites, many Shiites, have that as an idea, but even they argue among themselves. Is it three provinces? Is it nine provinces? And so on. We have a wondrous federal experiment and we still have a centralized government with a national identity. We cannot rule out that possibility in Iraq. But that is not the same as partition.

Senator REED. Does it not complicate things a bit when you see that the most successful part of Iraq is the Kurdish area, which is virtually autonomous, which has its own militia, the Peshmerga, which has been operating to provide security, which is economically thriving? Is it not difficult then to argue that you really have to have a national non-militia force, that you cannot rely upon this regionalization?

General HAYDEN. I understand the argument quite well. Again, I know you are not arguing for partition, which is something quite different.

Senator REED. No, I am not.

General HAYDEN. But there can be formulas that create different sharings of power between the national government and regional governments.

Senator, I add one other thing that the Kurds had, though. They had more than a decade of running up to this in relative peace to get themselves organized for what is going on. That is not the Shiite or Sunni experience.

Senator REED. I agree with you, General. I think, though, that one of the conclusions that everyone reaches here, that ultimately this is about politics—it has been described as a sectarian struggle for power by General Maples. You have described it as an existential struggle, where Sunnis feel that they are going to be displaced, Shiite have been displaced. Now they are first, I would suggest that in these existential struggles it is hard to compromise, particularly within a generation.

What are the objectives of the Shiites? You must make estimates if you want to break it down to Maliki and his government and Hakim and Sadr. Is it to retain power at all cost and suppress the Sunni? Is it to work out a better modus vivendi with the Sunni? What is your estimate?

General HAYDEN. Senator, I am going to answer your question, but I want to preface it. I have asked this question. I have asked our station officers, and they have come back with a statement first of all that I will share with you: Do not assume a detailed rational planning process here on the part of any of these groups.

Senator REED. Been there, done that. I agree with you.

General HAYDEN. The first rule, and it appears to motivate all Shiites no matter what the torque inside the Shiite movement, is to preserve Shiite unity. With Shiite unity, they are an absolute majority in the country. So that is one.

The second, maybe less rational, more intuitive, is what I suggested to you earlier, this almost palpable fear that the Baathists will return. Right now it colors almost all of their political decisions.

Senator REED. General?

General MAPLES. I would agree with what General Hayden said. It is a struggle for power, even within groups, within the Shiite community right now, and the struggle that we see going on between Sadr and the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq and who is really going to prevail on the Shiite side.

I think it is on the Sunni side a lack of acceptance of their position in the new Iraq and a desire to return to power and to share in both influence and resources of Iraq.

Senator REED. I think both of you gentlemen have provided very good insights. Listening to your final points, which I tend to agree with, it is no wonder to me that our requests, our blandishments, our suggestions, that Maliki accommodate the Sunnis and the Sunnis who cooperate more tend to be falling on deaf ears, and that discussions of new arrangements for oil distribution and sharing fully in power, et cetera, all the things, and going after the militias, which seem to be their last sort of sense of protection in a very terrible place, those reports and those aspirations seem to be a bit somewhat—well, not based on anything that you have sug-

gested to me in terms of the dynamic at work in Iraq today as being realistic.

General HAYDEN. Senator, I will speak for myself personally and let Mike add. I have met with the leadership. Like all of us, they are products of their personal histories. But like most of us, these are pretty noble individuals trying to do the right thing. So that is where we are.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank both of you for your service to your country and the countless hours you have given to this important issue for United States policy, world policy, and world peace.

I will go straight to a concern I have, and I think we have to confront it. I think we can make real progress in this area, but I do not believe for some reason we are making sufficient progress. That deals with the arrest and release of people who we have evidence are connected to terrorist activities. We heard it in our last trip Senators Warner, Levin, Pryor, and I attended and we got a real passionate concern about it.

I guess you would both agree that one of the things our soldiers are doing is identifying and apprehending dangerous people. Nothing could be more discouraging than to be successful in capturing someone of significance and then have them released prematurely. If someone in the United States were involved, for the bombing of that building here, that individual would be executed. This is a serious thing, for somebody to be involved in an activity in a nation that kills innocent men, women, and children. There is no more horrible crime, if the nation has a system of law.

So when I ask about this lawfulness and the ability to apprehend and deal with this in this state of extremity that Iraq is in. Frequently people tell me we are trying to establish a rule of law. First, I would suggest that it is an unlawful society when people can be captured and bomb and kill and then be released prematurely. That is unlawful in itself.

First, do you think that is a problem? If so, how can we improve it? What do we need to do now to get this thing moving? Because I have been talking about it for over 3 years. General Maples?

General MAPLES. Sir, I will start. I believe it is a problem, and it is a problem that we hear from our soldiers who go to great efforts to apprehend individuals who are involved in activities, only to see them back on the streets again. We hear that.

Senator SESSIONS. Now, is this a result of American procedures or Iraqi failures?

General MAPLES. Largely due to, as you mentioned, the rule of law and having a functioning judiciary within Iraq.

Senator SESSIONS. Well now, how critical is this to the overall success? Because I believe it was General Abizaid in his opening statement, or maybe the Ambassador, that indicated that one of the reasons for the rise in the militia is the fact that people do not feel safe, that somebody blows up their family, their neighborhood, their sect, and nobody gets apprehended, so now some militia are coming along and just killing a bunch of people in retaliation.

Is that not kind of what we mean by sectarian violence, General Hayden?

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir, that is it. It begets the circumstances you describe. For that individual, that is an incredibly logical decision to protect his family. Unfortunately, it leads to very horrible things for the society when most of the nation does that.

Senator SESSIONS. I do not think it is that difficult to fix this thing. I think they need to have in Iraq some clear laws, if you are caught with possession of IED paraphernalia, that ought to be a minimum of 20 or 30 years without parole or death penalty if you can tie them to the event, and some clear laws like that. We need to treat those cases somewhat differently than we do an Internal Revenue Service case in the Southern District of New York. This is a life and death situation in Iraq. Making a mistake can have deadly consequences.

For example, the Marine Times publication said that one individual known as "The Beheader" had been released, a known beheader. Another one was a bomber who had been captured, been active in bombing, and as a result of some period of time he was released. They had already found his signature back in another city where he was undertaking bombing again.

How can we get this—if this is a problem, as you suggest it is, how can we raise this up and do something about it?

General HAYDEN. Senator, I will just add to what General Maples said earlier. This is fundamentally an issue of capacity-building inside the Iraqi government—a functioning court system, a functioning national police and orderly processes.

Senator SESSIONS. Let me ask you, do you think the people that are trying to help the Iraqis set up a functioning court system are focused on a model of a court system in the United States and are not focused on the kind of model that is necessary to protect innocent men, women, and children in Iraq? Because it is quite a different thing.

General MAPLES. Sir, I am not sure the answer to that one. We would have to take that question and get back to you.

[The information referred to follows:]

The Defense Intelligence Agency has not assessed the model of a court system being developed in Iraq nor what model might be most appropriate for the Iraqi judicial system and the Iraqi people. The Department of Justice may be better able to address this question.

Senator SESSIONS. I hope you will because it is discouraging to me and I think we are at a point where some action needs to be taken, and we need to recognize that the same degree of judicial protections that we provide in a non-violent case in the United States may not be what is necessary. Some sort of military commission or something in which the central government can come in and try these people promptly, give them a fair trial, and if they are guilty take substantial severe action against them.

General MAPLES. Senator, I think you are right. You also mentioned a very strong set of counterterrorism laws to take into consideration where we are in Iraq today, and that is very important to the Iraqi government.

Senator SESSIONS. We have in the United States, if you are caught with an explosive device or an illegal firearm, you are guilty

of a serious offense whether you ever used it or not. They could craft some laws that would make some of these seizures and arrests of people very easy to prosecute, I would think.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your time.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Dayton.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank both of you gentlemen for what appears to be very candid testimony today. Both of you, as did our previous panel, rejected some of the alternatives in strategy that have been posited. But it also seems that the conditions you described reflect a current strategy that needs to be rejected just as emphatically for the results it has produced.

General Maples, you talk about overall attacks averaging 180 a day in October of this year, up from 170 the previous month, up from 70 in January; average daily attacks on civilians, October four times higher than were reported in January; a perception—I think it is also a reality—of unchecked violence, creating an atmosphere of fear and hardening sectarianism; the Ministry of Interior and the police heavily infiltrated by members of al-Sadr's organization, the inability to realize significant improvements in the oil and fuel sector and electricity production, undermining the average Iraqi citizen's support for the central government and the coalition, which I concur after being in southern Iraq 2 weeks ago visiting with Minnesota National Guard troops. The mayor of al-Batha came and, while he was appreciative of what the Minnesota guardsmen and women had been doing to help rebuild his city, he said that the electricity there was less than it had been under Saddam Hussein's rule.

So given the rejection of the other alternative strategies and given I think not only the failure but the continued deterioration of conditions under the existing strategy, is it fair to say we have no good option presently available to us or in the foreseeable future in Iraq? Would each of you comment on that, please?

General HAYDEN. Senator, clearly that is what all the discussions are about in the multiple fora that the chairman mentioned. I would say, and I think it was mentioned earlier today and I will repeat, there are some things that have been going on that have been very positive. We do have a democratically elected government in Iraq. We have a functioning constitution. We have functioning organs of government at the national level—the prime ministership, the presidency, and a council of representatives. We have armed forces that are building both in numbers and capacity. Some of the things we have been doing to create the circumstances, the conditions for success, are correct.

I do not think any of us are pleased with where we are now. I think all of us are concerned by many of the metrics by which we would measure ultimate success and hence the time now for this serious look, this serious reassessment, what is working, what is not, how we must adjust. The burden on General Maples' organization and my organization is to bring to each of these discussions the clearest possible view of the situation. I tried to emphasize in my comments today: not just the current situation. This reality has

a history and we need to understand that as well if we are going to be successful.

I think someone suggested earlier we have to find the right leverage points.

Senator DAYTON. Thank you.

General?

General MAPLES. Sir, I do believe that we still have opportunities to stabilize the situation in Iraq and to move forward. As General Hayden says, our responsibility is to try to present as clear a picture as we can of what our assessment is of the conditions in Iraq, the dynamics that are in Iraq, and also most importantly to identify opportunities. I think that that is particularly important for us to do as we go through strategy reviews that we are going through right now.

Senator DAYTON. General Hayden, a week ago in the Washington Post, David Ignatius wrote what was actually a very complimentary article overall about your leadership, and I thank you for that. He does say, however, that, referring to Baghdad, the CIA station there, he says: "Younger CIA officers are said to be frustrated with the cautious approach as they watch U.S. soldiers fighting and dying and see Iraq slipping away."

Is that an accurate statement about the perceptions of younger CIA officers in Iraq, whether you agree with it or not? Do they see Iraq slipping away?

General HAYDEN. I can give you a more detailed answer in closed session.

Senator DAYTON. All right, I will take that.

General HAYDEN. I have visited with our folks. I have talked to our analysts. I have reflected their views in my comments here. But I can go into greater detail, Senator, in closed session.

Senator DAYTON. All right, let us leave it at that. That is fine. Thank you.

On to Afghanistan. There again, both of you have described a mixed situation, but one where the insurgency, General Maples, you say has strengthened its capabilities and influence, the violence is likely to be twice as high this year as in 2005. You reflect the strength of the illicit economy there and the lack of sufficient options in the licit economy. I remember meeting with President Karzai shortly after he took office in January 2002 and he pleaded with us, a group, a bipartisan group of Senators, for sufficient international financial support to enable him to make the progress necessary. He described the lack of funding for local government leaders to be able to show progress.

In your assessment, has the international community, while it has been forthcoming, provided sufficient resources? Are more international financial resources necessary to enable him to be successful? Either of you?

General HAYDEN. Clearly the NATO troop contribution, particularly the major troop contributing nations, have taken on something, frankly, out of the historical norm for NATO. If you have talked to General Jones you understand all the work that went into getting national capitals to agree to that. There are NATO soldiers now dying and being wounded in areas of Afghanistan that we have not been for a long time, and that is one of the causes for the

increased fighting and the increased casualties. They are establishing a presence in districts where neither the government nor the coalition have been for years. So that clearly deserves credit where credit is due.

You are right about what President Karzai says. I think he has the right objectives. I think he has the right concept and he desperately needs assistance in order to build that capacity outside of Kabul, outside of the national government, at the province and district level, so that his government has a presence everywhere it needs to have a presence.

He has the will. He has the support. He needs assistance to do it, though.

Senator DAYTON. Mr. Chairman, my time has expired. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

I would like to pick up on what Senator Sessions was talking about. I could not agree more. Until there is some downside to getting involved in killing Americans and disrupting this emerging democracy, people are going to continue to do so, and we have to create downsides that are well known and severe.

But let us start with Afghanistan. General Hayden, have you talked to the attorney general in Afghanistan personally?

General HAYDEN. With the attorney general of Afghanistan?

Senator GRAHAM. Yes.

General HAYDEN. No, Senator, I have not.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you do me a favor and try to have yourself or some senior member of your organization visit him, because once you visit him, you are overwhelmed with the level of alleged corruption, that the institutions of government over there are corrupt to the core because of the drug money and this man is swimming upstream. The average prosecutor in Afghanistan makes $90 a month.

General HAYDEN. I have not met the attorney general. I have met with President Karzai and other senior members on the security side. The president is quite clear he recognizes that problem as well. We have a senior leader of the agency who will be there next week and we will make sure he talks to him.

Senator GRAHAM. The attorney general will tell you that part of the problem is President Karzai. So I do appreciate your talking with him. But he suggested that $250 a month could really transform things. I do appreciate your visiting and getting back with me.

About Iraq, what is the total number, give or take 5,000, of the insurgency foreign fighters?

General MAPLES. Sir, the number I have is about 1,300 foreign fighters in Iraq right now.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. How many people in Iraq?

General HAYDEN. More or less, 25 million or so.

Senator GRAHAM. So you have 25 million people, you have 1,300 foreign fighters, give or take a few hundred. How many native insurgents are there that take up arms and kill people?

General HAYDEN. Insurgents, that is a term of art for us. That would largely mean——

Senator GRAHAM. People who are trying to defeat democracy, yes.

General HAYDEN. Now you are widening the circle. If you use insurgents, those who are opposed to the coalition presence—what do you think, Mike?

General MAPLES. It depends on how we count the militias as a part of all this.

Senator GRAHAM. People who are using violence to disrupt progress in Iraq.

General HAYDEN. If that is your definition, Senator, it is tens of thousands.

Senator GRAHAM. How many?

General HAYDEN. Tens of thousands.

Senator GRAHAM. Tens of thousands? 100,000?

General HAYDEN. Again, Senator, I am sorry. I do not mean to dodge the question. But what portion of Jaysh al-Mahdi, the militia under Sadr, is under his control and therefore on a particular given day not attacking us; what are not and are out of control and are in essence lawless—that is why I think General Maples and I are a little reluctant to give a firm number.

If you are talking about the insurgents in Anbar, those who are opposed to the allied presence, largely the Sunni, low five figures is the number I would give you. I am not trying to dodge you. I just do not——

Senator GRAHAM. What number did you pick?

General HAYDEN. 10,000 or so.

Senator GRAHAM. 10,000.

General HAYDEN. That is a pretty wide circle, people who are mad at us. That is not full-time fighters.

Senator GRAHAM. So less than 20,000 between them and the foreign fighters. Now, on the Shiite side, how many people are the problem in terms of using violence? We do not know, have no idea?

General MAPLES. It is difficult to say. I would say that in terms of active within the militias you have probably a range of 20,000 to 30,000 if you combine all of that. But you have many more who are involved in the support mechanisms and providing support to both militia and to the insurgents as well, on the Sunni side as well.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. What percentage of the Iraqi people buy into our view of Iraq being a democratic functioning government?

General HAYDEN. That is hard to estimate, Senator. I am sorry.

Senator GRAHAM. Is it a majority?

General HAYDEN. I think a majority of the people of Iraq, an overwhelming majority of the people of Iraq, want to live in a pluralistic society, want to live in a unified Iraq, want to live in a peaceful Iraq.

Senator GRAHAM. So a majority, overwhelming majority of people, share the goal of a unified Iraq, not a partitioned Iraq.

General HAYDEN. Unified, pluralistic, and peaceful.

Senator GRAHAM. Why are they not doing better?

General HAYDEN. That is a wonderful question, Senator. Tom Friedman asked that question in an article in the New York Times 2 or 3 weeks back. He talked about the absence of the center. The longer this goes on, the less controlled the violence is. The more the violence devolves down to the neighborhood level, the center dis-

appears and normal people acting not irrationally end up acting like extremists.

Senator GRAHAM. Finally, would you agree that there are three groups in Iraq. There is a small minority who have taken up arms for religious or ethnic purposes to destabilize the government. Some of them are foreign in nature. The second group are very brave people who are volunteering to be the judges and the lawyers and they are getting assassinated. The third group is the overwhelming majority who are keeping their powder dry because they are afraid to come forward. Is that fair?

General MAPLES. Sir, I think that is probably a pretty fair statement. I think there are a relatively small number who are actively engaged in the conflict. I think you are exactly right, there is a small number that is trying to provide the leadership and bring the country together.

Senator GRAHAM. Why do we not as a nation throw everything in the world that we have at this small group so that the majority will come forward? Why are we treating this in such a police action fashion if it is indeed the central battlefront on the war on terror that will dictate the region for years to come and humanity as we know it? Why are we having this stupid debate about number of troops if we do believe that it is the central battlefront in the war on terror and bring aid to the people who are trying to fight and change Iraq? Why are we stuck on a troop level that is not working?

General HAYDEN. Sir, obviously—and I think General Maples has said the same thing—that is a policy question, not exactly in either of our job descriptions.

Senator GRAHAM. What is your advice?

General HAYDEN. I would offer the view that, again as I tried to state in my opening comments, a lot of the issues here are driven by deep historical forces that have been unleashed by the toppling of the Saddam regime. At the end of the day, Senator, this has to be won by the Iraqis.

Senator GRAHAM. Is it your advice as CIA Director that this is the central battlefront in the war on terror?

General HAYDEN. Our enemy believes it to be so and has said so.

Senator GRAHAM. Do you believe it to be so?

General HAYDEN. It is an absolutely critical battlefront in the war on terror.

Senator GRAHAM. Would it be your advice to this committee to throw everything this Nation has into winning this battle?

General HAYDEN. I would advise the committee to do everything within our power to use our power wisely to win this battle. Again, Senator, what I was trying to articulate before: At the end of the day, an American face will not be present on victory here. It must be an Iraqi face.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

Chairman WARNER. Senator Lieberman, would you indulge me?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Of course.

Chairman WARNER. I think we should also explore—that is a very important line of questions. Time and time again we are told by well-informed witnesses that the presence of U.S. troops engenders a lot of the fighting, and if we are to increase the numbers

the perception is we are there to stay, we are there to be permanent conquerors or however they want to do it, and this could begin to increase the numbers of the persons antagonistic against us.

Is that not part of the equation of thinking that has to be looked at in the context of raising our troop level?

General HAYDEN. Senator, earlier I said not one narrative explains the war, and it depends on which narrative you want to lay out as to how much our troop presence generates opposition. For that one narrative about opposition to foreign occupation, which has been a powerful narrative, an American face on security carries with it its own costs and its own countervailing pressures.

I would also say that the American presence there gives life to al Qaeda propaganda that they misuse and misrepresent to the larger Arab world. The more they can put an American face on the activity in Iraq, the more they are served by it.

General MAPLES. Sir, I think it is a valid point in some factions that the U.S. presence is the issue that they are trying to deal with, and removing the coalition is exactly what they would like to achieve, but not for the same purposes that we want to achieve it. Their purpose in removing the coalition is to enable their own objectives, and here I largely refer to al Qaeda in Iraq. I think in some cases the Shiite, that is the case also, so they can further their own goals.

General HAYDEN. What has happened, Senator, in the last 6 to 10 months—and I heard this alluded to this morning—is that you had that violence there that was generated by al Qaeda. You had that violence there that was generated by just opposition to our presence. That has remained. That has not gone away. What has been added to it is the Iraqi on Iraqi violence that the sectarian divisions have created, and hence my comment earlier, not one plot line describes this.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you, Senator.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks.

Senator LEVIN. Would my good friend yield for one additional question? You have been very generous.

Senator LIEBERMAN. In the spirit of bipartisanship that I espouse, how could I say no? [Laughter.]

Senator LEVIN. Just a comment also on Senator Graham. You have both testified, have you not, that a political settlement is the only way to achieve success, a political settlement between the Iraqi factions is the only way to achieve success in Iraq? Have you not testified to that?

General HAYDEN. Senator, that is absolutely correct. I will add one caveat. Without sanding off the edges——

Senator LEVIN. Add all the caveats you want.

General HAYDEN.—you put on there, there is a certain level of security required to create the conditions for a political settlement.

Senator LEVIN. I understand that.

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir.

Senator LEVIN. With that one condition, that a political settlement is essential, it is the key to a success in Iraq?

General MAPLES. I agree.

General HAYDEN. I agree.

Senator LEVIN. I thank our friend, who always espouses what we all aspire to, which is bipartisanship.

Chairman WARNER. The chair will very generously give you an added minute.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you, sir. You have a big heart.

Thank you. This series of discussions, Senator Graham, Senator Warner, Senator Levin, has been most interesting. I appreciate your answer because obviously this will not be solved without an Iraqi political settlement, but if there is no security there will never be a political settlement, nor will the economy have an opportunity to rebound. So it has to be all of that together.

These are tough questions—I was thinking about it—because in one sense we do hear, as you said, that the presence of American forces makes some Iraqis angry. But on the other hand, General Hayden, how are we going to get that center to come together and stand up against the extremists if there is no security? Right now I think we are critical to that security, because the Iraqis cannot handle it on their own.

I did want to ask in that regard—incidentally, I thought you were both very compelling in response to Chairman Warner's initial questioning, I believe, about the consequences of a failure in Iraq for us. We have a lot on the line here. So we tried to talk a little bit about how do we succeed. I believe you both indicated that you felt that the military transition teams, that is the Americans embedded with the ISFs, were one of the most successful things happening there now in terms of our involvement. Am I right about that?

General HAYDEN. Yes, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. General Abizaid said that today, too. Therefore would it be fair to assume that—and we talked about this today, too—that the more that we can do, the more likely we are sooner to get the Iraqis to a point where they can take over from us on the security front and we can begin to lessen the number of American troops we have there?

From an intelligence point of view—I am not trying to get you into policy here—I do not see how we can increase the number of American troops embedded with the ISFs, which seems to be working now, without increasing the total number of American forces in Iraq, because if we are taking them from elsewhere is that not going to leave that elsewhere, like Anbar Province, subject to catastrophe or at least chaos?

In other words, based on intelligence, on that question, the narrow question of increasing the number of American troops embedded, would you say we need more American troops there?

General MAPLES. Sir, it really depends on the analysis by the command of the troop-to-task ratio that they have to have. They have to lay out the tasks they have to accomplish and how many troops will be required to successfully accomplish those tasks.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I understand, you are not prepared to answer.

General MAPLES. Senator, I am reluctant, but I will give you perhaps a factor that will be used, that is very important. As you do

that, you actually increase the combat power of the Iraqi unit that you have stiffened, so to speak, with the U.S. presence.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Exactly.

General MAPLES. So you may actually be able to buy a great deal more of combat power and buy down the political cost of our presence.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Exactly, because our troops are in those cases within the Iraqi forces and they become a force multiplier for the Iraqis. We will come back to that.

I want to ask you about Iran, because you both talked about Iranian activities in Iraq being significant and growing. Can you talk a little bit more about that? What are they doing? How many Iranians would you say are in Iraq now and what are they up to?

General HAYDEN. Sir, I can give you more details in closed session. There is a significant Iranian presence in Iraq. I do not want in any way to say that all of that is in any way illegitimate. Much of that would be the presence that any neighboring state with interests in Iraq would have. But as time has gone on, the amount of Iranian involvement with the Shiite militias of all stripes, which has been quite a new development, the provision to them—let me just say this in a general way—the provision to them of capabilities that have been used against the coalition has been quite striking.

I will admit personally, Senator, that I have come late to this conclusion, but I now have all the zeal of a convert as to the ill effect that the Iranians are having on the situation in Iraq.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes, absolutely. I appreciate your saying that. I would like to go into it further in closed session.

Let me give you a statement and then ask you both to respond to it, which is that in Iraq, Iran has absolutely the opposite goals that we have. Our goal is to help the Iraqis form a free, unified, stable, multi-ethnic government. The Iranians want just the opposite. They benefit from the chaos now and in fact if the whole thing fell apart they would probably come in, either directly or through the Shiite militias, and control a big part of Iraq.

True or false?

General HAYDEN. Tough, tough question for an Iranian policymaker. The chaos there aids and abets them in their broader "relationship," that word in quotes, with the United States. Their perception is it punishes us, it ties us down, it makes us less capable of doing other things. That is their perception, I believe.

On the other hand, I can see this happening in the Iranian equivalent of our National Security Council, Senator. On the other hand, I do not think they want Iraq to fracture. I think they want it to be unified. A democratic Iraq will be an Iraq in which the Shiite have a reasonably strong voice.

Senator LIEBERMAN. This is a really interesting question, because I guess the question is, because we know that Iraqi Shiites are different from the Iranian Shiites. Obviously the Iranians are Persians, the Iraqis are Arabs, but they have a theological difference, too. So would they really want a unified democratic, presumably pro-American, Iraq? I ask all these questions and I am going to ask you to respond, General Maples, because I am concerned as we begin to raise the possibility of talking directly with

Iran about Iraq, because I think I worry that we have very different ambitions there, very different goals.

It is one thing to talk to the other Sunni Arab countries to play a larger role—the Saudis, the Egyptians, the Jordanians, the Gulf countries—because they have similar and in fact anti-Iranian views, General, but I never would hesitate to talk to anybody because, thank God, we are a strong enough country to talk. But I would be real skeptical about anything good coming out of the talks with the Iranians, particularly now after the Europeans have spent 3 years negotiating with them on their nuclear program and they have not done anything.

You had a great phrase. It was a "triumphal"—what did you call it?

General HAYDEN. "Dangerous triumphalism."

Senator LIEBERMAN. The Iranians are beginning to show a dangerous triumphalism about their role in the Middle East. They are beginning to think of themselves as dislodging us, and that is bad news for the region and for the world, and of course for us.

General Maples, did you want to respond, and then my time is up.

General MAPLES. Sir, our assessment is that Iran would like to have a stable government in Iraq, but they clearly want it to be Shiite-led.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman WARNER. Do you have a question, Senator Levin? I thought I would ask just one.

I was particularly struck with your observation that the de-Baathification, or exactly how you phrased it, is still a very formidable deep concern among the Iraqi people, which contributes to their insecurity and their fear to step forward as individual citizens and try and take more responsibility in their neighborhood and other foras. Am I correct in that?

General HAYDEN. Sir, I think what you are saying is that I would say the course of de-Baathification is a current, vibrant issue for the present government.

Chairman WARNER. Do you concur in that? General?

General MAPLES. I do, sir. I think the fear is a return of the Baathists to power. On the other side, the fact that the former Baathists are disenfranchised and have no ability to contribute is an issue on the Sunni side.

Chairman WARNER. Let me ask this question. Assuming that—and in no way do I infer by the question that any measure of due process should be denied Saddam Hussein. But we have followed this rather extraordinary exercise of their concept of due process. A sentence of death has been pronounced. Presumably the appellate process and other things will take place.

If after the flow of due process in an orderly way he is hung or otherwise put to death, would that help alleviate this serious problem of fear that the Baathists might return?

General HAYDEN. I cannot rule out that it could, Senator. I will say that the capture of Saddam—at that time, if you recall, the issue there was Sunni violence. It was far less of Shiite violence. It was all the provocations from al Qaeda and so on. The capture

of Saddam did not in and of itself reduce Sunni violence at that time. So I would say perhaps it is a possibility, but not a sure thing certainly.

Chairman WARNER. Do you have any views, General?

General MAPLES. Sir, I would expect that, particularly from a Shiite viewpoint, right now that carrying out a sentence would probably not eliminate the fear of a return of Baathists to control of Iraq.

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much.

Gentlemen, we have had an excellent hearing. We will now go into closed session in SH–219. We are adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN ENSIGN

COUNTERDRUG

1. Senator ENSIGN. Lieutenant General Maples and General Hayden, given the many problems in Afghanistan associated with the cultivation of poppies there, would it be worth instituting a program similar to what the U.S. did in Turkey in the 1980s whereby we purchased the poppies to keep them off the open market? Please elaborate on the pros and cons of undertaking such a program for Afghanistan.

General MAPLES. Widespread poppy cultivation in Afghanistan remains a difficult problem for the Afghan Government and the international community. DIA judges a program of purchasing opium to keep it off the open market ultimately would likely increase rather than reduce the amount of illicit opium available for the drug trade.

Supporters of a program to buy opium from farmers at farm-gate prices (the price paid to farmers at the time of harvest) argue all of the opium could be purchased for the amount spent to eradicate less than a tenth of the 2006 poppy crop. These supporters also believe Afghanistan would be competitive with other countries in producing licit opium for the pharmaceutical industry. In addition, supporters argue the poppy crop could be more easily reduced if it were regulated; noting those farmers with cultivation permits would not defend illicit producers.

DIA assesses a farmer compensation program would be very costly for donors and the licit opium market. The program would be difficult to enforce owing to geography, instability, and corruption and it would encourage farmers to expand cultivation.

- Buying all of Afghanistan's illicit opium would require a major financial investment. The United Nations estimates the farm-gate value of Afghanistan's 2006 opium production to be $760 million. Unless international donors are willing to subsidize an expensive annual program to purchase and destroy the entire crop, a compensation program of this magnitude could be financed only through licit sales of pharmaceutical opiates. The influx of additional opium most likely would flood the medical market, which probably is not flexible enough to accommodate Afghanistan's production while competing with prices drug traffickers offer.
- Afghanistan's geographically dispersed poppy cultivation and labor-intensive harvesting process would complicate efforts to prevent diversion of licit opium to higher paying drug markets. A lack of government security forces and insurgent influence in areas of elevated opium production would impede access to farmers. Widespread official corruption would also hinder efforts to regulate the industry.
- Creation of a compensation program would provide a strong incentive for many new farmers to begin planting poppies and for many existing poppy farmers to increase their cultivation because poppies still would be much more profitable than other licit crops. Afghan farmers could substantially expand poppy cultivation beyond the 3 percent of arable land currently used, thereby increasing the cost of compensation.

General HAYDEN. [Deleted.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

AFGHANISTAN

2. Senator AKAKA. Lieutenant General Maples, I understand that we are losing ground in Afghanistan. Moreover, the Taliban is gaining more influence and authority while Karzai's government is losing the hearts and minds of the people. What efforts are being done to address this matter?

General MAPLES. The Afghan Government and the international community have made efforts to address the threat posed by declining popular support for President Karzai's administration. DIA judges root causes of decreasing support for the central government include fear of a resurgent Taliban, doubts that the Afghan Government can defend against this threat, concerns about endemic government corruption, the slow pace of reconstruction, and the lack of economic opportunities. The international community and the Afghan Government are addressing each of these factors.

- Efforts to Improve Security. With the support of other members of the international community, the United States is training and equipping the Afghan National Army as well as other elements of the Afghan national security forces. However, these forces remain challenged by resource shortages, high attrition rates, corruption, and tense relations among security forces. NATO's International Security Assistance Force also conducted a series of counterinsurgency operations this year aimed at denying insurgents safe-haven and freedom of movement in southern and eastern Afghanistan. Gains made this summer and fall, however, have largely been offset by robust insurgent recruitment and propaganda efforts.
- Efforts to Improve Governance. The Attorney General of Afghanistan is in the process of conducting a campaign aimed at addressing corruption within the government. DIA believes this campaign will help restore some confidence in the legitimacy of the administration. In addition, President Karzai has taken steps to replace corrupt or ineffective governors, including reassigning the former Governor of Herat, Ismail Khan, whom many saw as a divisive figure. However, this effort remains limited by the lack of educated, capable, and trustworthy political leaders.
- Development and Reconstruction Efforts. The United States, with support from the international community and nongovernmental organizations, has worked to extend reconstruction and development assistance to garner popular support. This includes establishing provincial reconstruction teams that engage with the local people to provide development projects: paving of the Ring Road around Afghanistan and numerous community aid projects. Unfortunately, the unstable security situation, particularly in the south and southeast, has slowed some of these efforts. Finally, the U.S. Agency for International Development's Alternative Livelihoods Program, designed to accelerate economic growth in Afghanistan's principal poppy-producing provinces and at-risk areas, has shown progress in irrigation development, road construction, cash-for-work, and agricultural assistance. Despite these efforts, the continued dearth of alternative economic opportunities may have contributed to record poppy cultivation in 2006.

IRAQI DEATH SQUADS

3. Senator AKAKA. Lieutenant General Maples, did our efforts to train Iraqi personnel as law enforcement and military create recruits for the death squads that have been tormenting many Iraqi communities?

General MAPLES. [Deleted.]

[Whereupon, at 4:35 p.m., the committee adjourned.]