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A CONTINUING DIALOGUE: POST-SURGE ALTERNATIVES FOR IRAQ (PART 1 AND 2)

HEARING

BEFORE THE

OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD
JANUARY 16, AND 23, 2008

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A CONTINUING DIALOGUE: POST-SURGE ALTERNATIVES FOR IRAQ (PART 1)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, January 16, 2008.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:04 p.m. in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Vic Snyder (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. VIC SNYDER, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ARKANSAS, CHAIRMAN, OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Dr. SNYDER. The hearing will come to order. Gentlemen, we appreciate you all being here. You are old friends to this committee and to this town and to your country. We appreciate your service. I have a written statement that I actually was looking forward to delivering with great gusto, but I think I will pass on that. I am not sure exactly what our voting schedule is, and we may try to get your opening statements in, at least if we were to have some votes. But we should have plenty of time this afternoon to do the kind of discussion we want to have.

Mr. Akin and I decided, back at the end of June, early July, that we wanted to do a series of hearings on the way forward in Iraq. And after having done four of those hearings back in July, it occurred to me over the break that once again it was timely to do that. The one thing you can predict about war, is they are unpredictable, the situation changes and we want to hear your-all's opinion. Some of you we have heard from before, and some we have not. And we look forward to that discussion today. There is no question that Presidential election years are not necessarily the best time to discuss the nuances of significant issues, but obviously the situation in Iraq is of absolute importance to this country and our national security, and those kinds of discussions that get into the details of national security policies must occur. And with that, I would like to hear any comments Mr. Akin would like to make and then I will introduce our panel.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Snyder can be found in the Appendix on page 29.]

STATEMENT OF HON. W. TODD AKIN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSOURI, RANKING MEMBER, OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Dr. Snyder. And welcome, again, to our witnesses. It is a nice situation to be in here. We were here a year

ago and everybody was very pessimistic. We had solicited testimony from every expert, or non-expert in Washington, or in I don't know how many hundred of miles around and we got some kind of interesting ideas. We were looking for ideas. But it was sort of a generally pessimistic sense as to what we could do in Iraq. And some of you, of course, were not part of that pessimism, but by and large, it was. Now a year later, we have seen a turnaround that is probably more significant than anybody would have even dared to have hoped for hardly.

Yet in spite of that, there are continuing challenges and there are ways that we should be taking advantage of the good situation to try to improve it even more. So I hope that your testimony will focus on the additional steps that we could take and how we can prove what General Keane particularly, we thank you, is a voice of encouragement last year and maybe more encouraging this year. I hope you are not discouraging anyway. But we think that things have gone very well and are very interested in now, where do we go and how do we continue? Thank you all for joining us. And I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, your scheduling these set of hearings. I think that we have had some very interesting subjects and this is another good one.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Akin can be found in the Appendix on page 32.]

Dr. SNYDER. Without objection, any formal opening statement by Mr. Akin and myself will be made a part of the record. Any written statement you will provide to the committee will also be made a part of the record. We are pleased to have with us today, General Jack Keane, retired Army, Former Vice Chief and Acting Chief of Staff of the Army; retired General Barry McCaffrey, who is now the President of the BR McCaffrey Associates; Dr. John Hamre, President and CEO of the Center For Strategic and International Studies; Mr. Christopher Kojm, the Director of the U.S. Foreign Policy Summer Institute at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University. What I think we will do is we will begin with General Keane and go to General McCaffrey and then Dr. Hamre. Oh, Dr. Hamre first.

Dr. Hamre, we will go with you first. And I guess we will just march down the line then. We have some votes that will hit us at some point, but we may well get your-all's formal opening statements in and even get to some questions. As you know, it is unpredictable. We will start with you, Dr. Hamre. We will put the clock on for 5 minutes, but it is not a hard 5 for you-all, just to give you an idea of where you are. And if you are still going strong, keep going.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN J. HAMRE, PRESIDENT AND CEO, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Dr. HAMRE. We will easily make it for that. I think I get to go first because I am the heaviest physically and I appreciate that. Thank you for inviting me to come back, especially to join my colleagues. These are men that I have worked with and admired for a very long time, and it is a privilege to be with them, and of course here before you. I think I was asked to come because I was involved with and the Center for Strategic and International Stud-

ies (CSIS) was involved with the Jones Commission. We were asked by the Congress to send retired military officers and police chiefs to Iraq to assess the capability of the Iraqi security forces, and we were there during the summer, came back and reported to the full Armed Services Committee in September, and I will say I have not been back since then.

So my observations are constrained by the personal experiences I had at that time. But I have stayed in touch with people who are there, friends who are there and other delegations that have gone. So I may be able to offer a bit of help to the committee today. Let me just summarize what we—what we said in the Commission report, just very briefly. First we said there was real progress, we could see real progress at the time. It certainly has picked up enormously since we were there. But there was genuine progress on the ground, especially in Anbar province, you could see it.

Second we saw there were no shortage of Iraqis who were prepared to join the Army or the police forces. There were—people were not a problem. It was really getting them trained and getting a leadership cadre was the challenge. And we went around and saw the training establishments, and I must say I was impressed. I thought we saw genuine command and leadership credibility among the trainers and these were Iraqis. So that was good. It was still in the startup phase, but it was positive. We thought that—you know, the Iraqi, I should say the Iraqis were confident that they could take greater control of their security. The defense minister told us flat out we can take care of internal security by next summer. Yesterday or the day before, he has revised that. He has shifted that date back and he is now saying 2012. Our people felt he was a little optimistic last summer. But nonetheless, there was a genuine sense that they can do more and we ought to let them do more. And I will come to that in just a moment.

We saw the training of the police and we saw the police—there are four different police elements in the country, the provincial police, that is the bulk of the police. There are national police, a small cadre, really a paramilitary force largely in Baghdad. There are border police and then there are kind of highway traffic patrol type police. The ones that really matter for our purposes here, it is the provincial police and it is the national police. We judged at that time that there was genuine progress on the provincial police and we saw the training for them. Uneven leadership. Where there was good leadership, they did well. Where there was weak leadership, they didn't do well. But it was starting to get better.

National police was a problem, frankly, and we said in our report that we thought they were beyond real repair that they needed to be disestablished and rebuilt in a different direction. Now the Iraqi government really hotly protested that. They disagreed with us sharply. They were quite deeply riven by sectarian elements very much seen as being a Shi'a force and we didn't feel it would be productive. We gave recommendations on how they could be retooled, use them in a different capacity.

Sixth, we said that the interior ministry was a major problem. The interior ministry was dysfunctional. And now again, this is a hotly disputed finding on our part and the Iraqi government claims

quite to the contrary that it is not. But I think there are still serious problems in the interior ministry that we need to tackle.

Seventh, we concluded that the Iraqis could do more if we would let them do more. I noticed a very interesting phenomena when I talked to, you know, field grade officers, majors and lieutenant colonels, majors and captains and lieutenant colonels and said, you know, what is your view? I heard the same all the time. They could do more if we would let them. Usually general officers said they would take a long time. But field grade officers that were close to them said they could do more. And I think it was our view they could do more.

Indeed, if we do it for them, they will let us. If we insist that they do more of it, they will stand up. And things they want to do, they do. And they are able. For example, they make payroll every two weeks. And it is not a pretty process, but they get it done. And so it was our view they could be more effective and could do more if we let them do it.

Eighth, we concluded there was no progress on the political reconciliation. This was in September. And I think that is still a major problem. Now, we are building—we shifted our concept. We spent four years trying to create a central government and then have that government reach out and provide control over the country. That hasn't worked. What we have been doing during the last year is to build security up from the ground level and the provincial level and that is working. But what happens if you build that competency at the ground level and you are not able to build a central government that has credibility and authority? We will be in trouble.

So now let me just very briefly say with that as a threshold, what can I offer the committee now? Certainly the surge has contributed to a much better environment. But it is not just the surge. I mean, I think there are two other factors which we don't appreciate. One, is we have put 100,000 more cops and Army—Iraqis on—out on the beat. And that has made a big difference. They have become more competent and a better force. I think that is a major factor. The second factor is we have basically recognized the Sunni militia as a de facto police force and that is something we had resisted for a long time.

So there is a lot more Iraqi security presence on the ground at the same time we were doing the surge. Now, the surge it was a good idea and it has—we have created a security concept at work. So we have to say that is the starting point for, I think, the success that we can register this year. I think we can pull troops out this year. I think the plan we are on can work. I think we will build up enough Iraqi capabilities so it will compensate for us being able to pull out probably 5,000 a month. I think that is a path that we can and should stay on. We should put more of the burden on the Iraqis for the security. And then finally the economy is still a great problem, huge amount of unemployment in Iraq.

And, of course, the security situation has been a major factor for that. Hopefully greater security will provide more economic opportunity and you see it in the north. You see it in Kurdistan. Things are really moving remarkably better, it is starting to pick up in the south, starting to. So economic boosting the economy will be an

enormous thing we do. And frankly, our developments—our efforts have not been very effective. Partly because of the security, partly because we didn't have very coherent plans. Finally, let me say, we do need to find a way to encourage greater responsibility by the Iraqis. We have to give them and lead them to taking a larger role, and I think that is, in part, our pulling back and part of what we have to do during the year. Let me stop and turn to my colleagues.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Hamre can be found in the Appendix on page 35.]

Dr. SNYDER. General Keane.

STATEMENT OF GEN. JACK KEANE, (RET.), FORMER VICE CHIEF OF STAFF AND ACTING CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY, U.S. ARMY

General KEANE. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to participate again in discussions about Iraq. And I am honored to do that with my colleagues at the table, particularly Secretary Hamre and General McCaffrey, both of whom I have worked with and known for years and I just have tremendous regard for. If I can indulge you, I have got 10 minutes of statement here. And I will get to it. A year ago this month, the President announced what was a very unpopular decision based on a harsh reality, that the strategy in Iraq had failed, that Iraq was spinning out of control with an ever increasing level of violence, that a new government less than a year old was about to be fractured, that the consequences of failure in Iraq were unacceptable and that the only course of action was to conduct a counteroffensive soon to be called surge, and that action remained the only viable action to gain security as a necessary precondition for political and economic progress.

As such, the military strategy was changed to use proven counterinsurgency practices, which means protect the people where they live and a new team, General David Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker were put in place to implement it. Troops began arriving next month in February and they completed their deployment in June. After all the troops were in place, the violence began to go down. So much so that it has fallen dramatically over 60 percent in all major categories. This is a stunning achievement and credit to General Petraeus and General Odierno and their magnificent troops. To those who say, well, of course, you add more troops, particularly American troops, the violence will go down.

That misses the essential point. We had surged three times before, albeit with less troops, with no long-term success. It is a combination of proven counterinsurgency practices, in other words, a new strategy, yes more troops and also brilliant leadership which has made the difference. We have never, ever before taken on defeating the counterinsurgency directly. In the past, we had left that up to the Iraqis to do and that is why the change of mission and the strategy is so critical to the success. General Petraeus asked me to look at the situation in February as the troops were arriving. I did and I did a number of times after that.

But back in February, I confirmed that my analysis, something I had already known that we really needed eight brigades to surge, not five. But they were not available. So how these troops were

used also very dramatic. The leaders' intellectual flexibility and tactical agility maximized the troops we had and made the sum much greater than the parts. This is a remarkably successful military campaign which has broken all of the previous paradigms of counterinsurgency and regardless of what we view here, this will be studied for years in my view. A little over six months after the surge forces were complete, the Iraqis passed a major piece of legislation last Saturday, the de-baathification law. This actually is the justice and accountability law. But I think for our identification, that is the proper term. Despite our impatience and many frustrations with the Iraqi political system, in this new fledgling political culture, it is a remarkable achievement in such a short period of time for them. More must be done, it will be challenging, but I am convinced more will be done.

The Iraqis are already proving their willingness to change. They have implemented the following without codifying it into law because the executive branch knew how important it is. One, sharing oil revenues with the provinces; two, purging sectarian extremists from positions of authority; three is hiring Sunni volunteers for security forces and also in the civilian ministries; and four, making major improvements in the legal and justice system. Eventually, these will be codified into national legislation just as the debaathification law did. But they deserve the credit for implementing it beforehand.

With the dramatic improvement in security, and the beginning of real political and economic progress, where do we go from here? May I suggest at the outset that the alternative strategy in Iraq is already in place. It is operating and it is succeeding. I have got 10 short points to make: One, security. We must sustain and build on the gains that we have made. We have taken out 25 percent of our combat forces this year based on the stress and strain that is on the military, the Marines and the Army to be specific, and General Petraeus and General Odierno's empathy of that situation and they have looked at it and they have determined it an acceptable risk. That will be completed in July. The fact is that no one knows to include General Petraeus or General Odierno what the impact of a 25 percent force reduction will be. But we are going to find out eventually.

Therefore in my view, we should make a realistic assessment after we complete that reduction in July and determine the consequences of that. And I think that would take four to six months for us to be able to do that accurately. To those who say we should reduce further beyond the 25 percent because of our success or because of our frustration with the length of involvement, my response to that is it is an unacceptable risk. We should not squander the gains that we have made. To do that is a repeat of past failures where we planned for unrealistic reduction based on what? Our underestimation of the enemy and second our overestimation of the Iraqi security force's capacity level.

We have been there before and it has not worked. When General Petraeus testifies in April, the emphasis should be on how do we sustain the gains that we have made, not on how fast we should withdraw. Of course, we will withdraw our forces eventually as we should. But it must be based on the conditions on the ground. That

is a powerful lesson that we should not relearn. It is safe to assume that we would reduce our forces further in 2009, but equally important, if we meter this right, violence and casualties will continue to go down significantly, and in my view, Iraq will be much less of a concern to the American people as a result of that.

Number two, continue the current military strategy and this is important. Our protecting the people. We cannot pull away from them. Because if we encourage the extremists, if we do, we are going to encourage the extremists both Sunni and Shi'a and the criminals to escalate the level of violence. Three, continue to grow, develop and build the Iraqi security forces. The Army will double in size. 100,000 have been added this year. And our training teams are crucial to their success. The national police, who I recommended to General Petraeus last year be disbanded, are actually finally making some progress. And I think General Petraeus will provide evidence of that when he comes in April.

General Hussein, who is in charge, is a tough, competent leader. He has fired every brigade commander, all nine of them, and 17 of the 27 battalion commanders. Four of five of those brigades are finally starting to show some progress and get rid of the sectarianism, and also show some competence much to all of our surprise, and that is good news.

Number four, transition control to the Iraqis as they demonstrate a capacity to be successful. I mean, that is self-evident. But it is already happening in the south and it is already happening in the north. In 2008, we will do that in Anbar province and we will do it in certain areas within Baghdad. And obviously, as those conditions become available in other places, that transition control will continue.

Number five, encourage the government of Iraq to accept more of the concerned local citizens group into the security forces after they are properly vetted. They number now a staggering 70,000, which is very significant, but they can do more in terms of accepting more.

Number six, continue to assist the government of Iraq to pass the remainder of the legislative benchmarks. Recognize while the benchmarks are important, they are only the first steps for the Iraqis in resolving their differences through the political process, versus violence, to those who say we must reduce our forces immediately to force the Iraqis to complete the political process, my response is that the template—that template is harmful and does not fit the reality in Iraq. Quite the contrary, those who know the key leaders in Iraq believe with conviction that it is our presence that has helped the Iraqis to move this political process. Immediate withdrawal actually caters to their fears and paranoia, that they will be left to deal with the extremists themselves. It forces them to do the opposite of what we are intending. Instead of political process and progress, they will pull back from that and that impact will be very significant. What they will do is pull back and develop a bunker mentality to defend themselves. It invites a return to sectarian violence, extremism and civil war.

Number seven, assist the Iraqis in providing provincial elections in 2008 and the general election which is planned for in 2009. Out of that, a much stronger political system in my view is on the way.

We have to hold them to it. Number eight, Iraq is improving economically. While unemployment is much too high, staggeringly too high, it is improving. Utilities are improving. Micro loans for small businesses are on the rise. Iraqi currency, much to everyone's surprise, is in pretty good shape and the government has a budget. And this legislative body should be aware of how tough it is to get a budget out; it is no small task for them and they have succeeded.

And, of course, much more is needed. As the security situation improves, we must encourage foreign investment and free trade. And number nine, we must enter into a long-term security relationship with Iraq. The groundwork for this has already begun. First, we must resolve the internal security situation we are facing, then transition the Iraqi security forces to external defense. This will involve a much reduced force on our part and will be executed initially, in my view, with much less casualties and eventually with no casualties because Iraq will be stable.

And ten, more must be done to look at Iraq regionally with its neighbors who can assist with the further growth and development of Iraq, a stable Iraq is in everyone's interest in the region to include Syria and Iran.

So in conclusion, yes, I am hopeful about the future in Iraq. We have many challenges to be sure. The future is not certain. There will be frustrations there to be sure as well. But we have a very real opportunity to succeed and achieve in a stable government in Iraq. Capable of protecting its people and providing a quality of life experience for the Iraqi people. This could only be accomplished with the generosity and sacrifice of the American people, the courage and sacrifice of the Iraqis, and the truly magnificent selfless service and sacrifice by our troops and their families. Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

Dr. SNYDER. General McCaffrey.

STATEMENT OF GEN. BARRY MCCAFFREY, (RET.), U.S. ARMY, PRESIDENT, BR MCCAFFREY ASSOCIATES

General MCCAFFREY. Well, Mr. Chairman, let me thank you and the members of your committee for the opportunity to be here. I am delighted to join this panel. Dr. John Hamre and General Keane and I have worked together for years. I have tremendous respect for them and I have read a lot of Chris Kojm's work to boot. I provided each member of the committee a report from my Iraq visit. I just got back prior to Christmas as is my custom. I spent about a week there. I went throughout much of the country. I spent most of my time focused at lower level province and below. Talking to both Iraqi police, military and U.S. military leadership. And perhaps those observations—and also accompanied Wall Street Journal op ed to try to summarize the findings will be helpful to you.

Let me, if I can, lay down some general themes, and I look forward to responding to your own interests. Number one, it is clear to me that the situation in Iraq has changed like night and day. So the debate has to move forward and not talk about whether that is true or not, but instead, understand what are the plausible explanations to why that change has occurred, and therefore, are they sustainable or what will happen if we withdraw in the coming years? But I think any objective measure, principally measures the

violence, kidnapping, murders and attacks on U.S. forces, attacks on Iraqi forces, you name it, the situation is remarkable. I spent a day with an infantry brigade in Baghdad during the so-called surge into the city. 6 million Arab people took 80 killed, 600 hundred wounded regaining control of their piece of ground. The day I was in Baghdad in that entire city, there were two violent incidents that day. I rode around, spent a day in Ramadi, which was constant gunfire, 24 hours a day, and the last visit and this time around, there were no violent incidents in Anbar province the day I was out with the Marines and the Army forces. So the situation changed. That is not to imply there aren't still just under 3,000 attacks per month still against coalition allied forces or civilians. There is still a civil war going on but it is one changed environment.

Second observation, I think the political dynamics are dramatically changed, not clear we understand it, and that is the principal reason behind much of the change. It is not to deny the cards—the excellence of U.S. and Iraqi security force, but it is clear as you look at the Sunni, I think the bottom-line to me was they just woke up, they said my God, these people are leaving, we will be left a minority of the population, 16, 20 percent of Iraq to the mercies of the people we cruelly exploited for the last three decades, they rushed to join the police, the Army, Baathists, two star intel generals became province police chiefs in Anbar.

So the Sunnis got scared and started to engage. The spinoff of that was these concerned local citizens who are primarily Sunni, but is now being extended to Shi'a areas south of Baghdad. So suddenly you have got 60-, 70,000 people with AKs, guarding their neighborhood and their community. The Kurdish situation north, I think the Turkish threat to them may have been helpful where they suddenly got—were reminded of the notion better to be part of an Iraq federation—an Iraqi state than to be a target for the powerful Turkish military.

And then finally, the Shi'a, for a variety of reasons—again, I am not sure we totally understand it. It is clear that the ceasefire which—the generating factor was the humiliation of Mr. Sadr and his forces during their outrage against Shi'a pilgrims in the south. But nonetheless—and his personal fear probably of being killed by U.S. Special ops or captured. There is a ceasefire. To some extent, it is holding. And so the level of violence went down. The political dynamics are quite different. Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), this is a strong statement, one the military is not willing to make. U.S. special operation forces Stan McCrystal and Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) have tactically defeated AQI in Baghdad and Anbar province.

They are killing them faster than they can generate leadership. It is the first time in the history of warfare I have seen that happen. It is a combination of unbelievable intelligence, forensic police investigation, tremendous intel input from the Iraqis and some of the most ferociously talented special ops people we have ever introduced. That is not to say they can't respond with an outrage or that their operationally or strategically no longer a factor. They moved up into Diyala, they moved up around Mosul. They are in

the deserts out in the western frontier. They are still there, but tactically it has been appalling to them what we did to them.

The State Department dialogue, it changed the nature of the situation. There is an ongoing—Dr. Rice has an ongoing outreach to the Iranians and the Syrians. To some extent, it may be that they are responding. It may be that there is less active Iranian support for Shi'a attacks on U.S. forces. Clearly, the number of border crossers has gone down dramatically. The ones who are crossing the border, the overwhelming majority are dead within 4 weeks, either because they ineffectually, in general, conducted suicide attacks or they have been policed up by Iraqi security forces or U.S. military forces. And then finally I think Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey are now being engaged, now more supportive toward the general goal of not having us withdraw, leaving chaos in Iraq. Bottomline, we have still got problems. The Maliki government is largely dysfunctional. There is reason to believe provincial district municipal government is starting to become connected. The Army and police have been reenergized. The police who are still modestly corrupt, ineffectual, badly equipped and not reliable.

Nonetheless, I think there is eight of nine new brigade commanders, a massive retraining program, new commitment showing up and a lot of U.S. military mentorship. Not to be discounted, the nature of the leadership on the ground. General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, the two of them have—and I would agree totally with General Keane's comment. It wasn't five additional brigades to get to 21 for 5 months. It was a drastically different tactical application of counterinsurgency tactics combined with smart diplomacy. In the background, the new Secretary of Defense, Bob Gates, I think has changed the climate to one of pragmatism and focus on outcomes, thank God we have him in the last year of this administration in charge of trying to direct the interagency debate.

We have got some other problems. The U.S. Army can't sustain the current strategy. Our manpower is inadequate. Article I of the Constitution, that is the Congress's job to raise and support an Army and Navy and provide for a national defense. Manpower is off. The quality of recruiting and retention is a huge challenge to us. I think 10 percent of the soldiers coming into the Army shouldn't be in uniform. We do that too long, we will regret it. They will become sergeants. We are losing our hotshot young officers and midcareer NCOs in too high a number. Our equipment is broken and the Army and the Marine Corps and special ops are underresourced.

Finally—and I provide you one other handout. I would be remiss in not reminding all of us that the $12 billion a month campaign that has run 34,000 killed and wounded is largely not supported by the American people and has affected one other aspect of the national defense: Our technological modernization in particular of global air power. And, you know, it is hard for us to say this in public. We don't want to create and reset a battle for us that is capable of fighting Iraq, better minus Mr. Rumsfeld. Instead, we want to look out 15 years and say what are the new challenges and how do we deter mischief on the Pacific rim with a world class air

and naval force to prevent war in the next generation. I think we have sadly misjudged this and not database our job in that area.

Mr. Chairman, again, I thank you and your committee members for what you have done to sustain a strong national defense and I look forward to responding to your questions.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, General McCaffrey.

We have been joined by the chairman of the committee, Chairman Ike Skelton from Missouri. Mr. Chairman, do you want to say anything?

Mr. SKELTON. Only that this is a very distinguished panel.

Dr. SNYDER. I think we had better do our recess now for the series of votes that we have, Mr. Kojm. Otherwise, your are going to see members impatiently looking at their clock and not giving you the time you need. This is a longer break than we would like it to be. I think we will probably be close to 40 to 45 minutes. I apologize for that. It is just the nature of the game. The staff will be happy to help you with any thing you need in terms of a private room or fresh ice water, whatever you need. We will be in recess.

[recess.]

Dr. SNYDER. The committee hearing will resume. Gentlemen, I apologize for the delay. Part of, I guess, your seasoning and your professional careers, you have probably all been through this before. But that was one of those six-vote ones with some debate in the middle. Mr. Akin, our Ranking Member, said it was okay for us to go ahead. I think he had something else he had to run to.

Mr. Kojm, your opening statement, please.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER KOJM, PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, ELLIOTT SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Mr. KOJM. Thank you. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a distinct honor to appear before you today. The distinguished witnesses who have already testified have spoken in detail to the military situation and I cannot add very much to their eloquent testimony.

Where I would like to begin is with a slightly different question, picking up really on point 10 that General Keane mentioned. The most important question before us now is how to take advantage of this lull in the fighting on behalf of securing peace and stability in Iraq. Not a moment should be wasted in pressing for political reconciliation. Reconciliation is the only sure way to end all the violence, end the violence in Iraq.

Now, Iraqis cannot achieve reconciliation on their own. Too much blood has been shed. Bitterness is deep. And despite the best efforts of the United States, we, by our own actions, cannot achieve such reconciliation for them. We have influence with many parties in Iraq, but not all parties, and attitudes toward the United States are fairly well set in Iraq, FIVE years on. Many view us as friends and partners. The leaders, especially, many in Iraq, still view us as occupiers.

Political reconciliation in Iraq requires not only our efforts, but a strong, vigorous, determined effort by the international community. The United States can help start such an effort. American

backing for it is essential, but success requires an international effort, preferably led by the United Nations, with the strong involvement of all of Iraq's neighbors. Why? Because all of Iraq's neighbors share an interest in peace and stability in Iraq. They do not want Iraq to export its violence. They do not want more refugees.

All of Iraq's neighbors oppose the breakup of Iraq. All of Iraq's neighbors support the unity of Iraq. All of Iraq's neighbors see the need for political reconciliation as the key to stability in Iraq. Iraq's neighbors will be there until the end of time. American forces will not. Therefore, any effort to create enduring capability must engage Iraq's neighbors on behalf of reconciliation and a settlement they can support.

While Iraq's neighbors share this interest in peace and stability, as I have said, they disagree, of course, on many other questions. That is why a diplomatic effort simply cannot be left to Iraq's neighbors. A strong international diplomatic effort is required to find common ground. An effort backed by the United States can help galvanize Iraq's neighbors in support of stability in Iraq. But let me repeat: The United States cannot do this alone.

What constitutes reconciliation? Reconciliation is certainly a long process. The recent law on de-Baathification is a good step. It is a first step. Whether this law is meaningful remains to be seen.

Implementation—here I agree with the administration certainly—implementation based on a spirit of inclusion will make it meaningful. Implementation based on a spirit of exclusion will make it meaningless.

This current moment of hope in Iraq will fade unless Sunnis see a future for themselves in the life of their country. The de-Baathification law holds out the hope that a significant number of Sunni leaders and former military and police and government employees can be brought back into government in meaningful ways. But this new law is only a first step.

And I agree with the other distinguished witnesses that we also need a chance for Sunnis and all Iraqis to vote for their own elected representatives at the provincial level. We need an oil law. All parties need to share in Iraq's oil wealth. There needs to be a negotiated outcome for the future of Kirkuk. The current moment is one of possibilities and hope if we take the steps to make it so.

We are seeing tantalizing signs of new political alignments in Iraq between Sunni leaders and Shia nationalists on behalf of a united Iraq and on behalf of reconciliation. We see the start of dialogue between Sunnis and Kurds. We see an olive branch from Abdul Aziz Hakim toward the Sunni awakening.

The time is ripe for dialogue and intense diplomatic engagement not only by the United States but by the international community with complete American support. Otherwise the current lull in violence, as important and significant as it is, will just be a time-out in an unfolding sectarian war and a future Iraq made up of gangs and warlords. This is not the future Iraqis want, but it is the future they will get if successful military tactics and progress are not matched with comparable intensive efforts at political reconciliation.

I want to close by saying a word about refugees, a subject that is far too often not discussed at the policy level. Reconciliation and

stability in Iraq absolutely requires addressing the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons. Those who have fled Iraq are running out of money. They lack access to schools and medical care. Those inside lack almost everything. They are in a daily struggle for survival. This is no small problem. This is one out of every seven Iraqis, 4–1/2 million people, who have been forced from their homes because of violence.

We are spending over $10 billion a month in Iraq. The total request for humanitarian assistance in Iraq for the current fiscal year is $240 million, less than a day's worth of costs for the war. This great country with its long tradition of humanitarian relief can and must do better by the Iraqi people not simply out of altruism, although that is necessary too here, but because it is vital to the future stability of this country.

The last thing the region needs, the last thing Iraq needs is anotherlarge and bitter exile community akin to that created in 1947, 1948. Tolerable outcomes for the United States and Iraq are still possible if we use all of the tools of national power, and my distinguished counterparts here have spoken, certainly, of the importance of military power and what it has accomplished. I would simply flag for you, as I appear before your committee, that we need to use all the tools of national power—certainly diplomacy among them—on behalf of national reconciliation, building regional stability, and helping the Iraqi people. Thank you.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Kojm.

Thank you all for your opening statements, your very thoughtful statements.

I meant to mention also in addition to the voting schedule, as you know, we have had this issue with the defense bill. It is on the floor right now, and so Mr. Skelton planned to spend considerable time with us, as did other members, but they are on the floor with the debate on the defense bill. We will put ourselves on the five-minute clock here and I will begin with questions.

The first question I want to ask is—I think I will direct it to our military folks—as you all look ahead, you are pleased with the direction things are going. But as you see the size of the American force in Iraq going down, do you at some point anticipate some kind of formal decision in terms of what activities those forces should be engaged in?

This is a discussion that I think began last year. When we first came back we had that discussion, it would be limits. And I sat down with a pen and pencil and realized, well, that wouldn't be much of a limitation because you could have tens of thousands of troops to guard U.S. civilians.

So as you all look ahead, is that a practical way of looking at the use of U.S. forces as the numbers come down, that they would be restricted in certain kinds of activities?

General MCCAFFREY. Let me if I may—I know General Keane has an informed view on this. One of the things that has concerned me from the start—and I don't see this in any way, in a confrontational way—is that Washington not try and drive tactics and operational decisions in Iraq. There is a legitimate strategic argument, I would suggest, for the next administration to tell the military commander, joint commander on the ground, I want you

to get down by half your forces. At which point I would expect the military commander to come back and say, if that is your constraint on me, here is what I will do with them. But I would be really reluctant—by the way, some of the suggestions have been completely asinine—we are going to instruct you to go to the borders and guard the borders. That is not where the war has been. It is a civil war inside Iraq. Why we assume we can guard thousands of kilometers of Syrian frontier, Iranian frontier, Turkish frontier, when the threat is inside Iraq to a large extent.

The other thing I have said is, be careful, don't you dare go to a force—largely suggested by the Baker-Hamilton report—in which there is a modest, tiny, combat presence and we will be out of the political eyesight of the American people because we will be doing embedded training and intel and logistics and air power, because I honestly believe the theater is too dangerous to not have a substantial combat presence on the ground. The number I jerked out of my own judgment was seven combat brigades. Go below that, get out of Iraq except for a Marine battalion in the Green Zone.

I think there ought to be a certain sense of modesty out of Congress to not try and drive antipathy toward this mismanaged war by substituting their judgment for those of the military commanders on the scene.

Dr. SNYDER. That is the gist of my question because there is a temptation, when you are dissatisfied with what is going on, to say, We are going to keep your forces there but don't get in the civil war, just go after al Qaeda.

Well, how do you sort that out when you are doing door-to-door searches trying to make a neighborhood safe? General Keane, do you have any comments on that?

General KEANE. I think it is just as reckless for somebody here to provide instructions on what the numbers of forces should be in Iraq. I think the situation there should be driven, you know, by the conditions that are there and that reality.

What has taken place, there are three major missions that we do, and two of them have changed dramatically. One is the training of the Iraqi Security Forces, and that mission will be a constant in my view, you know, for many years to come, even after the country is stable and there are no more casualties.

The second one is the pursuit of the al Qaeda, which at one time was the province almost exclusively of the Joint Special Operations Forces. What Odierno and what Petraeus have done, and one of the reasons largely for the success of the operational defeat of the al Qaeda, is the joining of that operation with conventional forces. There are actually more conventional operations in toto in terms of massive troops being conducted against the al Qaeda now than what JSOC is doing with the leadership. So those two have melded. And they had to be melded if we are going to truly be protective.

And the third one is protecting the population in Iraq which soaks up most of our forces.

So those are the three major missions. And I think the major change will take place as the Iraqis develop capacity, and they are developing it all the time, and it is a good news story.

As I said in my opening statement, they are largely in the South by themselves. They are largely in the North by themselves, and

in 08 we will find that in the West and in parts of the central region.

So that is the major transition that will take place. And that actually permits the reduction of forces, initially the 25 percent reduction, and then something beyond that. And as I indicated, I think that the logical time is probably 09 to see that come to fruition.

I don't believe we should dictate the mission, and I don't believe we should dictate the force size as well. The overall strategy in Iraq, certainly for a new administration, is a decision and a policy question that they have to deal with in terms of what is the outcome they want.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Akin for five minutes.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of questions. The first is, it appeared to me that a series of things in your testimony has reflected the same thing, that it wasn't just one thing that went right, but a whole series of things have really come together and produced some arresting kinds of positive results. One of those seemed to me—and it is sort of ironic in an amusing way—we who work in D.C. tend to think in terms of centralized governments. It seems that the real success was at the local level.

It seems that Iraq, even though the State Department told me they have no concept of federalism, yet it seems like the concept of local government is uniquely suited to these places where there are these tribal differences. And it seems like great progress at the local level, provinces and towns and cities and local sheiks, and all being willing to shake off the al Qaeda and join with our Marines and other places and start to build at the local level.

Now, first of all, I would like you to comment on that. And was that a positive piece of what made things go well, or was that just sort of an ancillary thing: "Oh by the way, this happened."

And then the second question I have is my concern is that local government and federalism cannot really endure long if the money comes from oil which goes to the Federal Government or the Parliament. And then the Parliament controls the money entirely, because he who controls the money is going to control the government.

And so my question is: Is it not a very important next step to make sure that there are some dollars guaranteed to local governments just to make sure that federalism is alive and well? This is sort of a two-part.

General KEANE. Who is that question for?

Mr. AKIN. Whoever wants to take a shot. General Keane, if you want to do it first.

Dr. HAMRE. Let me offer one brief comment. First of all, I think it was crucial that we discovered the power of tribal authority as part of this new strategy. The new strategy is really bottom up, outside in, and I think it is a very important—it is our coming to realize those power structures and how to make them work.

Now, it still creates this dilemma of how do you create a coherent central government, because if the central government ain't working and the provincial governments are working, then you have the problem of how do you hold this place together over time. But there is no question that that is the foundation of a much more success-

ful strategy. And it wasn't an accident. Our people really went to school on this and learned that capacity to make that happen. And I think it is a crucial dimension to our success.

Now, the point you raised about how do you share revenue, I will just say that one of the dilemmas we have is the provincial police are allowed to hire people but the Federal Government pays them. And last year, they left over half their budget on the table because of a tug of war between Baghdad and the provinces. This is a problem. We are going to have to get this fixed.

General KEANE. Yes, this is an interesting question and in my own discussions with Iraqi and insurgent leaders and other Sunni officials and some of the sheik tribal leaders, it has kind of been a fascinating process. Out in Anbar Province, certainly the repression of the al Qaeda, the cumulative effect of that almost four years; forced marriages; the killing and raping that was taking place; the behavioral modification that was taking place to the degree that it was. They crossed over at some point where their future for their children was far more important than their very lives. And that was being pressed on the tribal leaders themselves by the people. So this bottom-up is interesting.

And then the key sheik leader came to one of the brigade commanders and opened his heart to him on the subject and asked for assistance. And that is how we began. And that started actually in Ramadi itself. And then it spread to that entire province much faster than anybody could have imagined.

But the second thing is very instructive. The Sunni insurgent leaders—not all of them because they don't all agree, and some of them are still fighting us—they strategically met and believed that they could not win. They had far too many enemies. They had the al Qaeda. They underestimated the Shia militia response to the provocation of the Samara mosque bombing and what it did to their people. They had the United States military and they had the Iraqi Security Forces. They made this decision. President Bush made a military decision not described in this fashion, but in fact, the way they look at it from their eyes, to occupy the capital of Baghdad with U.S. Military forces. They made a decision that what they needed to do was to influence the Shia-dominated government while the United States had the most influence on this power they believed it would have.

And they haven't had this kind of influence on this government for a number of years. And that is also what brought them to this movement. So they were pulling back from the insurgency, seeking some kind of political accommodation. And that brought the people out in numbers, even beyond the Anbar Province where those tribal sheiks and leaders are, into the other provinces themselves.

So it has been a fascinating thing to sort of pull the threads and understand what actually took place here. And those two factors are stunning in terms of the amount of time it took.

And the other point I would make is on the revenue sharing. The Shia model of government is strong provincial government with money to operate, with a looser central government, if you will. They want to achieve that. They have such a weak coalition in power right now, they are having great difficulty getting to it. But when you talk to them, the intellectual backdrop for what they

want to do is that. That is where they are moving. They realize that the money in the hands of provinces and municipalities is going to be much better spent. The Sunni model of government is centralized power, centralized funding, and centralized distribution.

I don't think this current coalition which is running the country up until the end of 09 can get there in the fashion that you are describing, with them being vested with money and that kind of power. I think they may be able to get to provincial elections, but to get to that kind of execution I don't think. I think after the elections and the Sunnis participate, then we will get a stronger coalition that may be able to do what you suggest and what the Shias believe is the right way to integrate the government.

Dr. SNYDER. Ms. Sanchez for five minutes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, gentlemen, again for being before us today. I just want to begin by saying that there has been a lot of talk and there are a lot of our colleagues—there are some of our colleagues who would prefer to see a timeline and prefer to see a number of troop reductions and everything. And that more or less stems from the fact that if you continue to look at where the American people are, they really don't want us spending $3 billion a week in Iraq.

My dad always used to say, you know, I sit on the board, on the board of directors of America U.S.A., and one of the things we do is we look at the limited resources and we decide where to place them. So I think for a lot of us, especially those of us who have been on this committee, we really have been trying to sort out where we move and how we move and what we do. We are not trying to micromanage the process.

I would just, you know, caution that we really aren't trying to micromanage this process from the Congress, but we are trying to figure out where we place limited resources; whether we place them on domestic issues or whether we put them into Iraq.

And I would also like to say that even though—and I do believe that the surge is working, and I don't think the surge is a strategy. I think it is a tactic, personally. That is the way that I view it. I would say that even though I think that it has been working, meaning to try to create the space which is really the strategy for political and economic things to happen in Iraq, the fact of the matter is if you look at this past year, 2007 it was the year of the entire war where we have had the most casualties to our men and women in uniform. So we are not out of the woods yet with respect to that.

And I also would say that I have a real bad feeling that if we really begin to draw down troops in a significant amount that we could be back to square one again, with an inability to really get Iraq back on its feet, especially with the Government Accountability Office's (GAO's) report about how the Ministry of Interior is corrupt and the police force isn't worth anything, et cetera, that we had earlier this year. So I am very interested and I have been listening very closely and I have read your statements, the ones that we did receive in time, with respect to what is going on there.

I just would like to have on the record that we are not out of the woods yet and there are a lot of issues. If we don't pull out our

troops, then it is not a surge; that is an escalation of the war. As long as we keep the amount of troops really in, that was an escalation of the war, and I don't think the American people really want to hear that. So I think we are at a very critical point.

I think that one of the reasons why we have had such success in the North and the South is that those are much more homogeneous areas, as you know, and we don't have the problems that we have where people who are of different stripes are in the same city. I think one of the great factors has been the accomplishments we have seen up in the Kurdish area, and to that extent the question that I have for you all is with respect to the declaration of principles that was recently signed by Prime Minister Malaki and President Bush, talking about the presence of U.S. troops for the future in Iraq.

And I understand that the planners at Central Command (CENTCOM) and the Joint Staff are preparing staff recommendations and courses of action for the eventual drawdown of our U.S. forces and the repositioning—or where we are going to leave troops or what types of troops we are going to leave.

And my question to you is: Do you think that those troops should be focused or centered or based in an area like the North where the Kurds are seeing that that is the most stable sort of an area? Or do you think that those—that we should be looking at bases or future troops that we keep in there, for whatever reason in other areas, in the areas that are going to be tougher to deal with?

I would sort of like to get your opinions on what types of troops you think ultimately we might have there if we can really do the reconstruction and the political construction that we need, and where they might be situated.

General McCaffrey. Let me, if I may respond to a bit of a spillover from the last question, but one of the things that is both extremely positive and unsettling, I had a sensing session with 38 tank commanders from throughout the Baghdad area, and the first impression one gets is these are the finest people we ever had in uniform. I have never seen anything like it, looking at our company commanders, tank commanders, brigade commanders, they have grown up, and they understand counterinsurgency. Many of them are on their third or fourth tours. They are phenomenally effective.

And I stumbled around several marketplaces, several towns, with some major who would tell me what he was doing was his say. And I would assert one of the problems we are going to encounter as we come out of Iraq is not just the lack of security, but a withdrawal of these unbelievably effective troops are going to bring. But when you take the captain and company commander out, suddenly that is the guy who has been organizing economic activities starting women's councils. The personnel, tank commanders going to these ineffective national ministries and talking about his clinic with three dentists and five docs, and he walked the paperwork around the capitol, and that is why it is there. So it is a bit unsettling.

Now, maybe General Keane and I don't agree on this point, I am not sure. I think the next administration is going to take a zero base approach to this. I think hopefully, because of Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker and Secretary Gates and others, we hopefully

won't have a disaster when the next administration is sworn in. In fact, I am modestly optimistic, to be blunt. And so they can look around, decide what they want to do. But one legitimate outcome is to say, for sure we are not going to keep apart a civil war in Iraq at 1,000 killed and wounded a month and $12 billion a month. So there is one outcome that politically would be legitimate for the next administration to start with.

And then they would go on to say, well, what are we willing to do? So I actually think there is some argument that the next administration might well say, we are in a timeline. I opposed that in the last three some-odd years. I am now more of a mind that the next administration may well say, we want to stand up 50,000 troops, we want to be outside the urban areas, and to give that kind of guidance to a military commander and have him come back and say, okay, here is my assessment on what you are telling me to do.

But I don't think we are there for 130,000 troops for 10 years or 1,000 years. Shouldn't happen, probably won't politically.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Davis for five minutes.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One thing I would like to do is to the subject away from interpretations, often driven by political positions, before we go and vote on the defense authorization again.

And one question that comes up, I have seen it on the ground firsthand in Iraq and Afghanistan, it comes through in much of what everybody on the panel has suggested in their statements, an area that Chairman Snyder and I and Congresswoman Davis have put together a task force to really look at from a congressional level, and that is the issue of the interagency community and how it functions together.

I can think all the way back to being a second lieutenant in the Army when I saw it, let's say, broken. But there was never the pressure on the interagency community with the kinds of things that the military is seeing now. One thing I hear from my classmates a lot is the military is at war, the Army is at war, but the country is not. And so you have a disengagement on top of that which creates a lot of misperception out in the general public about what is actually happening.

I throw this out just for the sake of time and would be interested in all of your opinions as we are trying to work on crafting legislation ranging from increased 1206 authority all the way to structural ways that can do, in effect, what the Goldwater-Nickels joint legislation did for the military back in the 1980's. And that would be this: What do you feel has been the greatest interagency success or shortfall, or perhaps both, that we have seen in Iraq? I would probably point to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) if I were going to say a "shortfall." But in addition to that, having seen these symptoms, you dig down to root causes, from a statutory perspective, what could we in the Congress do to help ease that effort, so that when we get into the next time we send our troops—or our instruments of power may be better put—down range, where do we need to focus, from an authorizing appropriations personnel standpoint, to have us better prepared for the types of things we are going to face this century.

Dr. HAMRE. I must apologize, I have an obligation. I must be downtown at five, but I could very briefly say, sir——

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. You have been very gracious hanging with our unpredictable vote schedule here.

Dr. HAMRE. This is the hardest problem I think we have, because it goes to the fault line in the Constitution. There is no question the Congress has a right to oversee the operation of the departments of the Federal Government. But the Congress has no right to oversee how the President organizes the interaction of those departments. That is in how the President structures the execution of the activities of the executive branch. And I can't conceive of a structural solution to this problem. I think we can come up with small things that we could do, which are important.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. I would reclaim my time for just one second, just to beg to differ. A Member of Congress about 1810 made the statement that if the Congress doesn't have the right to oversee what the Army does, the Army doesn't belong to the country, it belongs to the President.

Dr. HAMRE. Congress does have a right to oversee the standing departments. That is not a question. It is the interagency process that is being run on a day-to-day basis that is the prerogative of the President. And we do need to find a solution to this problem. And it is at the core the constitutional dilemma that we have in our form of government.

Now, I think there are things we can do. There are things—we certainly need to deepen the capacity of other executive branch agencies to be able to work with the Department of Defense. There is no mobilization capacity inside these agencies. The State Department is 2,100 Foreign Service officers short. They are short. They have no surplus. They can't send anybody to training because they haven't got a float.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Great Britain has more than we do.

Dr. HAMRE. Sir. So there are very real things we can do. I would love to come up and talk to you, but I think it is very hard to come with a legislative solution to the interagency process because of this constitutional question.

But there are things that you can do and things I would strongly encourage you to do that would help build up these other departments, because the Department of Defense has been pretty much alone in this thing for far too long. State is trying.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. I am going to take you up on that invitation to meet personally with you, and we will arrange that. And I would be interested in your opinions as well, especially the General, from a standpoint of I feel like I have college classmates that are proconsuls in some cases. They are managing all kinds of things very well, but really outside what their purview is.

Dr. SNYDER. If you could be brief, please. Then we will go to Mr. Sestak for five minutes. And that bell you heard is the buzzer, and we will let you go after that because you have been very patient this afternoon.

General KEANE. We were recommending a counteroffensive to the President and one of the concerns we had was that we needed to get the other agencies involved to the degree that the military

department is, because we have been, for three-plus years, compensating for their lack of involvement.

I really believe we have to take a stab at the structural change and organizational change and then the education and training of the people who are involved. You know it was put together post World War II. I think it has served us well for a while, and in the post 9/11 era, the global Information Age, it cannot keep up. And that is the reality of it.

And I think serious people have to come together to look at solutions for it in a post Goldwater-Nichols era. That is the reality of it. I do believe there are structural changes that we can make. I do believe we can make an organizational change. There has to be a formal structure that people participate in and are held accountable for their performance in that structure, and also they have to receive education and training to be able to deal with the complexity of the interagency.

And then when we—I think we should before we do conflicts—this group comes together and initially it probably is headed up by a military commander in a planning and preparation phase, and then in the execution phase it is as well. And early on, the military commander stays in charge of it, and then maybe at some point as we are dealing with more stability operations than military operations, we switch and another agency head takes over the joint integration task force. So there is a lot we can do and we should do it, and we should stop talking about it and start doing something about it.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Sestak.

Mr. SESTAK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, I was taken by your comments that people should not, because of success in Iraq or because of frustration with the length, be calling for a redeployment. I have always been taken by some of those, at least on the side that ask for redeployment, that they are not doing it for any other reason than they believe it would be a improvement in security.

I say that because with the following background in the short term, that there is not—pre-surge, there was not one Army unit, guard, reserve, or active here at home, not one, that could deploy anywhere in the world, because the state of readiness was so bad.

Korea has known, in open testimony, Army units that could deploy to protect the 27,000 troops there. We were told by the Commander in Chief, Pacific Forces (CINCPAC) that Air Force and Navy would back them up. You know what the war plans call for.

Afghanistan has the highest increase in violence we have ever seen this year with harvest, record harvest crops, and the Taliban are in the ungoverned regions again. Pakistan is probably the most dangerous place in the world. In the longer term, I see an Army that 42 percent of its recruits are in the below mental category, to your point, General. No training in any other warfare area except for Iraq-type of. And then China, probably where the center of strategic gravity for our Nation needs to be.

To my mind, we are still at the same place we were the last time you all testified. Same place. How long and at what acceptable cost?

General, you said, McCaffrey, that the Sunnis basically are doing something because, oh my gosh, they are going to leave, I better get more involved. Oh my gosh, they are going to leave, I better get more involved.

You also said, though, that our responsibility in Congress is to raise armies and those things. But it also says in the Constitution provide for the common defense, which constitutionally gives Congress a role to play in this debate. I know you have answered this in a way, but how long? And at what acceptable cost for overall U.S. security? In particular, when the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff says, in Iraq we do what we must. In Afghanistan—and I believe he could have added in there, for the rest of the world—we do what we can.

General, or each of you, how long and at what acceptable cost to stay there?

General MCCAFFREY. First of all, I think your premise is an appropriate one that, you know, when the question was to what extent has the interagency process failed, I might add to what extent has the congressional role of oversight failed, to what extent has the Senate responsibility to confirm senior officers of government? And without overstating, this part of the problem wasn't structural it was leadership. We had a level of arrogance and misjudgments on the part of Mr. Rumsfeld and some of his senior team that were of historical importance. And they were not confronted. At one of these hearings six months ago where the—and the Senate asked me, why didn't the generals tell us the truth? And the answer was, you did get the truth, and you were intimidated by a leadership that got us in a real perilous position.

If Dr. Perry had been the Secretary of Defense, if Dr. Gates had been the Secretary of Defense, you will see quite different tones. That wasn't a structure problem. It was wisdom. It was judgment.

And I think the second piece of it is Congress should play a legitimate role, not by specifying missions or tinkering with the internal tactics in Iraq, but you do have a role to play.

Mr. SESTAK. But, General, if I could—and I am almost out of time—your wisdom, your judgment, each of you, how long, with knowing what is happening in our overall security, because this isn't just about Iraq security, it is about our overall security, how long and at what cost?

General KEANE. Well, this gentleman asked a legitimate question and, you know, some of the points that you made are certainly valid. We do have other concerns in the world, and those are real concerns, and we do have some impact on our forces and those are very real. But the only thing I would say in response to that is that we know the consequences of failure in Iraq are generally unacceptable, I think to most thoughtful people; and if that is truly the case, if you accept that premise of what failure in Iraq would mean in terms of endangering the American people and what it would mean to us in the region, the seriousness of that, then I don't for the life of me understand why would we risk losing a war in Iraq so that it would help us with maybe fighting a future war someplace? That, I think, invites adventurism on the part of our enemies, and it also affects the relationship that we have with our allies. And certainly it changed the dynamic in the region.

I don't think anybody has an answer to your question as to how long. I know I don't. But this much I do know. We are bringing the combat forces down by 25 percent in 08. I think the prudent thing to do is to reduce those forces even further in 09. I would not do any more reductions in 08 until we knew what the assessment of that reduction is. And I think as a side bar to that, the casualties are still going to come down. And as those casualties come down, I think it changes the dynamics in Iraq rather dramatically, and it will free up forces as well.

Dr. SNYDER. I apologize. We have two minutes left, or maybe less, on this vote.

Mr. Sestak, I appreciate your question. I think it is as about as bad a truncated experience we have this afternoon as I have seen in a while, but it is bad luck on the votes.

I appreciate your all attendance here today. We are not going to keep you after this vote. You have been here almost three hours anyway, but we really appreciate your statements and your thoughts and the wisdom that you provided.

Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:40 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

JANUARY 16, 2008

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JANUARY 16, 2008

Opening Statement of
Chairman Dr. Vic Snyder
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Hearing on "A Continuing Dialogue: Post-surge Alternatives for Iraq"

January 16, 2008

The hearing will come to order.

Good afternoon, and welcome to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations' fifth hearing on alternative strategies for Iraq.

My colleague, Mr. Akin, and I entered into this series of hearings last July because we were frustrated by the tone of the discussion about Iraq last year, and the polarization that has occurred. The political debate on the U.S. strategy for Iraq had too often been framed by two extreme positions: "precipitous withdrawal" or "stay the course" indefinitely. Our hearings were an effort to bring in smart, experienced people who could help us identify and develop alternative approaches for Iraq.

Our intent, again, is not to critique current or past policies, but to focus on the future. Through these hearings, we hope to enhance the public debate and inform full committee deliberations. Presidential election years are not necessarily the best time to debate the nuances of significant issues, but it is absolutely necessary for us to get past sloganeering to discuss the details of national security policies and strategies.

Last July, over four hearings, we heard from retired senior military officers, defense policy experts, and academic specialists. The full committee has held many hearings on Iraq and passed legislation requiring the administration to report on a comprehensive strategy for the redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq. That legislation will hopefully be signed into law next week.

Our previous sessions made clear that we are focused on the future, and not merely intent on rehashing how we got to where we are. In July our witnesses were asked to address alternative strategies and key areas. Some of the specific things we were looking for were:

- The financial and personnel requirements to implement a given alternative;
- The impact on the people of Iraq;
- The impact on regional stability;
- The impact on U.S. national security generally; and
- The impact on the U.S. military.

Our two returning witnesses were asked to update their views since so much has happened since July.

General Keane, you testified that the dual aims of the surge were to create space and time

for political reconciliation and the development of the Iraqi Security Forces. You also noted that if the counteroffensive worked, we could draw down troop levels more quickly and that that had to be done because our military was seriously stretched. Finally, you recommended interagency reform because our political, economic, and diplomatic contributions had not matched those of our military. I hope you will update your views for us.

General McCaffrey, you testified that you didn't think it was the place of U.S. soldiers to try to solve the bitter sectarian struggle in Baghdad and you also didn't think using Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds to pick up garbage and fix sewer systems was targeting the right problem. You also spoke of the interagency challenge, but did not see much utility to Provincial Reconstruction Teams. In fact, you said the effort so far was a "failure". Finally, you too thought the Army might partially collapse if we didn't start drawing down this spring. To you it looked like we'd either be in Iraq for about 3 years – the time it would take to see the surge through and then withdraw if there was a lack of Iraqi progress – or 15 years with a smaller force if the Iraqis stabilized their own situation. You didn't think Iraqi success was likely back in July. I understand you're a bit more optimistic now and I'd like to hear about that change in outlook, if I've characterized it properly.

And, of course, we're seeking views on these issues and more from our two new witnesses.

Since last summer, there have been a lot of changes. The UN Mission in Iraq has been slated for extension and expansion, our President and Prime Minister Maliki have signed an agreement to normalize relations by next December, we have new regional conditions, and the surge appears to have contributed to a decline in violence.

So, we're interested in what our witnesses would recommend as a course of action now.

Our witnesses' written statements will be made part of the record and will help us better understand their views. I hope that today will bring a vigorous discussion not only between subcommittee members and witnesses, but between the witnesses themselves. Anyone who was here for our July hearings, which are all available in audio format on the Armed Services website, will tell you that is exactly the kind of productive exchange we've had in the past.

For today's hearing, we have another distinguished panel including:

- Dr. John Hamre, former Deputy Secretary of Defense and Comptroller and current President of the Center for Security and International Studies;

- Retired General Jack Keane, who has been actively involved in advising the White House and the civilian and military leadership at the Pentagon and in the field, and who appeared before us in July;

- Retired General Barry McCaffrey, who has been traveling to and reporting on Iraq in his capacity as an adjunct professor at West Point for several years now, and who also joined us in July; and

- Professor Christopher Kojm of George Washington University who also served as Advisor to the Iraq Study Group and was Deputy Director of the 9/11 Commission. He also served as an Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and for 14 years on the staff of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Welcome to all of you.

Now, let me turn it over to Mr. Akin for any statement he would like to make.

Statement of Ranking Member Todd Akin
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
House Armed Services Committee

A Continuing Dialogue: Post-Surge Alternatives for Iraq

January 16, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon to our witnesses; thank you for being here today.

When we last met as a subcommittee on this topic this past July, the security situation in Iraq, while improving, was still unstable, and the success of the surge was questioned, if not in doubt. Many of the witnesses who came before this subcommittee predicted that the surge had little (if any) chance of success. Well, here we are six months later, and fortunately the skeptics were wrong. There seems to be a growing consensus that the surge has worked; that is, the security situation in Iraq, particularly in Baghdad and Anbar province, is much improved according to all the commonly cited metrics. General Keane, in particular, I'd like to thank you

for the critical testimony you provided this subcommittee in July. It gave me a fuller understanding of General Petraeus' strategy, and I believe it assisted the Congress in ultimately funding the surge.

With success, however, comes a new set of challenges, and this is what we'd like to have our witnesses focus on today. The central questions we face in Iraq are: how do we take advantage of the progress we've made as a result of the surge; how can we make the security gains last; how can we translate progress on the security track into progress on the political track; and finally, what will the U.S. presence in Iraq look like in the months and years to come?

The Administration has given us some insight into how they plan to proceed in the coming year. In November 2007, President Bush and Prime Minister Maliki signed a Declaration of Principles which stated that by 2009 the U.S. would move from a Security Council mandated presence in Iraq to a traditional bilateral relationship with Iraq. This will include a status of forces agreement (SOFA) that would, presumably, delineate the size, roles and mission of U.S. forces in Iraq.

Moving towards a conventional bilateral relationship with a stable Iraq has always been our policy goal, but I'm curious to hear our witnesses' views on the Declaration of Principles. In particular, do you think the timeline (January 2009) is realistic? Moreover, what has to happen on the ground in Iraq in the next 12 months to make a successful shift to a normalized bilateral relationship? Finally, what should a SOFA with Iraq look like, and can you articulate the types of roles and missions U.S. forces in Iraq should continue (training, PRTs, counterterrorism, etc.)? The more you can help us think about these questions the better prepared we will be to address the next cycle of Iraq legislation that will come before this House in the coming months.

Again, thank you for being here today.

[Yield Back to Chairman Snyder]

Testimony before the

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Concerning

"Alternative Strategies for Iraq in the Post-Surge Environment"

January 16, 2008

A Statement by

Dr. John J. Hamre

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Chairman Snyder, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, I am honored to be invited to testify before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations concerning alternatives strategies for Iraq in a post-surge environment.

I believe I was asked to testify because I was a member of the so-called Jones Commission. Just for the record, last summer the United States Congress enacted a provision in the emergency supplemental appropriations act that directed the Department of Defense to establish an independent commission to survey and evaluate the capabilities of the Iraqi police and military establishments, and their capability to undertake security operations for Iraq. The law stipulated that the Department of Defense would use an independent institution to organize the Commission and to serve as its support staff. General James Jones was the chairman of the Commission and I served as one of the commissioners. Our commission results were presented to the full House Armed Services Committee last September.

I have not had a chance to return to Iraq since that time. I continue to keep apprised of the situation in Iraq, but through secondary sources. Therefore, my testimony today, in addition to representing only my personal views, also is limited by the fact that I have not been in Iraq recently.

As a preface to my observations on the question of the hearing, let me briefly restate the primary findings of the Jones Commission. I will summarize this in a highly abstract form, only to get the key points before the Committee.

First, we found last July and August that real progress had been made. Clearly that progress is now obvious to the outside world.

Second, we found that there was no shortage of Iraqis willing to fight for their communities. We saw Army and police training activities and saw genuine progress creating these two institutions.

Third, we concluded that the Iraqi army would be able to assume greater responsibility for the internal security of their country but would not be capable of undertaking fully independent operations this year. They believe they can take over the security of the country from internal threats later this year. We felt that was a bit optimistic, because they will still require essential support from U.S. and coalition forces for some time. But they were making great progress. They knew that their ability to defend against an external threat was some years in the future, and we agreed with that assessment.

Fourth, we judged that local police units were making genuine progress, especially in communities where there was a close connection between police and local political authorities.

Fifth, we felt that the National Police force—a paramilitary element of approximately 25,000 personnel located today primarily in Baghdad—was a major problem and needed to be disbanded and reorganized.

Sixth, we judged that the Ministry of Interior was a major problem, and its pathologies were preventing the development of strong and effective policing in the country.

Seventh, we found that Iraqi units likely could do more tasks, and they should be allowed to do more, even though they would remain dependent on American logistical support for some time. We specifically concluded that "good enough is good enough", and we should not be attempting to make the Iraqi forces into American-like elements and to judge them by that standard.

Eighth, we concluded that the progress in building a security force was not matched by progress in political reconciliation, and that was the primary problem facing Iraq.

Again, while I have not been back to Iraq since last summer, it is my impression that all of these observations remain valid. Iraqi spokesmen hotly dispute our view that the Minister of the Interior and the National Police are plagued by troubles. Informally I understand little has changed, but I do want to acknowledge that we have been criticized for our finding in this area.

Clearly the most troubling situation is the lack of progress with political reconciliation in Baghdad. America spent the first four years in Iraq trying to build a strong central government, but with positive attributes. That has not worked. During the past year we shifted our strategy and are now trying to build security from the bottom up. This appears to be working, in that it is creating a more stable and secure environment. But it is not creating momentum in Baghdad for a more effective central government.

Now to the primary question posed by the Chairman in his letter of invitation: what are the alternative strategies for Iraq in a post-surge environment?

First, let me say that I think the surge did contribute to a more stable security environment. But I think we also have to acknowledge that during this period we also saw a dramatic increase in the size of the Iraqi police and Army, as well as their substantial operational involvement in the Baghdad Security Plan. While we put 30,000 more troops on the ground, the Iraqis effectively put 100,000 more troops and police into service. The surge was not just an American surge, but an Iraqi surge. We also need to be clear that we struck a deal with the Sunni sheiks in Anbar province to recognize their militia forces as de facto police forces. This, too, put many more Iraqi security personnel on the streets. This increase in Iraqi capability hugely contributed to the improvement in the security situation, in my judgment, and is the basis for our confidence we can now begin removing American forces from Iraq at a measured pace.

Second, I think there is a good chance that we can slowly reduce the number of American forces in Iraq throughout this year as Iraqi police and army units become more numerous and more capable. I think it is quite likely we could be at or below 100,000 U.S. military personnel by the end of this calendar year.

Third, I can't offer firm predictions, but the widening circle of stability in the country should permit more economic development, to lower the crushing unemployment in the country. Our economic assistance has not been very effective, largely because of the insecure environment and the lack of a consistent economic development strategy linked to a broader political strategy. At least the physical insecurity problem is somewhat lessened now.

Fourth, the development of authentic political power is now emerging from the tribal level up to the provincial level. It is not improving at the national level. This effectively means that the country is practically being partitioned along ethnic lines. The final resolution of this is not clear, because the situation in Baghdad and in the surrounding provinces is unresolved. How can we grow authentic political legitimacy from the bottom up, to produce a coherent central government. That is the central problem we now face.

Let me conclude with an observation, Mr. Chairman. It was my personal conclusion from the multiple conversations we had in Iraq this summer that Iraqis can do more than we are letting them do, and they will not take control of the situation until they have to. If they think we will do a job for them, they will step back and wait for us to do it. If it is really important to them, they get the work done. I believe we should definitely be shifting more of the burden to Iraqis to manage their own country and take responsibility for their own security. The time for idealism in what we wish Iraq to become needs to be set aside, and an attitude of pragmatism should guide our policies. We can reduce our footprint in Iraq, and we should.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Subcommittee. I am pleased to answer your questions.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JANUARY 16, 2008

Adjunct Professor of International Affairs

December 18, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR: **Colonel Michael Meese**
Professor and Head Dept of Social Sciences
United States Military Academy

CC: **Colonel Cindy Jebb**
Professor and Deputy Head Dept of Social Sciences
United States Military Academy

SUBJECT: After Action Report—General Barry R McCaffrey USA (Ret)
VISIT IRAQ AND KUWAIT 5-11 DECEMBER 2007

1. PURPOSE: This memo provides feedback on my strategic and operational assessment of current security operations in Iraq. Look forward to providing lectures to faculty and cadet national security seminars.

Will provide follow-on comprehensive report with attachments of current unclassified data and graphs documenting the current counter-insurgency situation in Iraq.

2. SOURCES:

1.) **ADM William (Fox) Fallon USN, Commander US Central Command (CENTCOM)** One-on -one meeting in Iraq. Theater strategic assessment.

2.) **GEN David Petraeus, Commanding General Multi-National Forces Iraq (CG, MNF-I)** One-on-one office call: strategic assessment.

3.) **LTG Raymond Odierno, Commanding General Multi-National Corps-Iraq (CG, MNC-I)** Campaign briefing.

4.) **LTG Jim Dubik, Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq (MNSTC-I)** MNSTC-I Overview brief and ministerial capacity discussion "Building the Iraqi Police and Army".

5.) **Chargé Ambassador Pat Butenis, Deputy Chief of Mission** (Ambassador Ryan Crocker on personal leave) One-on-one diplomatic assessment.

6.) **MG John Paxton USMC, Chief of Staff Multi National Forces- Iraq (COS, MNF-I)** MNF-I Battle Update Assessment.

7.) **MG Joe Fil, Commanding General, Multi-National Division -Baghdad (CG, MND-B)** Update- "The struggle for Bagdad."

8.) **MG Mark Hertling, Commanding General Multi-National Division- North (CG, MND-N)** MND-N "Battle Update Brief the northern zones…AQI final refuge."

9.) **MG Rick Lynch, Commanding General Multi-National Division Center-(CG, MND-C)** MND-C Operations & Intelligence Round Table. "The struggle for the southern approaches to Baghdad."

10.) **MG Mike Jones, Commander Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT)** Round table discussion at Taqaddam Airbase. **"Building the Iraqi Police."**

11.) **MG Kevin Bergner, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Effects, MNF-I** Update briefing with senior MNF-I Staff.

12.) **MG Maston Robeson (Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategy, Plans and Assessments MNF-I), RADML Greg Smith (PAOMNF-I):** Update briefing with senior MNF-I Staff.

13.) **MG Dennis Hardy, Deputy Commanding General, Third Army, U.S. Army Central (USARCENT), Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC):** Briefing on strategic situation in Kuwait.

14.) **BG Geoff Freeman, CG, 335th Theater Sig Cmd (Prov), C6, Coalition Forces Land Component Command:** Update briefing on communications support, Iraq and Afghanistan.

15.) **US Embassy Baghdad Country Team Briefing – AMB Marci Ries (Pol-Mil Counselor), AMB Charlie Ries (Coordinator for Economic Transition in Iraq), Todd Schwartz (Economic Counselor), Matt Tueller (Political Counselor), Dr. Chris Schnaubelt (Chief of Joint Strategic Plans and Assessments).**

16.) **BG Jim Yarbrough, CG, Iraqi Assistance Group (IAG):** Update briefing MNC-I assistance group. "The status and training of US MiTT teams imbedded in Iraqi Forces."

17.) **Operational Intelligence Briefings. BG (P) Vince Brooks (DCG S, MND-B), COL Jack Ballantyne (Chief of Staff and MND-B), COL Bill West (Chief ISF Cell, MND-B), LTC Steve North (G2, MND-B), LTC Chris Bonheim (Deputy G3, MND-B):** "Iraqi Forces engaged in the struggle for Baghdad."

18.) **Campaign briefing with MNC-I CG Team. COL Jerry Tait (C2, MNC-I), COL John Murray (C3, MNC-I), COL J.T. Thomson (XO, MNC-I CG)** "The campaign Plan."

19.) **Sensing session and open discussion with thirty-eight US battalion commanders: MND-B Battalion Commander's Conference.** Working Lunch --- BG John Campbell, DCG (S).

20.) **BG Barry McManus (Joint Headquarters Transition Team CMATT), BG Robert Allardice (Air Force Transition Team CMATT), and RADM Edward Winters (Navy Transition Team CMATT), and COL Al Dochnal (Chief of Staff CMATT):** MNSTC-I Overview Brief Iraqi: Security Forces and Ministerial Capacity Discussion

21.) **BG Jim Kessler, CG 2nd Marine Logistic Group MNF-W, COL Rivers Johnson (PAO, CPATT), Mr. Don Lane (Chief of Training CPATT):** Round Table Discussion. (Forced down by dust storm weather with the Marines!)

22.) **BG Edward Cardon, DCG-S, MND-C**: MND-C Battle Update Brief.

23.) **BG Charles Gurganus USMC (CG Ground Component Element, II MEF), COL John Charlton USA (Commander 1st Bde, MNF-W), and COL Dave Fuquea USMC (G3-ISF MNF-W):** Overview, Ramadi city visits, and working lunch Marine/US Army leadership Camp Ramadi.

24.) **COL Jim Hickey, (Director, MNC-I COIC), MAJ Brian Bricker (XO, MNC-I COIC):** Office call with MNC-I Counter-IED Operational Integration Center. "Strategic intelligence assessment."

25.) **COL Ricky Gibbs, (Commander 4/1 ID), LTC Pat Frank (Commander 1-28 IN)**: 4/1 ID BCT & 1-28 IN "O&I Brief with focus on the battle for Baghdad." (US 80 KIA and 600+ WIA in this brigade during the campaign.)

26.) **COL Rodger Cloutier (G3 MND-C), MAJ David Waldron (G3 Ops MND-C), MAJ David Stender (720th MP Bn S3), MAJ Michael Kelly (G3 ISF Cell MND-C):** Lunch & Brief on Iraqi Security Forces Status & Readiness on the southern approaches to Baghdad."

27.) **COL Dominic Caracillo (Commander, 3/101 ABN), LTC Andrew Rohling (Commander, 3-187 IN), COL Ahmad (Iraqi Battalion Commander PB Kemple):** Visit with 3rd BCT, 101 ABN at Patrol Base Kemple. "The battle for the southern approaches to Baghdad."

28.) **COL Wayne Grigsby (Commander 3rd Bde, 3ID), MAJ Luis Rivera (XO, 1-10 FA Bn), and CPT Pat Moffett (Commander, A/1-10 FA Bn):** Battle updates "the southern belt" ..."market walk Iraqi City" with 3rd Bde, 3ID

29.) **COL Bryan Watson (Chief of Staff, MND-N), COL Steve Schenk (G3 MND-N):** MND-N Battle Update briefs the northern zones.

30.) **COL John Broadmedow USMC, Chief 7th IA Division MiTT:** 7th IA Division Mitt Overview& Discussion at Camp Black Diamond. "The reconciliation campaign for Anbar province."

31.) **COL Steve Schenk (G3 MND-N), MAJ Sam Lex (G3-ISF MND-N)**: Meeting with MND-N Iraqi Security Forces Cell.

32.) **COL Jessie Farrington (Commander 1st CAB), LTC Jim Cutting (Commander, TF Odin), MAJ Bill Huff (Brigade S3, 1st CAB):** 1st Combat Aviation Brigade and TF Odin Briefing-- Tikrit.

33.) **LTC Thomas Hauerwas (Bde XO 1/101st ABN), MAJ George Bratcher (Bde S2, 1/101st ABN):** 1/101st ABN Operations and Intelligence Update "the southern approaches."

34.) **Round table discussion with International Police Advisors: Donald Lane (Chief of Training CPATT), Steve Ryan, International Police Advisor, Habbaniyah, Dave Smith, International Police Advisor, Ed Weibl, International Police Advisor. "Effectiveness of the Iraqi Police."**

35.) **MG Tariq Yusuf, Anbar Provincial Chief of Police:** Operational assessment at Ramadi Government Center.

36.) **Meeting/ briefing with 7th Iraqi Army Division Commander and senior staff. "The struggle for Anbar Province."**

37.) **Sensing Session with twenty US Company Commanders. Multi National Division North. "Morale, career plans, performance of Iraqi Security Forces, trust in Commanders."**

38.) **Field visit 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, MAJ Eric Weis, S3.** (Serve as honorary Colonel of the regiment. Was honored to present awards for valor and purple heart medals, as well as receive update brief on their counter-insurgency operations south of Baghdad.)

39.) **Visit Public Market Place. MND Center. Narhwan, Iraq** (Population 100,000)

40.) **Visit "Concerned Local Citizens" security group. MND Center.**

41.) **Visit Iraq Police Station. Ramadi, Iraq.**

42.) **Visit Iraq Police. MND Bagdad, Iraq.**

43.) **Visit Iraq Army. MND Bagdad, Iraq.**

44.) **Visit Iraq Regional Training Center. Police & Army. Habbaniyah, Iraq.**

1. THE BOTTOM LINE---AN OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT:

a. VIOLENCE DOWN DRAMATICALLY:

The struggle for stability in the Iraqi Civil War has entered a new phase with dramatically reduced levels of civilian sectarian violence, political assassinations, abductions, and small arms/ indirect fire and IED attacks on US and Iraqi Police and Army Forces.

This is the unmistakable new reality ---and must be taken into account as the US debates its options going forward. The national security debate must move on to an analysis of why this new political and security situation exists---not whether it exists.

General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker have provided brilliant collective leadership to US Forces and have ably engaged the Iraqi political and military leadership.

b. AL QAEDA TACTICALLY DEFEATED AND TRYING TO REGENERATE:

Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) has been defeated at a tactical and operational level in Baghdad and Anbar Province and is trying to re-constitute in the north and along the Syrian frontier.

The Iraqi people have turned on AQI because it overreached trying to impose an alien and harsh practice of Islam inconsistent with the more moderate practices of the Sunni minority. (16% of the population.) The foreign jihadist elements in AQI (with their enormous hatred of what they view as the apostate Shia) have alienated the nationalism of the broader Iraqi population. Foreign intervention across the Syrian frontier has dropped substantially. Most border-crossers are suicide bombers who are dead within four days while carrying out largely ineffective attacks on the civilian population and the Iraqi Police.

The senior leaders of AQI have become walking dead men because of the enormous number of civilian intelligence tips coming directly to US Forces. US and Brit Special Operations Forces are deadly against AQI leadership. Essentially AQI has been driven out of Baghdad and is now trying to reconstitute their capabilities.

c. IRAQI SECURITY FORCES KEY FACTOR IN SUCCESSFUL INTERNAL SECURITY:

The Iraqi Security Forces are now beginning to take a major and independent successful role in the war. Under the determined leadership of LTG Jim Dubik ---both the equipment and force levels of the Iraqi Security Forces are now for the first time in the war at a realistic level of resource planning.

The previously grossly ineffective and corrupt Iraqi Police have been forcefully re-trained and re-equipped. The majority of their formerly sectarian police leadership has been replaced. The police are now a mixed bag--- but many local units are now effectively providing security and intelligence penetration of their neighborhoods.

The Iraqi Army has made huge progress in leadership, training, and equipment capability. The embedded US training teams have simply incredible levels of trust and mutual

cooperation with their Iraqi counterparts. Corruption remains endemic. However, much remains to be done. This is the center-of-gravity of the war.

The ISF still lacks credibility as a coherent counter-insurgency and deterrent force. It has no national logistics and maintenance system. It lacks any semblance of an Air Force with a robust lift and attack helicopter force and fixed wing C-130 lift to support counter-insurgency. It lacks any semblance of a functioning military medical system to provide country-wide trauma care, evacuation, and rehabilitation. It lacks any artillery with precision munitions to provide stand-off attack of hard targets—or to assist in counter-battery fire to protect the population and military installations. It lacks any serious armor capability to act as a deterrent force to protect national sovereignty. (In my judgment the Army needs 9000+ wheel and track armored vehicles for their 13 combat divisions.)

d. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WORK:

There is no functional central Iraqi Government. Incompetence, corruption, factional paranoia, and political gridlock have paralyzed the state. The constitution promotes bureaucratic stagnation and factional strife. The budgetary process cannot provide responsive financial support to the military and the police---nor local government for health, education, governance, reconstruction, and transportation.

Mr. Maliki has no political power base and commands no violent militias who have direct allegiance to him personally---making him a non-player in the Iraqi political struggle for dominance in the post-US withdrawal period which looms in front of the Iraqi people.

However, there is growing evidence of the successful re-constitution of local and provincial government. Elections for provincial government are vitally important to creating any possible form of functioning Iraqi state.

e. POPULATION AND REFUGEES IN MISERY:

There are 4 million plus dislocated Iraqis---possibly one in six citizens. Many of the intelligentsia and professional class have fled to Syria, Jordan, or abroad. 60,000 + have been murdered or died in the post-invasion violence. Medical care is primitive. Security and justice for the individual is weak. Many lack clean water or adequate food and a roof over their family. Anger and hatred for the cruelties of the ongoing Civil War overwhelm the desire for reconciliation.

There is widespread disbelief that the Iraqi government can bring the country together. The people (and in particular the women) are sick of the chaotic violence and want an end to the unpredictable violence and the dislocation of the population.

f. ECONOMY SHOWING SIGNS OF COMING BACK:

The economy is slowly reviving--- although there is massive 50% or more unemployment or under-employment.

The electrical system is slowly coming back--- but it is being overwhelmed by huge increases in demand as air conditioners, TV's, and light industry load the system.

The production and distribution of gasoline is increasing but is incapable of keeping up with a gigantic increase in private vehicle and truck ownership.

The Iraqi currency to everyone's astonishment is very stable and more valued than the weak US dollar.

The agricultural system is under-resourced and poorly managed---it potentially could feed the population and again become a source of export currency earnings.

g. US COMBAT FORCES NOW DOMINATING THE CIVIL WAR:

The morale and tactical effectiveness of engaged US military forces are striking. The "surge" of five additional US Brigade Combat Teams helped. (Although we are now forced to begin an immediate drawdown because of the inadequate resources of the worldwide US Army.)

These combat forces have become the most effective counter-insurgency (and forensic police investigative service) in history. LTG Ray Odierno the MNC-I Commander and his senior commanders have gotten out of their fixed bases and operate at platoon level in concert with small elements of the Iraqi Army and Police. Their aggressive tactics combined with simply brilliant use of the newly energized Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's -- Superb State Department leadership and participation) for economic development have dramatically changed the tone of the war.

US Forces have now unilaterally constituted some 60,000+ armed "Iraqi Concerned Local Citizen Groups" to the consternation of the Maliki Government. These CLC Groups have added immeasurably to the security of the local populations -- as well as giving a paycheck to unemployed males to support their families. Although the majority of these CLC Groups are Sunnis – increasingly the concept is being extended to Shia Groups south of Baghdad.

The US battalion and brigade commanders have grown up in combat with near continuous operations in the past 20 years in the Balkans, Desert Storm, Afghanistan, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Many of the Army combat forces are now beginning their 4th round of year+ combat tours in Iraq or Afghanistan. Many of the Marine units are now on their 5th tour of seven month combat deployments. The troops and their leaders are simply fearless---despite 34,000 US killed and wounded.

The US company and battalion commanders now operate as the de facto low-level government of the Iraqi state…schools, health, roads, police, education, governance. The Iraqis tend to defer to US company and battalion commanders based on their respect for their counterparts' energy, integrity, and the assurance of some level of security. These US combat units have enormous discretion to use CRP Funds to jump start local urban and rural economic and social reconstruction. They are rapidly mentoring and empowering local Iraqi civilian and police leadership.

Direct intelligence cooperation has sky-rocketed. The civilian population provides by-name identification of criminal leadership. They point out IED's. They directly interact with US forces at low level in much of the country. (There are still 3000+ attacks on US Forces each month…this is still a Civil War.)

h. SUNNI ARABS WANT BACK IN--- BEFORE US FORCES DEPART:

The Sunnis Arabs have stopped seeing the US as the enemy and are now cooperating to eliminate AQI -- and to position themselves for the next phase of the Civil War when the US Forces withdraw.

There is no leadership that can speak for all the Sunnis. The former regime elements have now stepped forward ---along with tribal leadership ---to assert some emerging control.

i. SHIA ARABS HOLDING IN CEASEFIRE—STRUGGLE FOR INTERNAL POWER:

The Shia JAM militia under the control of Mr. Sadr have maintained their cease-fire, are giving up rogue elements to be harvested by US Special Operations teams, and are consolidating control over their ethnic cleansing success in Baghdad---as well as maneuvering to dominate the Iranian affiliated Badr brigade forces in the south.

However, Mr. Sadr lost great credibility when his forces violently intervened in the Holy City of Najaf ---and were videoed on national TV and throughout the Arab world carrying out criminal acts against the pilgrims and protectors of the Shia population.

Sadr himself is an enigma. He may well want back into the political process. He is not a puppet of the Iranians and may lack their real support. His command and control of his own forces appears weak. He personally lacks the theological gravitas of a true Shia Islamic scholar like the venerable Sistani. He may be personally fearful of being killed or captured by ISF special operations forces if he is visibly leading inside Iraq…hence his frequent absences to Iran at the sufferance of that government.

j. DOMINANCE OF CRIMINAL ELEMENTS:

There is no clear emerging nation-wide Shia leadership for their 60% of the Iraqi population. It is difficult to separate either Shia or Sunni political factions from Mafia criminal elements-- with a primary focus on looting the government financial system and oil wealth of the nation.

In many cases neighborhoods are dominated by gangs of armed thugs who loosely legitimize their arbitrary violence by implying allegiance to a higher level militia.

The Iraqi justice system…courts, prosecutors, defense attorneys, police investigators, jails for pre-trial confinement, prisons for sentences, integrity of public institutions---does not yet exist. Vengeance is the only operative law of the land. The situation is starting to change. The Iraqi Police will be in charge of most neighborhoods by the end of next year.

k. THE KURDS---AN AUTOMOMOUS SUCCESSFUL REGION:

The Kurds are a successful separate autonomous state---with a functioning and rapidly growing economy, a strong military (Both existing Pesh Merga Forces and nominally Iraqi-Kurdish Army divisions), a free press, relative security, significant foreign

investment, and a growing tourist industry which serves as a neutral and safe meeting place for separated and terrified Sunni and Shia Arab families from the south.

There are Five Star hotels, airline connections to Europe, a functioning telephone system, strong trade relations with Syria, enormous mutually beneficial trade relations with Turkey, religious tolerance, a functional justice system, and an apparently enduring cease-fire between the traditional Kurdish warring factions.

Kurdish adventurism and appetite to confront both their external neighbors and the Iraqi central state may have been tempered in a healthy way by the prospect of invasion from the powerful Turkish Armed Forces to avenge the continued cross-border KKP terrorism.

The war-after-next will be the war of the Iraqi Arabs against the Kurds ---when Mosul as well as Kirkuk and its giant oil basin (and an even greater Kurdish claimed buffer zone to the south) is finally and inevitably absorbed (IAW the existing Constitution) by the nascent Kurdish state. The only real solution to this dread inevitability is patient US diplomacy to continually defer the fateful Kurdish decision ad infinitum.

2. THE WAY AHEAD:

a. THE CENTRAL US MILITARY PURPOSE MUST BE TO CREATE ADEQUATE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES:

The Iraqis are the key variable. The center of our military effort must be the creation of well-equipped, trained, and adequately supported Iraqi Police and Army Forces with an operational Air Force and Navy.

We have rapidly decreasing political leverage on the Iraqi factional leadership. It is evident that the American people have no continued political commitment to solving the Iraqi Civil War. The US Armed Forces cannot for much longer impose an internal skeleton of governance and security on 27 million warring people.

The US must achieve our real political objectives to withdraw most US combat forces in the coming 36 months leaving in place:

1st: A stable Iraqi government.

2nd: A strong and responsive Iraqi security force.

3rd: A functioning economy.

4th: Some form of accountable, law-based government.

5th: A government with active diplomatic and security ties to its six neighboring states.

b. THE US ARMY IS TOO SMALL AND POORLY RESOURCED TO CONTINUE SUCCESSFUL COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN AT THE CURRENT LEVEL:

An active counter-insurgency campaign in Iraq could probably succeed in the coming decade with twenty-five US Brigade Combat Teams. (Afghanistan probably needs two more US combat brigades for a total of four in the coming 15 year campaign to create an operational state--- given more robust NATO Forces and ROE). We can probably sustain a force in Iraq indefinitely (given adequate funding) of some 10+ brigades. However, the US Army is starting to unravel.

Our recruiting campaign is bringing into the Army thousands of new soldiers (perhaps 10% of the annual input) who should not be in uniform. (Criminal records, drug use, moral waivers, non-high school graduates, pregnant from Basic Training and therefore non-deployable, lowest mental category, etc.)

We are losing our combat experienced mid-career NCOs' and Captains at an excessive rate. (ROTC DMG's, West Pointers, Officers with engineering and business degrees, etc.) Their morale is high, they are proud of their service, they have enormous personal courage---however, they see a nation of 300 million people with only an under resourced Armed Forces at war. The US Army at 400,000 troops is too small to carry out the current military strategy. The active duty US Army needs to be 800,000 strong to guarantee US national security.

The National Guard and Reserves are too small, are inadequately resourced, their equipment is broken or deployed, they are beginning their second involuntary combat deployments, and they did not sign up to be a regular war-fighting force. They have done a superb job in combat but are now in peril of not being ready for serious homeland security missions or deployment to a major shooting war such as Korea.

The modernization of our high technology US Air Force and Navy is imperiled by inadequate Congressional support. Support has focused primarily on the ground war and homeland security with $400 Billion+. We are digging a strategic hole for the US as we mono-focus on counter-insurgency capabilities ---while China inevitably emerges in the coming 15 years as a global military power.

c. HEALING THE MORAL FISSURES IN THE ARMED FORCES:

The leadership of Secretary Bob Gates in DOD has produced a dramatic transformation of our national security effort which under the Rumsfeld leadership was characterized by: a failing under-resourced counter-insurgency strategy; illegal DOD orders on the abuse of human rights; disrespect for the media and the Congress and the other departments of government; massive self-denial on wartime intelligence; and an internal civilian-imposed integrity problem in the Armed Forces---that punished candor, de-centralized operations, and commanders initiative.

Admiral Mullen as CJCS and Admiral Fallon as CENTCOM Commander bring hard-nosed realism and integrity of decision-making to an open and collaborative process which re-emerged as Mr. Rumsfeld left office. (Mr. Rumsfeld was an American patriot, of great personal talent, energy, experience, bureaucratic cleverness, and charisma---who

operated with personal arrogance, intimidation and disrespect for the military, lack of forthright candor, avoidance of personal responsibility, and fundamental bad judgment.)

Secretary Gates has turned the situation around with little drama in a remarkable display of wisdom, integrity, and effective senior leadership of a very complex and powerful organization. General Petraeus now has the complete latitude and trust in his own Departmental senior civilian leadership to have successfully changed the command climate in the combat force in Iraq. His commanders now are empowered to act in concert with strategic guidance. They can frankly level with the media and external visitors. I heard this from many senior leaders -- from three star General to Captain Company commanders.

3. THE END GAME:

It is too late to decide on the Iraqi exit strategy with the current Administration. However, the Secretary of Defense and CENTCOM can set the next Administration up for success by getting down to 12 + Brigade Combat teams before January of 2009 ---and by massively resourcing the creation of an adequate Iraqi Security Force.

We also need to make the case to Congress that significant US financial resources are needed to get the Iraqi economy going. ($3 billion per year for five years.) The nation-building process is the key to a successful US Military withdrawal---and will save enormous money and grief in the long run to avoid a failed Iraqi state.

Clearly we must continue the current sensible approach by Secretary of State Rice to open dialog with Syria, Turkey, and the Iranians---and to focus Arab attention with Saudi leadership on a US diplomatic offensive to mitigate the confrontation between Israel and the Arab states. We must also build a coalition to mitigate the dangers of a nuclear armed Iran.

The dysfunctional central government of Iraq, the warring Shia/Sunni/Kurdish factions, and the unworkable Iraqi constitution will only be put right by the Iraqis in their own time---and in their own way. It is entirely credible that a functioning Iraqi state will slowly emerge from the bottom up...with a small US military and diplomatic presence holding together in loose fashion the central government. The US must also hold at bay Iraq's neighbors from the desperate mischief they might cause that could lead to all out Civil War with regional involvement.

A successful withdrawal from Iraq with the emergence of a responsible unified Iraqi nation is vitally important to the security of the American people and the Mid-East. We are clearly no longer on a downward spiral. However, the ultimate outcome is still quite seriously in doubt.

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Here's the surge Iraq needs

The US can still stabilize Iraq – if it steps up its efforts.

By Christopher Kojm

Washington

Iraq continues to surprise us. Even with our massive presence in Iraq, the United States responds to developments there more than it shapes them.

The Sunni tribes in Anbar decided they hate Al Qaeda more than they hate the American presence. They decided they need an ally against the Shiite-led government in Baghdad. Gen. David Petraeus, in turn, decided to place priority on protecting the Iraqi people, and decided it is better to work with the insurgents than to be their targets. Across a wide swath of western and central Iraq, US forces and former insurgents are at or near an uneasy cease-fire. So what do we do now?

The troop surge is the story of 2007. What the US needs in 2008 is a surge of political, military, diplomatic, and humanitarian activity across the board, in order to achieve a reduced but still attainable objective in Iraq – stability. Without stability, more ambitious goals cannot be achieved. With it, US forces can begin to withdraw.

We need to press the Iraqi government as hard as we can on questions of national reconciliation. Why? Because the current moment of hope in Iraq will fade unless Sunnis see a future for themselves in the life of their country. They need to be brought into the Iraqi Army, police, and government ministries. They need a chance to vote for their own elected representatives at the provincial level. They need to share in Iraq's oil wealth. Otherwise, the current lull in violence will be just a timeout in an unfolding sectarian war – and a future Iraq made up of gangs and warlords.

We need to move as quickly as we can to complete the training of Iraqi security forces and to transition the security mission to them. Why? Because the high-water mark for US troops in Iraq has already passed. At the direction of President Bush, US force levels will return to pre-surge levels by July 2008. The next president almost surely will reduce US troop levels further.

Polls consistently show that Iraqis and Americans both want a withdrawal of US forces from Iraq. Iraqi leaders want to take charge of security, and we should let them. Will it be messy? Yes, but Iraqis will have to find their own solutions, because a large US troop presence in Iraq can no longer be sustained.

We need strong US leadership in an international effort to support Iraqi reconciliation and regional stability. Why? Because Iraq cannot do it alone. Reconciliation in Iraq requires the support of all its neighbors. The neighbors, in turn, need stability in Iraq. They want to avoid spillover of the conflict, and want the 2 million-plus Iraqi refugees to return home.

US diplomatic leadership is necessary. Only the US can persuade Turkey to not invade Kurdistan. US encouragement for Saudi Arabia's quiet efforts can help sustain the "Anbar awakening." The US saw fit to invite Syria to the Annapolis peace conference: Why not now engage Syria directly on behalf of peace and reconciliation in Iraq?

Iran will be the toughest challenge for diplomacy. Yet the intelligence community's reassessment of the nuclear threat offers the opportunity to pursue a dialogue with Iran anew – and topic No. 1 should be our shared interest in stability in Iraq.

Reconciliation and stability in Iraq also require addressing the plight of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons. Those who have fled Iraq are running out of money. They lack access to schools and medical care. Those inside lack almost everything. They are in a daily struggle for survival.

The president does not speak of Iraqi refugees in his speeches. Yet the US bears a large measure of responsibility for the 4.5 million Iraqis – 1 out of 7 – who have been forced from their homes because of the violence. The US spends some $10 billion a month in Iraq. The total requested for humanitarian assistance in Iraq for fiscal year 2008 is $240 million – less than one day's worth of war costs.

Surely our great country, with its long tradition of humanitarian relief, can do better by the Iraqi people. Surely it is in the national interest of the US to prevent the creation of another large and bitter exile community in the Middle East.

Good options are long past, but tolerable outcomes for the US in Iraq are still possible if we use all the tools of national power on behalf of national reconciliation, regional stability, and – as General Petraeus told us – protecting the Iraqi people.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JANUARY 16, 2008

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY DR. SNYDER

Dr. SNYDER. Lt. General Lute's role is shaping Iraq policy has been unclear. Can you explain what you think his role is and what he has accomplished? CENTCOM's position has been similarly ambiguous, as the chain of command seems to be from General Petraeus directly to the Secretary of Defense. Can you explain what role CENTCOM is playing, if any?

Dr. HAMRE. I know that LTG Lute's appointment caused great debate, and there were statements that he was to be the "czar" for Iraq policy in the Bush Administration. I actually think his role was more modest and more appropriate. I believe LTG Lute has been playing an essential coordination role, to ensure that the U.S. Government's response is more coordinated and coherent. The leadership for action has remained with the respective Departments of the Executive Branch. My impression is that he is working hard to make sure interagency problems are brought forward to the National Security Council, and that there is some measure of follow through on the decisions that are made.

I don't believe that CENTCOM's role is ambiguous. CENTCOM remains responsible for the security issues in their area of operation. Secretary Rumsfeld created a reporting relationship where the Commander in Iraq reports directly. I know that General Petraeus (as did his predecessor) also reports to the CENTCOM commander. This relationship is analogous to the situation we have in the Pacific with the Commander, US Forces Korea. CENTCOM is responsible for the broader security challenges in the region, with special attention to Iran. I also know that Secretary Gates has tasked CENTCOM to provide an independent assessment of the security situation inside Iraq. He indicated recently that he has asked for independent assessments from General Petraeus, from CENTCOM and from the Joint Staff so that he has differing perspectives on the situation in Iraq for purposes of is own decision making.

Dr. SNYDER. Have you had the opportunity to evaluate the current Joint Campaign Plan? If so, what are your unclassified impressions of it?

Dr. HAMRE. I am afraid I am not familiar with the current Joint Campaign Plan and have not studied it. I have several experts at CSIS who are familiar with it. If the Committee would wish to draw on those experts, please let me know.

Dr. SNYDER. Please feel free to submit any other information on the way forward in Iraq, or to extend your remarks.

Dr. HAMRE. I feel the Committee gave me ample opportunity to explain my views, both during the period of my opening statement and in my response to questions from the Committee members. Therefore, I do not have any additional comments to offer at this time.

Dr. SNYDER. Have you had the opportunity to evaluate the current Joint Campaign Plan? If so, what are your unclassified impressions of it?

Mr. KOJM. I have not had the opportunity to review the Joint Campaign Plan.

Dr. SNYDER. Please feel free to submit any other information on the way forward in Iraq, or to extend your remarks.

Mr. KOJM. Tactical progress under the surge, and a dampening of the violence, is an opportunity for U.S. policy. Yet if there is no significant progress on political reconciliation in Iraq, this moment of hope will pass, and sectarian violence will resume.

As General Petraeus put it in the *Washington Post* (March 14, 2008), "no one" in the U.S. and Iraqi government "feels that there has been sufficient progress by any means in the area of national reconciliation," or in the provision of basic public services. In the absence of such progress, the achievements of the surge will erode and unwind.

There is still a significant imbalance in the use of American power and influence in Iraq. Too much emphasis is focused on the military side of the equation.

The focus for U.S. policy in 2008 should be an all-out effort to press the parties in Iraq on political reconciliation. In addition, US diplomatic efforts should be focused on engaging regional partners and the international community in support of reconciliation, security and stability in Iraq. Our diplomatic efforts to date have

been lackluster. They have been selective. They cannot be successful unless we engage all of Iraq's neighbors directly in that diplomatic effort.

Finally, the United States has a strategic interest as well as responsibility in addressing the plight of the more than 4 million Iraqis who have been forced from their homes. Stability in Iraq will be difficult to achieve and sustain unless the humanitarian needs of these refugees are addressed, and unless there is a growing climate of political reconciliation that makes it possible for refugees to return to their homes.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. DAVIS

Mr. DAVIS. What do you feel has been the greatest interagency success or shortfall, or perhaps both, that we have seen in Iraq? From a statutory perspective, what could we in the Congress do to help ease that effort, so that when we get into the next time we send our troops—or our instruments of power may be better put—down range, where do we need to focus, from an authorizing and appropriating personnel standpoint, to have us better prepared for the types of things we are going to face this century?

Dr. HAMRE. This is an enormously complex problem and question. It has many dimensions.

There have been substantial "interagency problems" associated with our activities in Iraq. The Department of Defense made a mistake to think that it could manage all the problems by itself in Iraq. In the early stages of the operation, it excluded other agencies from participating in the planning and early organization. When DOD realized this was a mistake and it needed the other agencies, a climate of ill will prevailed that limited the extent to which other federal agencies wished to jump into the situation.

One of the greatest failings in the interagency process was the failure to follow through when tasks were assigned to the various agencies and bureaus. The Administration held countless meetings on Iraq and made many decisions, but there was a systematic weakness in that they failed to follow up to determine whether the agencies had followed through on their assignments. In my personal judgment, this lack of follow up and accountability was the greatest interagency failure in Iraq.

The non-DOD agencies of the federal government lack an operational culture (using the term "operational" in the terms used by DOD, meaning undertaking tasks in the field) and lack sufficient depth of staffing resources to focus specifically on pressing assignments. This led the Government to turn to contractors for conducting operations that should have involved U.S. governrnent personnel.

You asked what Congress can do from a statutory perspective to deal with these problems.

First, let me say that I think this question hits the great fault line in the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution unequivocally assigns the Congress the right to oversee the functioning of the individual departments of the Executive Branch. But the Constitution also protects the right of the President to exercise his executive authority. Historically, how the president coordinates the various activities of the executive branch through the interagency process has been judged to be an executive branch authority. I personally hold this view. So I do not think that the Congress has a right to statutorily regulate the interagency process.

Having said this, however, I do think there are important things that can be done by the Congress. First, the Congress can and should use its oversight functions to bring together various Department heads at the same time in joint hearings to ascertain how the agencies are working together. The Congress has not done a good job of overseeing the activities of the Executive Branch concerning Iraq, in my personal judgment. Second, the Congress can insist that executive branch agencies (especially non-DOD agencies) have adequate staff to participate in emergency operations that were not anticipated in baseline budgets. DOD routinely programs to buy more personnel than are needed for peacetime operations (a so-called "float") so that it can send people to training, dispatch them to professional development assignments in other agencies, and staff emergency operations. Non-DOD federal agencies do not have this so-called manpower "float". They very much need it if we are to fix this problem.

The Congress could consider mandating that senior civilians may not be promoted above a certain rank unless they have had interagency experience, paralleling the reform instituted in the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

I also believe that we need a standing administrative capability in the Executive Branch to assist the stand-up of interagency crisis action teams when problems emerge. The State Department created the Stabilization and Reconstruction Office

in part to deal with this problem, but I don't think this has been accepted as a viable solution outside of the State Department. Personally, I believe an administrative structure should be attached as a field operating agency to the White House Executive Secretary organization. This administrative structure would serve as the mechanical backbone for coordination in the early hours of a crisis and become the backbone for an interagency crisis action team. I believe this is something the Congress can mandate.

The U.S. experience in Iraq is marked by interagency shortfalls and failures of the decision-making process that have resulted in several mistakes deeply harmful to US goals and interests in Iraq.

For the sake of brevity, only a few are noted here:

- the dissolution of the Iraqi military in 2003 contrary to the advice of U.S. forces on the ground, and without interagency consultation;
- a de-baathification order that similarly was contrary to expert advice and promulgated without interagency review;
- a failure to recognize the presence and growth of an insurgency against the U.S. presence;
- a failure to carry out economic reconstruction projects in a manner that involved Iraqis in their design and execution; and
- a failure to deploy a meaningful and expert U.S. civilian affairs presence in conjunction with the U.S. military presence in Iraq.

Several of these problems are not susceptible to legislative correction. The President is responsible for the activities of the National Security Council and the proper function of the interagency policy coordination process. The President's National Security Adviser is responsible for ensuring that national security agencies have meaningful input before key decisions are made. Presidents will resist, on both practical and constitutional grounds, legislative dictates as to how they should manage the policymaking process.

The Congress has a critically important role to play in helping to create or restore the capabilities of national security agencies of the United States government.

The Congress should insist that the President present budgets that build the international capabilities of civilian agencies of the United States government, including the Department of State, the Agency for International Development, and the international affairs activities of a wide range of Cabinet Departments.

The Congress should call on the President to create a civilian expeditionary force or capability that can deploy in conjunction with the U.S. military in support of post-conflict reconstruction activities.

Whatever the President may request in his budget, the Congress and its Committees Have a responsibility to authorize and appropriate funds that restore balance with respect to the tools of national power. In the first instance, this requires significant budget increases for the personnel and activities of the civilian agencies of the national security establishment.

A CONTINUING DIALOGUE: POST-SURGE ALTERNATIVES FOR IRAQ (PART 2)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, January 23, 2008.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 1:03 p.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Vic Snyder (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. VIC SNYDER, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ARKANSAS, CHAIRMAN, OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Dr. SNYDER. The hearing will come to order. We appreciate you all being here with us this afternoon. Mr. Akin will be joining us shortly.

I see our chairman of the full committee, Mr. Skelton, is coming in to join us, and we are pleased to see him here this afternoon.

This is the sixth hearing that this subcommittee has held in the last seven or eight months on Iraq. We held four back in July and one last week and one today. And I think the title of this series, a continuing dialogue, post-surge alternatives for Iraq, is a good one, because this is a continuing, ongoing dialogue that this country is having.

I will have to say, sometimes the dialogue is perhaps more flash than substance, but we hope that the pattern continues at this subcommittee today that it is one of substance.

I want to say from the get go I was very pleased with all of your written statements. They obviously were very thoughtful contributions to this continuing dialogue that this country needs to have.

That is about all I am going to say. I am going to introduce you.

We will be joined by Mr. Akin. Mr. Skelton may want to participate in this hearing also.

Our witnesses today are Dr. Stephen Biddle, the Senior Fellow for Defense Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations; Dr. Andy Krepinevich from the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments; Professor Lawrence Wilkerson, Former Chief of Staff of Secretary of State Colin Powell and is now the visiting Pamela Harriman Professor of Government at the College of William and Mary; and Mr. Michael Eisenstadt, Director of the Military and Securities Studies Program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

And I must also acknowledge that Mr. Michael Eisenstadt is also Lieutenant Colonel Eisenstadt, who is due to deploy in Iraq fairly soon.

How soon? Sorry?

Mr. EISENSTADT. A short tour.

Dr. SNYDER. A short tour.

Gentlemen, we appreciate you being with us today. I will have Sasha put on the five-minute clock for your opening statements, but you feel free to ignore it if you have got other things to say. It is just to give you a sense of where time is. Your written statements will be made a part of the record.

We are joined by Mr. Akin. If he would like to do his opening statement now, he may do so.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Snyder can be found in the Appendix on page 97.]

STATEMENT OF HON. W. TODD AKIN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSOURI, RANKING MEMBER, OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. AKIN. I think I have a short opening statement. Doctor, I am just thankful for the witnesses, look forward to your testimony, and we have an energetic doctor running this committee. This is his second committee hearing in one day, so I think he ought to get a special star award.

Thank you, Vic.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you. Mr. Akin is referring to this morning. We had a private briefing at 8 o'clock with Kathy Hicks and Rick Barton, and what was the third person's name? Steve McMorris, on the whole issue of interagency issues in post-conflict situations.

So, Dr. Biddle, why don't you begin? We will go right down the row.

STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHEN BIDDLE, SENOR FELLOW FOR DEFENSE POLICY, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS; DR. ANDREW KREPINEVICH, JR., PRESIDENT, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND BUDGETARY ASSESSMENTS; COL. LAWRENCE B. WILKERSON, U.S. ARMY (RET.), FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF TO FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN POWELL, VISITING PAMELA C. HARRIMAN PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT, COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY; MICHAEL EISENSTADT, DIRECTOR, MILITARY AND SECURITY STUDIES PROGRAM, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHEN BIDDLE

Dr. BIDDLE. Well, thanks for the opportunity to discuss these issues with the committee. The surge saw a major reduction in violence, but the surge is ending, so what does this mean for Iraq? I think that is about as important a question as the Nation faces right now.

Obviously, nothing is guaranteed in Iraq. We are a long way from anything that looks like peace or stability. There are a lot of things that could cause these trends to reverse.

But, having said all of those things, I think that the underlying strategic calculus in Iraq has changed since 2006 in ways that create an opportunity, by no means a guarantee, but an opportunity for something that looks like tolerable stability in Iraq, but not if

the United States takes a peace dividend and pulls our troops out too fast or too deep.

I think our role in Iraq, if breaks continue to go our way, could shift from war fighting to peacekeeping, and if that happens, it wouldn't involve the casualty rates of war fighting as we have seen it in Iraq since 2003. But peacekeeping is a long-term, long-duration, labor-intensive job. And I think if we draw our troops down too far, too fast, we run the risk of being unable to do it effectively and undermining what we have been able to obtain over the course of 2007.

Now, my written statement goes into some detail on the nature of the strategic environment in Iraq and how it is changing. I am just going to highlight three key events in the last couple of years that I think have been particularly important in this context, most of which, incidentally, we had nothing to do with. And in fact in at least one key element of which we actually sought to prevent, but which nevertheless has conspired, if you like, to bring about an environment that could be more favorable.

The first and most important of these is Sunni military defeat in the battle of Baghdad that followed the Askaria mosque bombing of February 2006. The wave of sectarian violence that followed that event was a humanitarian disaster and the United States, for understandable reasons, would have preferred that it not occur.

But the net result of that violence was to push Sunnis systematically out of the majority of what had been a mixed Baghdad and take a Sunni insurgent collection that had believed prior to this point that if they could just get the Americans out of the war they would win the full-scale version of the civil war that would follow against what they viewed as a weak Shiite government and persuaded them that this was an incorrect appreciation of the military reality in Iraq.

They got the Sunni-Shiite war in Baghdad with us standing on the sidelines that they wanted, and the result hurt them. It didn't help them. That meant that systematically their view of the military possibilities changed.

The second key change in the environment was a series of mistakes by al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). It is nice to know that we don't have a monopoly on screwing things up in Iraq.

Al Qaeda in Iraq managed to be so violent to their Sunni co-religionists, and interfered so substantially with the smuggling routes that had been the traditional tribal patronage network fuelers of Sunni tribal sheiks in Anbar Province, that they convinced their Sunni allies that they, AQI, were extremely costly allies to have around.

Prior to the battle of Baghdad, Sunnis believed that this was a cost they just had to bear, because they thought al Qaeda in Iraq was carrying their military water for them and was necessary for security against the Shiites and the Americans. The battle of Baghdad persuaded them that AQI couldn't deliver military results on the battlefield.

This made them all cost and no benefit and caused Sunnis systematically to look for other allies and the only possibility for that was us. And this is where the third key development, the surge, came in the picture.

Tribal sheiks in Anbar had tried to break away from AQI in the past and al Qaeda counterattacks had made it impossible for them to sustain that posture and they would come back to the fold. What the surge did was to provide protection for Sunnis who wanted to flip, to enable them to survive the counterattack they would inevitably receive from their erstwhile allies in the form of al Qaeda in Iraq.

This systematically changed cost-benefit and opportunity for Sunnis and the result was that the majority of the Sunni combatants in the theater have now stood down and are observing local negotiated cease-fires with the United States and the government of Iraq.

That then changed Shiite militia incentives in ways that put it in the interest of militia leaders like Muqtada al-Sadr to observe cease-fires of their own for reasons that are detailed in the testimony, and I would be happy to follow up on in Q and A if you like. But for the moment I will simply assert that the result of this change in strategic possibilities facing the Sunnis, creating a standdown which created incentives for a comparable series of ceasefires from Shiite militias, has been that at the moment violence has come down because most of the people who had been doing the violence have made a voluntary decision to stop.

They retain their arms, they retain their organizations. In many cases, they maintain their leaders and their ambitions, but it is for now in their strategic interest to cease firing, rather than continuing the warfare. All of those decisions have a base in strategic reality but could change.

Voluntary decisions to stop fighting can be followed by voluntary decisions to resume fighting. These deals are terribly important, but they are not inherently stable or self enforcing or terribly unusual when we look at the negotiated endings of ethnic and sectarian civil wars like Iraq's.

You always face an initial period in which parties have made a voluntary decision to stand down but retain enough military capacity to go back to war if they decide to. Critical in stabilizing these deals classically is the role of an outside party that can serve as a peacekeeper to enforce the terms that the parties have agreed to and prevent the situation from spiraling out of control as spoiler violence returns the situation to something that looks more like 2006.

For that reason, I think it is terribly important that if we are going to take advantage of the opportunity that the moment provides—no guarantee, even if we do the right thing—but a chance and an opportunity, we have to play this peacekeeping, stabilizing role in the event that breaks continue to work our way.

If we decline to do it, I think it is very likely that Iraq will return to what we saw in 2006 and before.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Biddle can be found in the Appendix on page 102.]

Dr. SNYDER. Dr. Krepinevich.

STATEMENT OF DR. ANDREW KREPINEVICH, JR.

Dr. KREPINEVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and share my views on this issue. My

testimony speaks to first a critique of the strategic alternatives you mentioned as being suboptimal. I won't go into that. I will focus my remarks primarily on alternatives, as opposed to critiquing the current public debate.

Echoing what my colleague says, I think it is almost certain to be a difficult path for us in Iraq, whether we stay or whether we withdraw. And it seems to me this is one of the fundamental issues that the American political leadership has not really presented to the American people.

It reminds me to some extent what President Johnson once said about Vietnam. He said I feel like a hitchhiker out on a west Texas highway, where you see a car about once every hour or so. And I see a storm coming on the horizon, and I can't run, and there is no place to hide. I have just got to stand there and take it.

And, again, I think if you look at the option for a timed, stated withdrawal and you look at the options that are involved in staying, there is no pleasant option. There is no easy path. And I think we need to come to an acceptance of that at the very beginning.

I think we also therefore need to accept the fact that if we are to achieve even our minimal objectives, a reasonably stable Iraq that is not a haven for terrorism, not likely to pursue weapons of mass destruction, not likely to lead to a wider war, that we are going to have to be in Iraq for an extended period of time.

We need to convince the Iraqis of this necessity, as well as ourselves. And I think there are some Iraqis who are beginning to come around in terms of—I think one of the more interesting statements I have heard is, well, we can't tolerate you as occupiers, but we might be able to accept you as guests. We have got to get them moving toward that second mindset.

As Dr. Biddle points out, the surge, part through serendipity, part through design, has enjoyed a number of successes, enhanced security, the tribal awakenings it is termed by some, the weakening of AQI, some bottom-up reconciliation, stability at the local level, some top-down progress as well. But it hasn't produced yet the major movement toward the grand bargain or the national compact, as Ambassador Khalilzad once referred to it.

The political solution that we all agree really is necessary before stability can come to that country. However, I do think that our best chance at achieving our minimal objectives lies in building upon the success that has come out of the surge, rather than pulling the plug on what we are doing in Iraq and hoping for the best.

I think, though, that continuing the surge, first of all is not really an option. Surge means it is a temporary increase in effort and of course that increase in effort is coming to an end. Nor do I think that we can count on the serendipitous events—there are others in addition to what Dr. Biddle mentioned—as a strategy for how we are going to proceed into the future.

What are some elements of the way ahead? Well, first, I think we need to maintain the fundamental shift in approach that characterized a good part of the surge campaign, which is to say an effort to provide greater levels of enduring security to the Iraqi people.

To a great extent, an insurgency conflict, this kind of conflict, is a war of intelligence. If we know who the enemy is and where the

enemy is, we can defeat him. It is not a matter of not having enough tanks or planes or guns, it is a matter of not having enough good intelligence.

And to the extent that you provide people security and an option to cooperate, you enable enduring reconstruction, you begin to work out deals at the local level with these tribes and so on, that is one effective means of getting access to that intelligence.

Second, as our troop levels come down, we have to help the Iraqis help themselves. This means that, I think, we are going to have to move more in the direction of standing up a cadre, a cadre of advisers that can work with the Iraqis as U.S. forces draw down, both to enable them to operate effectively, but quite frankly also as a great source of intelligence for us to identify which Iraqi commanders are competent and incompetent, which are loyal and disloyal, which are sectarian and which are prone to avoid those temptations.

Third, I think we need to continue to pursue reconciliation from the bottom up, as well as the top down. This hopefully will incentivize faction leaders at the national level to work toward compromise and also to enable us to form local alliances if things do take a turn for the worse.

Fourth, we need to keep our best commanders and diplomats in the fight. I was struck by the statement on the part of one senior Army officer who said to me at one point, you don't understand. The United States Army would rather lose this war than change its personnel policies.

We have got to stop the practice of rotating commanders in and out as though they are interchangeable parts, when the history of warfare teaches us that it makes a huge difference whether you have a George Washington or Benedict Arnold in charge of your army, or a General Grant versus a General McClellan.

Right now, again, we have General Odierno, who by the account of many has done a remarkably effective job in his role in commanding forces in the surge, rotating out. Why? Is he burned out? Is he battle weary? No, it is just not his turn anymore.

Finally, we need to establish unity of command in Iraq, as well as in Washington. There still is no single American in charge in that country. Both Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus have to negotiate with each other in order to get something done.

Fortunately, they are two people in the right place at the right time, but, again, this is a serendipitous event to some extent. Sooner or later—there are already rumors about Petraeus leaving to go to Europe. We will be faced with can we get two other people to get along well?

And, finally, we need to see any strategy within the larger context of a war that is really ongoing between the Mediterranean and the Hindu Kush, and certainly this is the way a number of our enemies look at this, whether it is al Qaeda or Iran or others. This is not a war in which the consequences of the outcome will be localized solely to Iraq.

In summary, these initiatives, like others, offer no guarantees of success. I think they offer a better chance than just simply staying the course and continuing with current processes or setting arbitrary dates for withdrawal and following through on them.

There are no easy solutions. Although former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has been roundly criticized by some, I think he got it exactly right when in October 2003 he said we are in for "a long, hard slog." Again, I think that is true whether we stay or whether we leave.

President Kennedy once talked about the challenges that each generation faces. And, to be sure, we will debate for many years whether or not we should have gone into Iraq, whether it was the right thing to do or the wrong thing to do.

FDR once asked Winston Churchill in the middle of World War II, what should we call this war? And Churchill responded, immediately, why, the unnecessary war, of course, realizing that appeasement had led to that conflict.

Having said that, we are in the middle of this conflict, and the question is how do we resolve it? How do we end it? It is certainly going to be a difficult challenge. The question is, are we up to that challenge? Is it a reasonable challenge? Is there a strategy that will lead us somehow to achieve our minimal objectives?

President Kennedy once challenged this nation by saying we choose to do these things, going to the moon, waging the Cold War and so on, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because the challenges are ones that we are willing to accept, that we are unwilling to postpone, and ones that we intend to win.

And I think we really need to get to the point of seriousness, of understanding that staying or going, it is going to be difficult and we have to get about the business of improving our strategic options.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Krepinevich can be found in the Appendix on page 113.]

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Dr. Krepinevich. One of my accomplishments in my 12 years here is learning to say Krepinevich, so I try to demonstrate that skill in each answer I give.

Dr. KREPINEVICH. It took me longer than 12 years.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Wilkerson.

STATEMENT OF COL. LAWRENCE B. WILKERSON

Colonel WILKERSON. Thank you, and thank you for having me here today. I wish I had been in your morning meeting. One of my major interests right now, having seen it absolutely dysfunctional for a long time now, particularly my four years at the State Department, interagency coordination is a large part of what got us to where we are now.

Dr. SNYDER. Well, that will be my first question during the Q and A, so you can keep your powder dry until then.

Colonel WILKERSON. And let me also identify myself rather strongly with Dr. Biddle's remarks in particular and, as well, on my right—I won't try the name.

But let me try to put just a few more markers on the table, I think. Muqtada al-Sadr going to ground and taking the most powerful militia in Iraq with him certainly is part of the reason why we have a better situation in Iraq today. And that is why his recent statements, however accurately reported, about perhaps rejoining the fight are particularly disquieting.

Again, the decision of many Sunni leaders to suddenly decide to change their ways is a part of that. And I would add that the vigorous U.S. and coalition combat operations that occurred starting in early 2007 and right up to the point of the actual so-called surge did a lot to convince the Sunni leaders that maybe they should change their ways. Maybe taking money and arms and training was better than getting killed.

And I would add to that the significant operations against al Qaeda also. And I think we can't fail to understand or misunderstand—we shouldn't misunderstand the war we are in amongst what is left in Iraq. That is coupled to the fact that we have had anywhere from two to three million in a diaspora, most of whom are in Jordan or Syria, and another million or so probably in Iraq who didn't have the wherewithal and the means to get out.

And we need not forget also that at the time of the surge, the ethnic cleansing was pretty much done. So there is this kind of weird equilibrium in Iraq right now, produced, as Dr. Biddle said, by sort of a confluence of things that is as much serendipitous as it is anything else.

I do agree, though, that we have the first competent leadership team in Iraq since the war started. That is a profound statement to make, but I think it is nonetheless true.

In the face of this favorable development, I don't disagree with anything my colleagues have said either with regard to the difficulty or with regard to the possibilities or the opportunities. But I would like to point out, I think, two other very important realities. One is that we are significantly malpositioned to protect with a very small professional military the rest of our strategic interests, not only in the Gulf and the Middle East, but in the world.

I would not want to be Admiral Fallon, trying to figure out how he is going to do all the things that he needs to do with 154,000, I am told is the figure right now, American troops with their boots on Arab soil, sort of enmeshed in what they are in. And then add to that in Afghanistan and so forth.

I would want to get those forces, as rapidly as possible, back out into carrier battle groups and Marine amphibious ready groups, pre-positioned stocks, exercises with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and so forth, a profile not unlike the profile we had before we enmeshed ourselves so much in this particular portion of the Middle East.

I would want to be agile. I would want to be flexible with my military forces, particularly since they are so small, to protect the rest of America's interests. So I think that is a reality that imposes—maybe we don't publicize it, but it imposes a timetable on what we are talking about in terms of exploiting this new opportunity or these new opportunities.

I also think there is another area. I think we are destroying our land forces. And this is a very arcane, esoteric subject that people, just their eyes go dull on, but we have got to look at the institutional fabric of the Army, for example, its educational processes, the courses that officers have to go through to be professional and so forth.

We have to look at the captains in the Army, which I am told now we are about 15,000 short on. We have to look at recruiting. My son just came home from Kirkuk. It was his second tour.

My son walked through Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI), went through customs, came up to me, and the first words out his mouth were not, it is good to see you, dad. They were, I am out. And he submitted his paperwork. He is on the major's list. He is going to get promoted to major on 1 May, and he is going to get out on 2 May.

That is anecdotal, but I think we have a significant problem on the spousal side, whichever that might be, male or female, as much as we do maybe even amongst the ranks. That said, I will have to tell you that I heard Seth Moulton on a radio show yesterday where Michael O'Hanlon and I were talking for about an hour, "On Point" on National Public Radio (NPR), and Seth Moulton came out of the desert and just surprised me, because he is one of my heroes, Harvard-trained Marine, mind you. And I spent 12 years with the Marines. I know there aren't too many of those animals.

And Seth is on his fourth tour in Iraq and what he said on that show really gripped me, and I think it gripped Michael and it gripped the listeners, too. He said, we have made remarkable progress in this country. And this is the man who at the end of Charles Ferguson's documentary, "No End in Sight," says, don't tell me that America can't do better. Don't tell the guys that died with me in Najaf that America can't do better.

On his fourth tour in Iraq, he says we have made remarkable progress. But then he said something quite disheartening. He said there has been absolutely no, in my view, political progress, and if we don't make political progress—and then he left it hanging.

I think that is the sine qua non here. If you don't make political progress, then what are you doing there in the first place? And so these two realities, the need to get back the strategic agility and flexibility again, the need to get our boots off Arab soil, the need to protect our land forces—because I don't see you approving a vast increase in the land forces. And I don't see that taking effect quickly enough to have a real impact anyway.

I think we have to think about these two things as we consider all of the things that have been said here. And as we try to exploit these opportunities, we have to have sort of a date certain, at least in our minds, about where we are going to say it is over.

And then I would say we might be surprised about what happens when we say it is over. I think there are two possibilities. It will muddle through, and we will be over the horizon to make sure that the muddling is more in our interest than against it, or it will turn into a vicious civil war as the Sunnis, newly trained and newly armed and backed by the Saudis suddenly get very, very aggressive again.

And, in that case, I would say we wait and see who wins and then try to work out an arrangement with the victor. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Colonel Wilkerson can be found in the Appendix on page 124.]

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Eisenstadt.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL EISENSTADT

Mr. EISENSTADT. Yes, sir. Three very powerful and compelling sets of testimony. I would just like to add a few of my own thoughts to the comments, the preceding comments.

First, just a few comments about the factors which account for I think the dramatic improvement in the last six months in the security situation in Iraq, and the first having to do with the tribal awakening. And what we are seeing I think in Anbar Province and spreading elsewhere as well is something which is very typical in tribal societies in the Middle East. And that is when tribal groups are threatened by external actors, tribal groups that often have problems working together will bond together to deal with the external threat.

And once the threat is removed, they will once again relapse to—I wouldn't go so far as to say their natural state of affairs of kind of somewhat contentious relations. But I think that is something that we have to be careful about and keep an eye on, that if we succeed in putting an end to the threat posed by AQI that this could result in a change in the calculus of the people who we have allied ourselves with.

And a second point on this fact. I think we should have no illusions about the people who we are dealing with. One reason I think that the tribal awakening has been so successful in rolling up AQI in the areas that they have operated in is because in the past many of them belonged to Islamo-nationalist insurgent groups that served as facilitators or co-belligerents with the al Qaeda people and they know exactly who these people were. And therefore they were able to go after them and roll them up.

And this is, for them, a tactical alliance of convenience and we should have no illusion about it. Again, I think what we are doing is right and well and it has borne remarkable successes, but, again, we have to recognize that this is for them most probably a tactical alliance of convenience.

As for the surge, I think one of the things that is the cause of the success of the surge is not just that we have been able to increase our force footprint, which went against the previous strategy we were pursuing, by putting an additional five brigade combat teams into Iraq. But, by putting these units out at the local community level, we transformed the local psychological environment.

One brigade combat team commander said to me, when people saw that we were coming into their neighborhoods and we were there to stay, their attitude toward us changed and we were able to achieve a new level of cooperation with them and the intelligence started pouring in.

And I raise this simply because if we are going to start drawing down, this could result in potentially a reversal or a change in the psychological environment again in a way that is adverse from the American point of view. And we have to figure out ways to prevent that from happening.

I think it is also something to consider for the next administration, whoever gets elected president. Keep in mind that Iraq is still a dangerous place. There is still a fairly significant level of violence going on there. There are still insurgent groups that are attacking coalition and Iraqi forces.

And I think in part their willingness to continue the struggle is based on the calculation that there is a good chance the new administration might change its policy and pull out. And therefore they would like to take credit for pushing the United States out.

And I think it is vitally important that a new administration reassert its commitment to the security of Iraq and in that way perhaps alter the calculus of these groups to realize that they are going to have four more years of hard combat against the U.S. Army and the Iraqi security forces. And that might cause them to reconsider their commitment to what they call armed struggle and maybe reconsider negotiations and going down the political path. Again, the psychological environment and what we do and how that affects the psychological environment is very important.

Taking on Shiite militias, again, the focus in the press has often been on operations against al Qaeda, but we have been operating against the special groups that were supported by Iran, as well as Mahdi army cells that were involved in sectarian cleansing in Baghdad. And that was indeed a major factor accounting for the decision by the Jaish al Mahdi to stand down in August.

In addition, I think there are indications that they were starting to lose support among their support base. Again, that is something that could change in the future if circumstances were to change on the ground.

And then, finally, a diminished flow of foreign fighters, at least in part due to efforts by the Syrian government, and that is also an important achievement to preserve.

In sum, I think the essence of our success is due to the fact that we were able to neutralize the main drivers of the escalating civil violence in Iraq prior to the surge, AQI suicide bombings on the one hand and the ethnic cleansing and revenge killings done by Jaish al Mahdi cells. By clamping down on both of them, we were able to kind of deescalate this spiral.

And it is important, there are a couple of policy-relevant conclusions that can be drawn from this experience of the last six months. First, while the U.S. presence may have stoked insurgent violence in Iraq between 2003 and 2006, the U.S. is for now a force for stability.

Second, while some violence in Iraq is undoubtedly the product of random and revenge killings, it is for the most part neither spontaneous nor self sustaining. Rather, violence is used in an instrumental fashion by armed groups whose activities can be disrupted and whose decision calculus can be influenced by various military and nonmilitary means. And I raise that simply because there was a perception at the time when it looked like Iraq was slipping into a high-intensity civil war is that you can't stop these things once they get a momentum of their own.

And I think the experience of the last six months shows that you can affect it in a decisive way, maybe not completely, but you can have a dramatic impact.

In terms of preserving recent gains, clearly it is impossible to predict what impact the U.S. draw-down will have on the security environment. As I said before, because there are insurgent groups that are continuing to engage in violence, I think as we draw down they will continue to seek and probably find new opportunities to

act. And, as a result, we have to be aware or be alive to the likelihood that we will see probably some kind of up-tick as a result of the violence being perpetrated by groups that have not decided to stand down yet.

And there are a number of other factors which could occur which could complicate issues. And I mentioned before the collapse of the tribal coalition. We all start seeing now tensions among de facto tribal leaders in Anbar and elsewhere and the elected leadership of the Sunni community, which could erupt into violence.

The Mahdi army could resume military operations. Tensions around Kirkuk could explode. And then there is the issue of internally displaced persons and refugees who might either resort to violence to retake their homes or might be met by violence if they seek to recover their homes.

Some of these developments would have only local consequences. Others could have far-reaching implications and our ability to deal with them will depend largely on the success of the Iraqi security forces and taking up the slack as the U.S. draws down and on the political savvy and negotiating skills of Iraqi politicians and U.S. diplomats.

Just a final point about accommodation or reconciliation. I prefer the term accommodation. Reconciliation sets a very high bar and if we look at other deeply divided societies around the world, Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, we see that often the process of reconciliation often takes decades. And, in many places, it has never occurred.

So I think perhaps our focus should be on accommodation. That being said, I think we can look at the cases where inconclusive insurgencies or civil wars were ripe for settlement, and usually they become ripe for settlement when there are three factors present: one, a military stalemate that leads both sides to conclude that they cannot achieve their objectives by violent means; two, an emerging consensus among the belligerents of the terms of a settlement; and, three, authoritative leaders capable of speaking and negotiating on behalf of their respective constituencies.

I would say that almost in just about all these cases none of these conditions are present in Iraq at this time, although I think we have seen signs of progress toward fulfilling some of these conditions during the last year.

Just on the issue of authoritative leadership, I will just make just one point. It is very clear that even the ruling coalition now is increasingly fragmented. The ruling alliance in the Iraqi government is riven by all kinds of divisions. And even within each party there are divisions, there are issues of whether the party headquarters in Baghdad has control over the leadership in various provinces. And we see this with several of the parties.

But I think it is important to mention that at the local level we often see that local leaders often retain sufficient influence to negotiate on behalf of their constituencies, and therefore local accommodations may be possible and in fact I think we are seeing them in some places, even if national reconciliation remains a distant, unattainable goal at this time. And I think this is something we can build on.

In conclusion, I would like to say that while Iraq remains a dangerous place, the security situation has improved greatly, creating the possibility of political and economic progress in the coming year. Many challenges lay ahead and there is no guarantee that recent security gains can be sustained.

But for the first time in a long time, there is reason to believe that an acceptable outcome may be feasible. The key is continued U.S. military and diplomatic engagement.

An acceptable outcome in Iraq could, beyond its inherent benefits to the long-suffering people of Iraq, help rehabilitate America's reputation and reestablish its credentials in the Middle East and elsewhere as a reliable ally and force for stability at a time when the region faces growing threats.

For this reason, as long as there remains a reasonable prospect for success in Iraq, no matter how modestly defined, it is vital that the U.S. work toward such an outcome and accept the risks and costs that a long-term commitment to the people and government of Iraq is likely to entail.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Eisenstadt can be found in the Appendix on page 133.]

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Eisenstadt.

Mr. Skelton.

Mr. SKELTON. Thank you very much.

Just excellent testimony, and I apologize, I must run for another engagement, but would like to ask one question and thank the chairman for calling this all-important hearing.

Mr. Wilkerson, you used the phrase, "war weariness." In 1994, I had the opportunity to visit with two sergeants of the Royal Marines just outside Exeter in England. And they both had just returned from Bosnia, and both of them at the time agreed this conflict will end soon, because everyone is getting tired.

Are we getting close to that in Iraq at all?

Colonel WILKERSON. I think the polling that I have seen that the military has done, which is quite exquisite—much better, I might add, than most of the polling you see in this country, particularly with regard to the current campaign—would indicate to me that there is a significant majority of Iraqis that want this crap to stop, and that if they saw something that looked like it was truly solid in stopping it—and of course this leads one back to the Saddam Hussein type figure, the Putin type figure, if you will, they would support that.

If they saw that the coalition was stopping it, if they saw that the government under Maliki in Baghdad was not a feckless entity, was indeed effective, they would support it.

Now, whether or not that support would mean an instant cessation to violence, I don't think so. But I do think it would mean you would be on a track to some degree of stability and economy progress that would lead to that eventually.

The question is, where is that entity? Where is that political entity that is going to convince this 70 or so percent of Iraqis who really don't want the violence, who want to lead a life, want to have a trade, want to have a job, want to have a home, want to

have children and so forth, want to worship they way they want to worship?

The median age in Iraq was 19. We should have been in there attacking that median age. I got so frustrated at the State Department I offered the minister of women's affairs a credit card, because the Iraqi government would not give her a budget, would not give her any money.

This is a feckless government. That is the reason there is no political progress. And we had a little bit to do with that fecklessness because of the way we designed it and the way we put it together. But that notwithstanding, I don't see the current crop of characters as being capable of bringing about some sort of political progress that will appeal to this majority of Iraqis who want peace.

Mr. SKELTON. Thank you very much.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Davis for five minutes.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One thing I would like to touch on, I think Dr. Krepinevich's comments brought back memories of sitting in military art classes at the military academy in the age of stone knives and bearskin. But the one concept that was pounded into our heads over and over was the concept of unity of command.

And we spend a lot of time in the Congress creating our own form of greenhouse gases that don't necessarily add value talking about first and second and third-order effects of things that everybody in the country knows about but to keep political momentum moving in one direction, but often don't get down to root causes of the problems and really begin to address those.

I would like to start with Mr. Wilkerson and preface my remarks from the standpoint that Congressman Davis and I formed a National Security Reform Caucus that we have gotten a lot of interest from a broad section of members. Chairman Snyder has certainly driven these efforts here in the Oversight and Investigations (O&I) subcommittee—to really find out what I see as process problems far more than personality issues—although certainly the wrong personality in a broken process can really aggravate the situation.

But we seem to be seeing root issues that relate back to things we saw in Grenada, things we saw in Panama, things we saw in Mogadishu, things we saw over in Bosnia and Serbia and certainly now. Only in those days the American public didn't pay attention to it because there was a relatively low price in human life associated with it.

You have been in a very unique position, Colonel Wilkerson, having come up through the old forces command, seen that, the joint staff, come over to the State Department and witnessed probably all of this in every form of pain I am sure that is conceivable to imagine from an agency perspective.

I was wondering if you would comment, and then I would like to open it up to the other gentlemen, as well, putting the personal issues aside that we have all seen, if you were king for a day, if we could amend the Constitution and you could make statutory changes, whether to organization and personnel policies or ways the agencies interact, to allow for a better integration of our instruments of power, so we are not always turning first to the Depart-

ment of Defense or the military and really get back to a way to be better stewards of those resources.

Colonel WILKERSON. I think you have hit on the organizational, institutional question of the opening of the 21st century, in my view. I think we need a new national security act. I think we need a new legislative package.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Jim Locker hasn't been to you yet.

Colonel WILKERSON. Well, Jim and I have been together for a long time on this.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Okay, I won't hold that against you.

Colonel WILKERSON. A set of executive orders and other things that can be done without statute or executive orders. And I think it needs to involve this body, too. Your oversight alignment with the executive branch is just out of whack.

Whether it is a joint security on national security that runs 150 and all the other budgets involved with national security together, I don't know. I am not expert enough to say. But I do know that what is happening right now is broken.

For Secretary Powell, for example, to have to come testify to two different committees, one on state operations, justice and commerce and the other on foreign affairs and have the state operations and justice people asking more questions about foreign affairs than they do about the management of the State Department is just one indicator of how oversight is just not right.

I realize the committee chairman are not going to give up their posts and so forth, so that is a hard thing to tackle. But I think it is the whole structure that needs some amendment, needs some reform, needs some reshaping.

That said, if I were king for a day, the first thing I would do is change this $0.5 trillion, $0.75 trillion with supplementals, going to DOD, as opposed to $35 billion going to State. That is unconscionable in my view.

That just says you have militarized your foreign policy. You don't have diplomats.

One of the things Powell did right off the bat was go with his bona fides before you, the Congress, and get the money necessary to hire 1,103 over his 4 years new foreign service officers. That doesn't sound like much, but that is a fifth of the corps.

And now that has been completely consumed by Kabul and Baghdad. They don't exist anymore. And so now the State Department is back to the same thing again. It is trying to double fill, triple fill. Somebody is having to do three jobs, two jobs and so forth. That is the first thing I would do.

The second thing I would do, if I had the authority and I was going to do it really fast and I wanted to impact this, the failed states and the kind of things we are seeing in Afghanistan, increasingly in Pakistan and Iraq of the future, then we need something like a unified command, headed by a civilian with a military deputy, with $3 billion or $4 billion in their pocket to start with, not appropriated on an annual basis, for prevention, and in the event prevention fails, crisis management.

And that command would eventually, because of it being at the place where the rubber meets the road, attract the creme de la creme from the bureaucracy, all across the interagency. It would

also attract development dollars and so forth. It would probably do away with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It would do away with the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

It would suddenly become that entity that everybody wanted to work in, much the way Goldwater-Nichols did for the joint staff. It would suddenly become first rate and cooperation with the interagency that was posited under its command, under its leadership, would be great.

That is what I would do.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Davis, I am next. I am going to yield my five minutes to you, and you can continue it with the other three witnesses.

We will start the clock. You have got five more minutes.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Thank you very much, and we would like to follow on this dialogue at a separate meeting, if that would be possible, because we are working on it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your deference. I would like to recognize Dr. Krepinevich.

Dr. KREPINEVICH. Just a couple of observations. I just talked to someone who came back from Afghanistan. We have two two-star commanders there. One is General Sanchez, who essentially is responsible for tactical operations, and also General Cohen, who is responsible for training and advising.

Cohen doesn't report to McNeil. He reports to Admiral Fallon, whereas Sanchez reports to both McNeil and Fallon. We have three Combatant Commands (COCOMs), Special Operations Commund (SOCOM), European Command (EUCOM) and Central Command (CENTCOM), involved in operations in Afghanistan. And to a certain extent, I think perhaps we need a Goldwater-Nichols two, but I think this is also reflective—you go back to 1983 in Lebanon, one of the triggers for Goldwater-Nichols one was the convoluted chain of command that existed in the run-up to the attack on the Marine Corps barracks there.

So, in a sense, we have met the enemy, and he is us. There is no reason that these things can't be sorted out, I think in terms of the unified——

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. If I could just reclaim just a few seconds——

Dr. KREPINEVICH. Yes.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY [continuing]. Just to emphasize a point. I mean, when I look at State, forgetting the severe personnel differential, our military commanders become proconsuls in effect, which I think is a very dangerous precedent for the future.

But, more to the point, I am concerned—I did a tremendous amount of organizational consolidation and process improvement. You have got four State Department bureaus and one CENTCOM commander, is immediately a recipe for a ripple effect of grave concern.

Dr. KREPINEVICH. Well, it is also interesting I think that State is, and Mr. Wilkerson can probably correct me, my understanding is that they are increasing the number of State Department representatives that work now with the COCOMs. So in a sense they

are there now to support the COCOM as sort of the regional diplomat in chief.

Second, something else that doesn't require legislation. When we sent large numbers of advisers to Vietnam in late 1961, President Kennedy established something called the special interdepartmental group, counterinsurgency, that was going to bring together the efforts of the various departments and agencies, because these kinds of operations have a strong reconstruction, diplomatic, intelligence, as well as a military effort. And budgets have to be redirected and so on.

Lieutenant General Doug Lute is very capable, but he has nowhere near the stature that Maxwell Taylor and the president's brother, Robert Kennedy had. And they were in charge of that group. And that is when we had about 10,000 advisers in Vietnam, not 160,000.

Third——

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Have you seen Lute's War College paper?

Dr. KREPINEVICH. I am sorry?

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Lute wrote a paper in 1997, foretelling this issue that we are experiencing now, based on the very examples that——

Dr. KREPINEVICH. And now he is getting to live it. Doug and I taught together at West Point many years ago.

Third, getting back to what Mr. Wilkerson said, in 1964, when things were heating up in Vietnam, President Johnson did send Ambassador Maxwell Taylor there and essentially told him he should organize that country as a mini National Security Council (NSC) in terms of his diplomatic corps and also the military.

And I think you are right. For this kind of an endeavor, you need the ability to set priorities and make trade-offs between various elements that won't naturally make it themselves, so not only at a national level, but at a regional and a country level.

Another point, I think, and it is the final one I will make, is this hearing is about strategy, and yet it seems to me strange that oftentimes it is Congress that has to in a sense direct or request, whether it is the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) or something else, an administration to conduct a strategic review.

You go back to the early days of the Cold War and the best strategy that has been put together by this country since 1945 was at the initiative—it didn't require legislation—the initiative of the Truman administration that produced NSC 68 and the Eisenhower administration that produced the so-called Solarium Project.

So I think to a great extent it is not so much legislation that is lacking; it's leadership.

Mr. EISENSTADT. If I could just jump in on this, I think one of the major failures as a country of the United States since 9/11 is our failure to mobilize the Nation for this war effort. And there are two components of this problem, one of which has already been alluded to, that basically the military is shouldering a disproportionate share of the burden of conducting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere.

The second component, though, is the failure to really, I mean, mobilize the human wealth in our nation. I mean, we are an in-

credibly rich nation, not just in material terms, but in terms of human resources. And, by and large, the civilian civil society has not been called upon, or has not been mobilized, and the talents in civil society have not been tapped by our Federal Government.

Now, one idea that has been floated to remedy these two issues is the idea of a civilian reserve corps, which I would urge be investigated further. There was an idea that was floated in an op-ed in the *"Washington Post"* a month or two ago about creating a civilian reserve corps of about 5,000 people, but consisting of people from civilian government agencies who would be deployable and be available to deal with contingencies.

And I would add that that is only half the problem and that is not really enough. And I would urge that consideration be given to a civilian reserve corps that is much larger and that taps into the talents and resources of our civil society. And in the case of Iraq and Afghanistan, I think we could have benefited greatly, had we had such assets available.

And this is a way also for dealing with an important problem in American society, which is the growing gap between the government and the people. And therefore I would just urge that perhaps Congress give greater attention in the future to this idea. But go beyond just looking at how do we get civilians from government agencies to help the military, but how do we mobilize the American people in support of these operations overseas.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Akin's opening statement, without objection, will be made part of the record, his written statement.

And, Mr. Akin, for five minutes.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Doctor.

I had a couple of thoughts, hearing your testimonies, and I heard the word serendipitous a bunch of different times. And of course there are many things in life that you can't always predict.

It seems to me, though, that there were some things that the Administration did right. The first one was to show the resolve to stay there and be a player. If we weren't staying there, if we were busy trying to cover our rears as we are all running, that things wouldn't be the way they were.

The second thing is that I am aware from talking to General Allen about the Marine portion over in the Anbar Province, it wasn't just coincidence that some of these sheiks stood up. He effectively went out like a football recruiter, went over to Jordan, and talked some of these guys into coming back, at tremendous risk to those sheiks' lives, to assume the leadership for the geographic areas that made up part of Anbar Province.

So it leads me to the conclusion that when you have extremely competent leadership, it is surprising how luck seems to be more of a factor, not that there weren't a lot of factors that were going on that were certainly outside of our control.

I appreciated most of your testimony, agreed with most of it, from what I have been able to see. One question, though, and that was for you, Mr. Wilkerson, and that was it seemed to me one of the most encouraging things that I have seen was actually political, but not political the way those of us that work in D.C. think.

It always concerned me right from the get go in Iraq that the emphasis is all on parliament. We are all a bunch of belt-line big gov-

ernment nuts. And the thing that impressed me was the standing up of the local communities and the local governments and the guy's son agreeing to join the local police force and those local communities starting to take some charge of their own fate and destiny and policing their own neighborhoods.

It seems to me that that ground-up basis for a federalist solution over there was tremendously encouraging, even though the parliament just sits there and appears to do nothing. I suppose maybe they have made more progress than the Congress has, but not very impressive anyway.

But it seemed to me that there is good political progress at the local level and that if we could in some way do a sort of a limited government thing in parliament that guarantees certain basic issues, things like health care or police and this and that can be done in those local provinces. And then if we could guarantee them some source of revenue that is not controlled by the central government politicians, that we might be well on the way to being able to consolidate some of the gains.

So, I am not an expert. You guys are. But I am not short of opinions, so I would appreciate if you would respond in either category.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Akin can be found in the Appendix on page 99.]

Colonel WILKERSON. Well, I don't disagree with what you said. And, in fact, Seth's remarks yesterday to me were, as I said, quite saddening, quite disheartening, to me to hear him say that. There has been some progress, and it has been largely the way you say.

There has even been some progress—I would say maybe the glass is maybe a tenth full now, rather than being empty. The revenue that is going out now is sort of an oil sharing, because most of that revenue comes from oil, that is going out to the provinces, is happening. And it is happening largely because they finally got around to doing it.

And what you say about the local councils and villages and mayors and things like that is important. I think it is more important, though, if what you are shooting for ultimately is a Kurdistan, a Mosul, a Baghdad, a Basra, and you are not shooting for some entity in Baghdad that is going to largely be allied with us, or at least friendly to us, and be in control in some significant ways, at least, of these three or four outstanding provinces.

Many—not many, but some—have proposed that solution and have said that is what we should do. If that is the political resolution you are looking for over the next 10 years or so——

Mr. AKIN. Could I stop you? My only point was I am not into the carving it up in separate countries, that kind of thing. All I am simply saying is if federalism is going to work, if the money all comes from the central government, then the central government is going to control everything. Unless you can fund local provinces, some way cascade that money to them without the parliament pulling the strings, you are not going to be able to have that level of federalism which potentially—federalism to me doesn't mean different countries. It just means a series of states working together.

Colonel WILKERSON. I think my understanding of the pressures there and the tensions there would be that that is probably what you would wind up with, certainly in the north, I think.

Sulaymaniyah is prosperous now. One of my Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) friends told me the growth rate there is about 12, 13 percent now, doing well, really doing well. They don't want to disturb that. That is the reason recently, with Gates and Rice working with them, they have tacitly agreed to let the Turks take on the Kurdistan Workers' Paty (PKK), a major accomplishment.

And, as a result of that, our relations with Turkey are on the upswing again. So I compliment Secretary Rice and Secretary Gates on finally doing that. But that again reinforces that that is Kurdistan, really. They don't have any care for the rest of Iraq except that they want them to stay away, particularly Arabs.

So I don't know how you get away from that eventual happening if you let it start in that sort of significant way. And maybe that is the solution we should be looking for. I don't know. It is not the one we professedly are looking for.

Mr. AKIN. I wasn't suggesting that the army works at a local level. I would keep the defense under control of parliament. I am just talking about local police.

Colonel WILKERSON. The Kurds have their own army.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Cooper for 5 minutes.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Excellent testimony.

From the standpoint of the Armed Services Committee, the most striking testimony we had today was Colonel Wilkerson's statement that for the first time we have competent generals in Iraq. What an indictment, years into a war. For the first time, to have competent leadership.

Dr. Krepinevich said earlier that perhaps the Army would rather keep its personnel policies than to win the war. Those are two very powerful and penetrating statements that to me speak of hardening of the arteries of the upper ranks of the military, in ability to select the most powerful people for the job, inability to keep the talented people that we do find on the job so that we can succeed in this conflict.

I hope that we can reform the Pentagon and do the things necessary so that we don't have to wait five or six years into the next conflict before we get the appropriate leadership at the top.

Do either of you gentlemen have specific suggestions for things that we should be doing, as this committee, to try to improve the leadership in the upper ranks?

Dr. KREPINEVICH. I am sort of repeating myself, but it really does come down to leadership.

Mr. COOPER. Are we not developing enough leaders? Or are the right leaders not being included?

Dr. KREPINEVICH. I think we are struggling to catch up in terms of this kind of warfare. When this war began, we essentially had no doctrine for counterinsurgency. It was as though we decided after Vietnam we are getting out of this business and we are not getting back into it.

Mr. COOPER. It is the sixth Muslim country we have helped rebuild in the last dozen or so years?

Dr. KREPINEVICH. Certainly if you go back to the early 1990's and you could say, we are in Somalia, we are in Haiti, we are in Bosnia, maybe we ought to start thinking about irregular warfare in a serious way once again.

Again, I really do think there is a leadership issue here, and it is not to impugn the leadership of——

A PROTESTER. Where are the Iraqi voices? Where are the Iraqi voices?

Dr. KREPINEVICH [continuing]. Of the Army in terms of their patriotism or their dedication to duty. However, there were in the early days of World War II, General Marshall fired four Army corps commanders. In I think at least two cases, it wasn't because they were incompetent, it was just because he thought he had better people.

There was a certain ruthlessness, a certain seriousness of purpose, about what we were involved in. And somehow we seem to have lost that. And I think we lost it long before Iraq.

I once talked to interview General Westmoreland, and I said, General, the standard tour for a company commander in Vietnam is six months. I said, in those cases where a company commander has been able to serve longer, his casualty rates go way down, his effectiveness goes way up. How could we justify?

And his response to me was, we didn't know how long the war was going to last. We didn't want to create two classes of Army officers, one that had combat command and one that didn't.

And, again, it was the personnel needs, the career needs, before the needs of the country, almost before the needs of the soldiers. And I have approached General Petraeus on one occasion, after he had just come back from training the Iraqi security forces. And, again, great soldier doing a terrific job. And I said, Dave, what are you doing back in Washington? And he said, well, come on, Andy, I have been over there for a couple of years now.

And I said, well, given the importance of the job, if you weren't the best guy for the job, you shouldn't have been there, and if you are the best, you shouldn't be here. I have gotten answers, well, he has been over there for a year or so. We need to bring him back. He is exhausted.

And I said, is he really exhausted? I said, wasn't there a guy named Washington who was in the field from 1775 to 1781, for 6 years, no helicopter, no palace to sleep in at night. You think he had it rough?

Again, at the end of the day, you have to ask yourself as an institution, what kind of weight are we putting on trying to achieve our war aims as opposed to the health of the institution?

And in terms of legislation, it is worth talking to General David Barno, who commanded in Afghanistan. And General Barno said, Goldwater-Nichols—he said General Marshall in World War II, his in box, he had to worry about two things. He had to worry about the Army as an institution, and he had to worry about winning the war.

He said Goldwater-Nichols makes it so General Petraeus worries about winning the war and General Casey worries about the institution of the Army. And he said it is not always the case, in fact, in many times it has not often the case, that those two gentlemen will agree, because Petraeus is willing to risk breaking the Army to help win this war and Casey's job is to preserve the Army and to preserve the morale of the officer corps.

So on a number of occasions, we have set up a situation where these people are working at cross purposes from one another. But at the end of the day, I think it goes back to—and it is too bad Mr. Skelton isn't here—I think it goes a fair way back to how we train these people to think about war, how we train our senior leaders to think about strategy and what is needed to succeed and also a seriousness of purpose.

And I don't quite know how you instill that in people, but it seems as though we have lost a good part of that.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Spratt for five minutes.

Mr. SPRATT. Thanks very much for an excellent presentation and super testimony from all of you. I am the chairman of the Budget Committee, and it sort of surprises me, even after this many years, to sit through the discussions of these issues without any consideration at all being given to the budgetary consequences of what we are doing.

Now, I am not so mundane as to say that is the most important matter, but as it approaches—exceeds $500 billion. We got testimony today from The Congressional Budget Office (CBO). Their estimate of the cost of Afghanistan and Iraq since the inception is about $691 billion to date. They have a model for estimating what the cost will be if we stay there in smaller numbers. Their estimation is we draw down gradually to 75,000 troops in both theaters, Afghanistan and Iraq and stay at that steady state from 2013 through 2018, the last year of their projection.

The cost is about $1 trillion. Those are consequential numbers, consequential for the Defense Department, for the defense budget and for the country's infrastructure, all of the needs we have got, which are highlighted by the economic situation we have got on our hands right now.

We have been able to buy into this without taxing the American people one penny for the effort and largely on the assurance of the president's rather facile argument that we will stand our troops as their troops stand up. I have been over there five times now, I think, including before the current war, and I am just dismayed to see that we have not been able to put in the field 135 battalions that we have trained and taken full advantage of the fact that we have supposedly got an Iraqi army now that can begin to assume more and more responsibility for our troops.

Is that happening? If not, we had an Iraqi defense minister here a week ago who says we will need to stay there in substantial numbers until 2012. The cost of that is enormous, and it begs the question.

Dr. Krepinevich, you just mentioned Marshall. I have been reading Rick Atkinson's latest book and the previous book as well, and, my God, it is amazing how bad the generalship in the United States Army was as we were learning the hard way and losing casualties and making tactical mistakes up and down.

But when General Marshall took office on September 1, 1939, he went down to thank the president for his appointment but told the president, Mr. President, I want you to know, I am very proud to take this job, but I want you to know, I am the commander in chief of the 17th-largest army in the world. In two years, he was no longer the commander in chief of the 17th-largest in the world. He

was commander in chief of the army that, along with the Russians on the Eastern Front, won the second world war.

Why can't we shape these forces up? Is it ethnic divisions that still run through the Army? Is it corruption? Is it because we aren't putting them in the field where they will get battle hardened? What is the answer to that? Why can't we field an army that is adequate to bring security to the country sooner, rather than later?

Colonel WILKERSON. Let me take a shot at it and then anyone else, of course. Your first part of your question, one of the reasons I do all three of my seminars at William and Mary and The George Washington University, I make my students deal with resources. They don't like it. They are not economists, by and large. They don't like it, but I make them deal with resources.

The last president of the United States to put an addendum on every national security decision document that told him what the estimate of his decision was going to cost the Nation was Dwight Eisenhower. Haven't done it since.

You are absolutely right. This——

Mr. SPRATT. That is an interesting point. I would love to see that made part of the War Powers Act.

Colonel WILKERSON. This is another dimension of what I was talking about yesterday with Seth and with Michael O'Hanlon on the radio. This new president, in January 2009, is going to have a fiscal situation that I believe is quite powerless. And to continue to put this money out at the rate we are putting it out now, or even close to the rate we are putting it out now, is going to be virtually impossible.

So that is another constraint on the time we have left remaining to exploit these opportunities that we have got. Your point is genuine from both perspectives. We never think about it, and it is critical.

On the other point, I will identify myself with what was said over here by my colleague, but I will also tell you that I had seminar after seminar at the Marine Corps War College. And Senator Hagel and I have had particularly poignant discussions about this, and generally speaking we were doing counterinsurgency.

I mean, we were in Pristina in 1994. We were in Southwest Asia doing—we put troops on the West Bank to police a settlement in the Israeli-Palestine situation. We did really remarkable things, but let me tell you that not very many of those lieutenant colonels who stood out in that environment got promoted to general. And I had Marines, sailors, Air Force officers, one Coast guardsman and a number of other service or affiliates in reserves, national guard and so forth in my seminars.

Why? I asked myself. Well, I know the reason. It is what he said, but he just didn't want to go aggressively about that. The personnel system runs my Army, and the personnel system is not geared to producing people like David Petraeus. They sneak through.

Dr. BIDDLE. On the question of the Iraqi security forces and whether or not they can take over for us, there are a lot of challenges, equipment training, logistics, leadership, all that. The binding constraint is not their proficiency, it is their politics.

They are in the middle of an ethnic and sectarian civil war. They inherently consist of people drawn from ethnic and sectarian com-

munities and are subject to the same kinds of centrifugal pressures that the rest of society is. If the society is breaking apart into factions, you can't reasonably expect that we are somehow going to create a disembodied, free-floating entity that is divorced from the society from which it is drawn that is somehow disinterested and nationalist.

I think because of this I think it is unrealistic to expect that until and unless the underlying sectarian civil war that is Iraq is resolved that we are going to be able to create an Iraqi security force that can take over for us. Given that, I think what we are looking at in the near-term future is an Iraqi security force that can provide essentially a roll not unlike that that the concerned local citizen groups and Anbar awakening councils are providing. They can defend their own.

Shiite Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) units are very effective in defending Shiite neighborhoods. Sunni ISF units and the few nationalist, disinterested subsets, are capable of defending Sunni areas. By and large, they are not capable of defending people not of their sect.

That is I think centrally why if we are going to get something that looks like stability in Iraq it is going to require a long-term stay by us. We are the only party in the country that now, and I think for quite a while, is not viewed by someone as a threat of genocide.

And I think that is not a problem that we can readily fix by amping up training budgets, amping up advising efforts. These are good things in a variety of ways, but there are substantial limits on what they can accomplish, given the nature of the war in which this is taking place.

Dr. SNYDER. Mrs. Davis for five minutes, and then to Mr. Conaway and then to Mr. Johnson.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I am not sure if I am going to repeat anything that has gone on. I am sorry I had to leave the room for a few minutes.

You talked about the chain of command and the fact that it wasn't really clear, I think, Dr. Krepinevich. I have been studying that, too, so I thought I was going to get it right.

I actually heard that in a trip to Afghanistan a few days ago, the confusion there. And so where will this come from? I mean, how will this change?

Dr. KREPINEVICH. Well, it is within the power of the Defense Department to change the chain of command. They have something called the Unified Command Plan (UCP), where they sit down and they say, okay, this is how we divide up the regional commands.

Right now, for example, you have one combatant commander who is responsible for Pakistan, another one who is responsible for Afghanistan. And then you have the special operations——

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Part of my question, is there a recognition that this is a problem and that people want to solve it?

Dr. KREPINEVICH. Well, I certainly think, yes, there is a recognition that it is a problem. And the question is, how hard do you want to push in order to change things? And most organizations, most individuals, once they have power and authority and responsibility and budgets, don't like to give it up.

And this part of the world, there has always been this interesting debate about, well, we need India and Pakistan together because those two countries are often at odds with one another, so you peel off Pakistan. In this case, you have got a conflict, as I mentioned before, that really transcends several commands. And do you reorganize yourself in order to be able to conduct operations more effectively?

And, of course, once the president, I believe it was, or maybe it was Secretary Rumsfeld, designated the special operations command as the principal command involved in the global war on terror, then these other commands are supposed to support the special operations command, so you have got that layered in, as well.

And as Mr. Wilkerson mentioned, there is a similar problem in terms of the diplomatic side of the house, and then you have got the problem of integration. Since the military content of an operation like the invasion of Iraq is very high, the military content of counterinsurgency or stability operations relative to intelligence and reconstruction and diplomacy is relatively low, and it is much more balanced.

And so it becomes very important to be able to integrate that under an individual who has responsibility, can make trade-offs and can force compliance so that you can actually execute a good strategy when you have identified one.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. I know that my colleague, Geoff Davis, mentioned the interest and the work that we are trying to do, raise the issue on the interagency, and a lot of members have talked about this. Some are addressing it through different kinds of legislation. What would it look like if the Congress actually were to cross jurisdictions and help build the capacity in these different areas to do that?

In your estimation, where is the greatest—aside from the culture and getting there, I mean, is there a part of this that you think would be the most difficult to focus on? Not just you, Doctor, but everybody. Where is the least capacity, and I guess in one way the most capacity? How do we do that?

Colonel WILKERSON. I will describe to you what I saw that was the most effective interagency operation in my 40 years or so association with the government, military or otherwise. And it was essentially—I can't talk about it in great detail, but it was essentially 70-plus people as disparate as the Secret Service and the Department of Commerce, State, Defense, others, agencies, departments, bureaus, all working together to come up with a real plan to clandestinely go after North Korea in certain very key areas. Very successful effort, in fact, incredibly successful.

Did it ever come to any real fruition? A little bit, not much, because it ran into diplomacy, it ran into real power issues and so forth and so on, which was good.

Why was that so different from what I saw in Iraq and what I have seen in Somalia and a number of other places? It was principally different because the people working in the interagency group were first of all experts in their areas. They were not possessed of huge egos and they were out of the attention of those who were and, generally speaking, their technological and functional expertise was so exquisite that their pachyderm bosses didn't have a

clue what they were talking about. And so beneath the screen, so to speak, they got things done.

When you throw egos, and you throw the big 800-pound gorillas, into the arena, fully aware that their way is best, and you have a leadership that is unwilling to knock heads above that and to make people do what they should be doing, it is a very different situation. Can you improve that?

To a certain extent, I agree with the doctor here that leadership is the key. Leadership is the key. It is the key, it is always the key. But you can improve the organizational structure beneath that leadership in order to give that leadership in an increasingly complex decisionmaking environment.

The challenges of today are nothing like the challenges of the past, in my view, in complexity. You can increase that decisionmaker's ability to make better decisions. And that is what I think the group that he was referring to, Jim Locher's group and others, are striving for, is that institutional reshaping that would give decisionmakers a better opportunity to make good decisions and then, more importantly, probably, have them executed reasonably, the way they ask for them to be executed.

State and Defense are at the very peak of that. You fix the relationship between State and Defense and the others will follow.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Conaway for five minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

How long ego—it is probably a little difficult.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Conaway, could you pull your microphone in? I know it is kind of pointed.

Mr. CONAWAY. We did a little infrastructure work on the Armed Services Committee so that this clandestine 70 people fixed North Korea?

Colonel WILKERSON. No, no, didn't mean to say that. The plan that they put together would have been a marvelous accompaniment to diplomacy, had it been executed.

Mr. CONAWAY. I am trying to blow up that 70-person working model that had the very brightest people that walked the face of the Earth, no ego, to a grander scale that would address Iraq or Afghanistan, or maybe Congress itself.

Colonel WILKERSON. Good luck.

Mr. CONAWAY. Yes.

Dr. Wilkerson, you mentioned a new, grander bureaucracy that would I guess report directly to the president, that would include SOCOM, all the capacity of the Department of Defense (DOD), all the capacity of the State Department, every power that the Federal Government has, within this one organization. Once that is established and you create a new turf, how do we realistically keep it from migrating to exactly the circumstance we have today?

I am not a fan of replacing an existing bureaucracy with another bureaucracy that has got—if we could ignore the current turf, how do you overcome all of that and keep it from migrating back to the silos that we have right now?

Colonel WILKERSON. Well, it is an excellent question. I could answer you in comprehensive terms and tell you that that is probably what you do with bureaucracy periodically anyway. You have got to rape, pillage and plunder it every now and then and reshape it,

perhaps every generation, to get it to be a little less sclerotic and work a little bit better, but that is not the reason you do it.

What I suggested, I think, first of all, would be based on a fundamental strategic decision that this is the way of the future. That is to say, failed states, and what looks like failed states, whether they are in sub-Saharan African, Southwest Asia or wherever, are the real strategic priority, not only of our armed forces, perhaps, but also of the interagency group.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, stopping right there, won't you always have a tension between the groups that are in and out of the failed state models?

Colonel WILKERSON. Absolutely, absolutely. But what I am saying is, as Goldwater-Nichols did exactly what you said was impossible, because that is what Goldwater-Nichols did, it changed the entire bureaucratic arrangement of the armed forces. It did so by changing——

Mr. CONAWAY. I heard Mr. Krepinevich say it is terrible today. It doesn't function. You have got bad leadership across the board.

Colonel WILKERSON. I didn't say it was designed to produce great leaders. I said it changed the bureaucracy of the armed forces.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay. Let me go to Mr. Eisenstadt.

A civilian reserve corps, given the experiences we had the last four, five years with the national guard and the struggle and the tension between a home career and then having to leave for, if you were in the Marines, seven or eight months, if you were in the Army, 12 to 15 months, and then come back and the impact that that has had, which is not particularly favorable, how do you create a civilian reserve corps in which people can continue to have an outstanding civilian career here in the United States, but also at the same time be ready to leave that, walk away from that job and force those employers to make the adjustment that they all have to make, to go do something somewhere else?

Is that realistic in the real world?

Mr. EISENSTADT. I don't have all the answers for you, sir, but I would just say that is one reason why I think numbers are important, so that is why numbers are important and that is why a civilian reserve corps of just perhaps 5,000 people is probably too small, so that you could share and spread the burden over a larger number of people.

Having served in the Reserve for about 24 years now, I will just tell you that the challenges of creating a civilian reserve corps in terms of personnel management, which, if you want to talk about problems, I will just say just having as Reservists, I think the Reserve personnel system has a lot of problems and challenges attending to it.

Mr. CONAWAY. But you still have—even though the Army has got a personnel system that Dr. Krepinevich says is part of the root of the problem, the personnel system, you still have to have a personnel system.

Mr. EISENSTADT. Exactly, and that is one thing that I think people, before going down this route, they have to consider that there has to be career paths, there has to be professional education——

Mr. CONAWAY. On which side?

Mr. EISENSTADT. I am sorry?

Mr. CONAWAY. On which side?

Mr. EISENSTADT. On the civilian side, as well, and that is I think one of the things you hear often from military people, is that even within the Federal Government, whereas in the military there is a very well defined educational path that military officers in all the services have to go through, on the civilian side of the house, very often there is nothing analogous to that. And there is nothing analogous to doing joint billets or tours.

Now I think my understanding is that there are efforts to put people from civilian agencies with other agencies with the military to create this sense of jointness within the government, and I think that is a desirable development. But I think with the civilian reserve corps, this has to be thought through very carefully and I would not underestimate the challenges and problems involved.

But all I could say is this, that after 9/11, one thing that people asked me in various venues, what can we do to help? Our nation is facing historical challenges. We want to contribute, we want to be part of it.

And there is no mechanism right now for a lot of citizens, unless they join the military, and that is not for everybody. Unless they join the military, there really is no avenue for them to contribute to the general good.

Okay, you have emergency services. They could be volunteer firemen and emergency service personnel, but that is in their local community. If they want to travel overseas, they want to contribute to American commitments abroad, beside Peace Corps, there is just not a lot.

Mr. CONAWAY. I am way past our time, but we have got all these civilian contractors in country working for the dreaded company, Halliburton or KKR or others, who found a way to get into the fight, and yet we have spent a lot of time criticizing because of maybe mismanagement or whatever. There are roles where we had civilians go into the fight providing certain functions, beyond peaceful——

Mr. EISENSTADT. I will tell you, for a lot of people, and I will just say this in terms of myself, for certain people, the idea of serving in the government and not for a private contractor—and I am not knocking in any way the private contractors, because they have really done a very important service in Iraq. But I think a lot of people, the idea of Federal Government service has a sense of a certain mystique or appeal to it that is not the same as working for a contractor and there are—I would just also wonder if the economics from the government's point of view, how they work out contractors versus civilian reserve corps.

The contractors I am not sure provide real economies in some areas, both in terms of in financial terms and in terms of their contribution to the situation on the ground. I mean, it has been brought up that in a counterinsurgency fight it is not clear that security contractors are a net benefit in that particular milieu.

Dr. SNYDER. Mr. Johnson for five minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Biddle, I am sorry, in your *"Washington Post"* op-ed piece, you cite the reduction in violence that has occurred in Iraq as a result of the troop increase, and you say that we can embellish upon

this reduction in violence by negotiating a cease-fire, helping the parties negotiate a cease-fire. And then the U.S. can serve to enforce the cease-fire as the final leg, I guess, of that three-legged stool.

Who would be the parties to negotiate the cease-fire? What parties would be bound by the cease-fire, in other words?

Dr. BIDDLE. The cease-fire process is actually well under way already. There are over 200 currently existing cease-fire agreements in Iraq, mostly between individual Sunni groups and the local United States military leadership in their area, extended then to the U.S. Government and, to some degree, to the government of Iraq.

But I would actually attribute much of the decline in violence that we have seen to the effects of the cease-fires that we have already put in place. And I think the——

Mr. JOHNSON. These are agreements between the United States military and tribal factions, I guess you could say.

Dr. BIDDLE. It varies widely. Many of them are tribal leaders. Others are not. Many of them are actually the combatant factions that had been shooting us until hours to minutes before the agreements were signed.

So the particular parties to the agreement vary a lot from place to place within the country. I think, as a whole——

Mr. JOHNSON. It is not an agreement between the Iraqi government and these factions.

Dr. BIDDLE. That is correct, and you raise a very important point, which is this has mostly been independent of the government of Iraq and largely in spite of the government of Iraq, which by and large is very skeptical of this entire process. For a variety of reasons, centrally including the initial parties to engage in these cease-fire agreements were overwhelmingly Sunni and were former Sunni combatants, leading the Maliki government to fear——

Mr. JOHNSON. Actually a threat to them.

Dr. BIDDLE. Exactly, exactly.

Mr. JOHNSON. Now, you recommend that we continue this trend. Let me hear from the other panelists, what they think about this.

Dr. KREPINEVICH. I would agree with Dr. Biddle. Certainly, if you can take an enemy out of the fight who was killing Americans and trying to undo what we were trying to accomplish, I think that is a good thing.

Now, do they share our values? I doubt in many cases that they do.

Mr. JOHNSON. They do like our money, though.

Dr. KREPINEVICH. They like our money, and we also have a common interest. As Mr. Eisenstadt was pointing out earlier, we had a common interest in that we both came to view, they later than us, al Qaeda as our enemy in Iraq. And they were willing to cooperate with us to help get rid of AQI in their neighborhoods, in their areas.

I think you can't think of these cease-fires or these agreements as the kind of diplomatic arrangements you would enter into, say, with another country, or an alliance like we have, say, with Great Britain. I think you have to look at these groups and these arrangements as very dynamic in nature, if you will, subject to

change on a moment's notice. But do you gain a tactical advantage by entering into these?

Mr. JOHNSON. Short term, certainly. Long term, does it mean that we will continue to be trapped in Iraq with a government that is not reconciling with the various factions that we ourselves are negotiating with directly?

Dr. BIDDLE. The short answer is yes. I think the model we are headed to, if this process continues and if it does produce something that looks like a national cease-fire, looks very much like Bosnia or Kosovo today, a situation in which weary, distrustful, fearful former combatant factions are willing to tolerate cease-fire arrangements but are worried that the other party might and the thing stays stable because an outside party remains to serve as a peacekeeper.

I think that is actually the likeliest route, if we are going to get it, subject to all the uncertainties, to something that looks like stability in Iraq.

Mr. JOHNSON. That pretty much means permanent bases in Iraq. It means we will have to maintain a certain level of troops there and a certain amount of money. Public money will have to be committed to that. Do you have any idea of what those numbers would be?

Dr. BIDDLE. Well, let me give you the logic of it rather than the specific numbers, which require a good, solid study out of the joint staff.

But the logic of it, I think, is someone outside the system is going to have to be there probably for 20 years. I think what you need to truly resolve the situation such that no foreigners are needed any longer is generational change, a group that wasn't scarred by this conflict rises to leadership age in Iraq.

That doesn't have to be us the entire time. It is going to have to be us in the near term, because right now we are the only people who are willing to do this in quantity. If you were to get something that looked like stability, cease-fire and peace in Iraq, after a year or two of demonstration of that, historically there have been many actors around international system who have been willing and able to provide peacekeeping resources, especially if it becomes a United Nations (UN) aegis that is running this, rather than a relationship with the United States or with the government of Iraq bilaterally, who could take much of the burden off our shoulders.

They are not going to do it, though, until and unless it becomes clear that this is an actual cease-fire and they are peacekeeping and not war fighting. The troop level required for this is hard to estimate, because the social science of peacekeeping is so weak, but the kinds of rules of thumb that people toss around are not unlike the rules of thumb that people use for counterinsurgency operations.

Ideally, many people would like to see peacekeeping forces with about one capable combatant per about 50 members of the population, which gives you an unreachable, implausible, unreasonable troop count of about a half million for a country the size of Iraq. We are obviously not going to get anywhere close to that.

If this is the model we want in Iraq, I think what that implies, though, is more is better than fewer and the right U.S. troop count

for Iraq, especially once it becomes, if it becomes, a peacekeeping mission and not a war-fighting mission, is the largest force we can sustain there without breaking the military, with the hope that after two or three years of this we can begin to hand off more and more of these responsibilities to others, preferably under UN aegis.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you.

Dr. SNYDER. Gentlemen, we appreciate you being with us today. Thank you for your time. I think it is interesting that this hearing on Iraq probably had as much discussion about interagency issues involving the civilian side of our government, but I think that is certainly crucial to the things of the future, if not crucial to what is happening today, and we appreciate your observations on that.

The committee will be adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:38 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

JANUARY 23, 2008

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JANUARY 23, 2008

Opening Statement of
Chairman Dr. Vic Snyder
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Hearing on "A Continuing Dialogue: Post-surge Alternatives for Iraq; Part 2"

January 23, 2008

The hearing will come to order.

Good afternoon, and welcome to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations' sixth hearing on alternative strategies for Iraq.

My colleague, Mr. Akin, and I entered into this series of hearings last July because we were frustrated by the tone of the discussion about Iraq last year, and the polarization that has occurred. The political debate on the U.S. strategy for Iraq had too often been framed by two extreme positions: "precipitous withdrawal" or "stay the course" indefinitely. Our hearings were an effort to bring in smart, experienced people who could help us identify and develop alternative approaches for Iraq.

Our intent, again, is not to critique current or past policies, but to focus on the future. Through these hearings, we hope to enhance the public debate and inform full committee deliberations. Presidential election years are not necessarily the best time to debate the nuances of significant issues, but it is absolutely necessary for us to get past sloganeering to discuss the details of national security policies and strategies.

Last July, over four hearings, we heard from retired senior military officers, defense policy experts, and academic specialists. Our previous sessions made clear that we are focused on the future, and not merely intent on rehashing how we got to where we are. In July our witnesses were asked to address alternative strategies and key areas. Some of the specific things we were looking for were:

- The financial and personnel requirements to implement a given alternative;
- The impact on the people of Iraq;
- The impact on regional stability;
- The impact on U.S. national security generally; and
- The impact on the U.S. military.

Since last summer, there have been a lot of changes. The surge appears to have contributed to a decline in violence, the UN Mission in Iraq has been slated for extension and expansion, our President and Prime Minister Maliki have signed an agreement to normalize relations by next December, and regional conditions have continued to evolve.

Last week, we spoke with two returning witnesses, Generals McCaffrey and Keane, who were asked to update their views since so much has happened since July.

General Keane thought we are on exactly the right course by withdrawing 25% of the force (the surge brigades) by July 2008, and recommended then taking four to six months to evaluate where we stand before further adjusting troop levels.

General McCaffrey agreed that great progress had been made but warned against underestimating the challenges remaining. He attributed our recent progress to new leadership at the Department of Defense and in the field, and thought that the new president might consider establishing timelines for withdrawal next year.

The generals were joined by Dr. Hamre and Professor Kojm. Citing his experience with the Jones Commission, Dr. Hamre asserted that the Iraqi Security Forces are steadily growing capable of assuming more responsibility for security, potentially allowing the U.S. to withdraw as many as five thousand combat personnel per month. And Professor Kojm suggested that we must take advantage of the current lull in violence by pushing hard for national reconciliation, regional relations, and solutions to the refugee crisis.

Today, we're interested in what our witnesses would recommend as a course of action.

Our witnesses' written statements will be made part of the record and will help us better understand their views. I hope that we will have a vigorous discussion not only between subcommittee members and witnesses, but between the witnesses themselves. Anyone who was here for our July hearings, which are all available in audio format on the Armed Services website, will tell you that is exactly the kind of productive exchange we've had in the past.

For today's hearing, we have another distinguished panel including:

- Doctor Stephen Biddle, the Senior Defense Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, returning from July;
- Doctor Andrew Krepinevich, President of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment;
- Professor Lawrence Wilkerson, Visiting Professor at the College of William and Mary and former Chief of Staff to Secretary of State, Colin Powell; and
- Mister Michael Eisenstadt from the Washington Center for the Study of Near Eastern Policy.

Welcome to all of you.

Now, let me turn it over to Mr. Akin for any statement he would like to make.

Statement of Ranking Member Todd Akin
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
House Armed Services Committee

A Continuing Dialogue: Post-Surge Alternatives for Iraq

January 23, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon to our witnesses; thank you for being here today.

Today's hearing is the second in a series of hearings held this month looking at post-surge alternatives for Iraq. When this subcommittee held a similar series of hearings on this topic this past July, the security situation in Iraq—while improving—was still unstable, and the success of the surge was questioned—if not in doubt. Many of the witnesses who came before this subcommittee predicted that the surge had little—if any—chance of success. As I stated in our last hearing, just a little more than six months later, and fortunately the skeptics were wrong. There seems to be a growing consensus that the surge has worked; that is, the security situation in Iraq,

particularly in Baghdad and Anbar province, is much improved according to all the commonly cited metrics.

In addition to understanding how we should build on our recent successes in Iraq, which I will get to in a moment, I think it's worthwhile to understand what we have learned about our strategy and Iraq from the success of the surge. In particular, Dr. Biddle, when you testified before this subcommittee this past July you stated, "The surge represents a long shot gamble that is much likelier to fail than to succeed. But the odds of success, although small, are not zero" I'm curious why, in retrospect, the strategy you believed to be a "long shot gamble" worked? What do we know now that we did not know six months ago?

With success, however, comes a new set of challenges. So, I'd like to ask today's panel to address the same questions that I asked the witnesses who testified at our last hearing on critical issues we face in Iraq, they are: how do we take advantage of the progress we've made as a result of the surge; how can we make the security gains last; how can we translate progress on the security track into progress on the political track; and finally, what will the U.S. presence in Iraq look like in the months and years to come?

[The Administration has given us some insight into how they plan to proceed in the coming year. In November 2007, President Bush and Prime Minister Maliki signed a Declaration of Principles which stated that by 2009 the U.S. would move from a Security Council-mandated presence in Iraq to a traditional bilateral relationship with Iraq. This will include a status of forces agreement (SOFA) that would, presumably, delineate the size, roles and missions of U.S. forces in Iraq.]

[I'm curious to hear our witnesses' views on the Declaration of Principles, and whether you believe the timeline is realistic? Moreover, what has to happen on the ground in Iraq in the next twelve months to make a successful shift to a normalized bilateral relationship? Finally, what should a SOFA with Iraq look like, and can you articulate the types of roles and missions U.S. forces in Iraq should continue?]

The more you can help us think about these questions the better prepared we will be to address the next cycle of Iraq legislation that will come before this House in the coming months.

Again, thank you for being here today.

[Yield Back to Chairman Snyder]

Iraq after the Surge

Statement by
Dr. Stephen Biddle
Senior Fellow for Defense Policy
Council on Foreign Relations

Before the
Committee on Armed Services
Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives
Second Session, 110th Congress

23 January 2008

The American "New Way Forward" policy in Iraq, popularly dubbed "the surge," saw a major reduction in violence by late 2007. As the term "surge" implies, though, the troop increase was always understood to be temporary, and is now on the way down. What does this mean for Iraq? Is the violence reduction merely a temporary lull created by an unsustainable US troop presence? Will Iraq return to the violence of 2006 as the surge brigades come home? And what does this mean for post-surge US strategy and troop levels? Should we return to our pre-surge approach of training Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and facilitating a transition to Iraqi conduct of the war? Should we continue the US drawdown to troop levels below those of 2006 or pull out altogether?

The answers to these questions turn on our understanding of what the surge accomplished and how this came about. If nothing fundamental changed in 2007, then there is no reason to expect post-surge Iraq to look any different from pre-surge Iraq – and that was a disaster.

But in fact the situation today *has* changed in important ways. Due partly to the surge and largely to fortunate events beyond our control, the strategic landscape in Iraq is now much more favorable than it was in 2006. The new situation is still a long way from stable or secure. But today's conditions offer a much stronger *possibility* for a stable Iraq than has been available in a long time – *if* the United States resists the temptation to draw down sooner or deeper than necessary.

I advance this case in three steps. First, I assess the causes of the recent decline in violence, and attribute this to a series of voluntary local ceasefires – not national political reconciliation, the destruction or elimination of the enemy, an exhaustion of violence potential as a result of sectarian cleansing, or improvements in Iraqi government forces. Second, I discuss the chances for these ceasefires to hold. If violence is down because the combatants have chosen to stop fighting, will they choose otherwise when the surge brigades come home? I argue that while voluntary ceasefires are inherently reversible, they do not always collapse. The new strategic landscape in Iraq creates an opportunity for a lasting ceasefire that outlives the surge, but does not guarantee this by itself. Third, I argue that to realize this opportunity requires a continuing military presence by an outside

peacekeeper. This does not mean open-ended war fighting or the US casualties that go with it, and it may not require the surge's troop count. But peacekeeping is labor intensive nevertheless – and the right posture for stability maintenance in Iraq is thus the largest force we can sustain in steady state for an extended stay.

Why Did Violence Decline?

The original idea behind the surge was to reduce the violence in Baghdad in order to enable Iraqis to negotiate the kind of national power-sharing deal we thought would be necessary to stabilize the country. Chaos in the capital, it was thought, made negotiated compromise impossible; by deploying more US troops to the city and assigning them the mission of direct population security, it was hoped that a safe space could be created within which the national leaders of Iraq's Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds could afford to take the risks inherent in compromise.

The violence came down, but the compromise did not follow. Although some slow, grudging political progress has been made, the pace has lagged far behind the original intentions of the surge's designers. Many, prominently including the Democratic leadership on Capitol Hill, were prepared to declare the surge a failure given its inability to produce the reconciliation deal that was the whole point originally.

In the meantime, however, a completely different possibility arose – one that was neither planned nor anticipated nor intended when the surge was designed, but which has nevertheless become central to the prospects for stability in Iraq. This "Anbar Model" or "bottom-up" approach began with a group of Sunni tribal sheiks in Anbar Province, then quickly spread to Sunnis elsewhere in Iraq and now to many Shiites as well.

This model is built not around a national compact, but instead a series of bilateral contractual agreements in which particular groups of local Iraqis agree not to fight the United States or the government of Iraq, and to turn their arms instead on common enemies – initially al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), and increasingly rogue Shiite militias as well. These local groups further agree to wear distinguishing uniforms, to patrol their home districts, to limit their activities to those home districts, and to provide Coalition forces and the Iraqi government with biometric data (e.g. fingerprints and retinal scans), names, and home addresses for all members. In exchange they receive recognition as legitimate security providers in their districts, a pledge that they will not be fired upon by US or Iraqi government forces as long as they observe their end of the agreement, and a US-provided salary of $300 per member per month.

The parties to these local ceasefire deals have been variously termed "Awakening Councils" or "Concerned Local Citizen" (CLC) groups. As of January 2008, membership in these CLC organizations had grown from a baseline of essentially zero in early 2007 to more than 77,000 Iraqis under more than 200 such contracts across much of western and central Iraq. By way of comparison, the entire active strength of the British Army worldwide is about 100,000 – the growth in CLC membership in less than a year has been truly extraordinary.

For now, the CLC groups are disproportionately, though not exclusively, Sunni (about 80 percent of CLC members were Sunnis in January 2008). Many of the principal Shiite combatants, however, were observing their own ceasefires. In particular, Muqtada

al Sadr directed his Jaish al Mahdi (JAM), or "Mahdi Army" militia to stand down from combat operations following an altercation with the rival Shiite Badr Brigade in Karbala in August 2007.

The result is that as of January 2008, most of the major combatants on both the Sunni and Shiite side were all observing voluntary ceasefires.

One would expect this rapid spread of local ceasefires to have an important effect in reducing violence in Iraq, and indeed it has. In fact it has been largely responsible for the dramatic reduction in violence by late 2007. In effect, most of the combatant factions that had been fighting the Americans and the government voluntarily agreed to stop. Moreover, the remaining hard core AQI and rogue militia holdouts had been seriously disadvantaged by the defection of their erstwhile allies: without the safe houses, financial support, intelligence and concealment provided by their coreligionists, AQI and militia rogues were exposed to US firepower in ways they had not been previously. Guerillas survive by stealth – their key defense from destruction by better-armed government forces is the government's inability to distinguish fighters from innocent civilians. When their former allies agreed to finger holdout guerillas for US engagement, AQI's military position in western and central Iraq thus became largely untenable and they were forced to withdraw into the limited areas of Diyala, Salah ad Din, and Ninawa Provinces where CLC deals had not yet been reached. The net result was a dramatic reduction in opposition, a dramatic reduction in the number of enemy-initiated attacks, and a corresponding reduction in US casualties, Iraqi civilian deaths, and ISF losses.

The violence reduction was not, by contrast, caused by our killing the enemy or driving them out of Iraq. AQI's casualties were heavy in 2007, but AQI was never the bulk of the Sunni combatant strength, and violence in 2006 was increasingly attributable to Shiite militia activity. Neither of the latter has suffered nearly enough losses to explain a radical reduction in violence, nor have many such combatants fled the country.

Nor is the violence reduction attributable to sectarian cleansing. Many have argued that violence fell because there was no one left to kill: Baghdad's once-mixed neighborhoods are now purely Shiite, they claim, removing the *casus belli* that once drove the violence. Yet significant Sunni populations remain in Baghdad – many fewer than in 2005, but significant all the same. More important, the relative incidence of mixed and pure, or Sunni and Shiite, neighborhoods in Baghdad correlates very poorly with the scale of sectarian violence. The killing has always been concentrated at the frontiers between Shiite and Sunni districts, where, typically, Shiite militia fought to expand their control and Sunni insurgents fought to hold them off. As this unfolded, Sunnis were often forced out and city blocks would fall under Shiite control, but this simply moved the frontier to the next block, where the battle continued unabated. Cleansing thus moved the violence, but it did not reduce it. This can be seen in the casualty statistics for 2006, which hardly fell as the city's Sunni population shrank: all estimates show *increasing* civilian fatalities over the course of 2006, not the opposite. The only way this cleansing process could explain a radical drop in violence is if the frontiers disappeared as a result of Sunni extinction in Baghdad – but this has not occurred. And it is far from clear that even a total Sunni eviction from Baghdad would end the violence: the frontier would simply move on to the "Baghdad Belts," the ring of heavily Sunni towns and suburbs that surround the city. In fact this had already started in 2006-7: both Sunni and Shiite

combatants maneuvered extensively to improve their positions for continued warfare beyond the city by contesting control of key outlying towns. The violence did not simply run its course and ebb for lack of interest; regrettably, there remains an enormous potential for continued sectarian bloodletting in Iraq.

Nor is the violence reduction attributable to improvements in Iraqi government security forces. The ISF is better than it was, but its training, equipment, and logistics remain very uneven. Its key shortcoming, however, remains its politics rather than its proficiency. Shiite-led ISF units can secure Shiite districts, but are often distrusted by Sunnis and then have great difficulty functioning effectively in their neighborhoods. A few units have established a reputation for even-handedness and can act as nationalist defenders of all, but too few to secure the country. Much of the ISF, in effect, thus operates as the CLCs do: they defend their own. Local communities, whether Sunni or Shiite, accept defense by co-religionists they trust, but not by others – hence Iraq today is increasingly a patchwork of self-defending sectarian enclaves, warily observing the others but for now declining to use violence as long as they are left alone.

Can the Ceasefires Hold?

Of course, a voluntary decision to stop fighting can be reversed. CLC members retain their weapons. Many are essentially the same units, under the same leaders, that fought Coalition forces until agreeing to stop in 2007. Many retain fond hopes to realize their former ambitions and seize control of the country eventually. The JAM has stood down but not demobilized; they, too, could return to the streets. Many have thus argued that these ceasefire deals could easily collapse. And indeed they could.

But this is not unusual for ceasefires meant to end communal civil wars such as Iraq's. These typically involve very distrustful parties; they often begin with former combatants agreeing to ceasefires but retaining their arms; and they are always at risk of renewed violence. Many fail under these pressures. But some succeed: in Bosnia, Kosovo, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, for example, ceasefires of this kind have held and led to persistent quiet, if not warmth or deep reconciliation, between the former warring parties.

At least two requirements are needed to translate fragile deals into persistent stability. First, peace has to be in the perceived strategic self-interest of both parties. If one or both sides see warfare as superior to ceasefire, then any deal is temporary and will collapse at a more tactically opportune moment.

Until recently, Iraq failed this criterion. Sunnis feared Shiite domination, but believed they were stronger militarily than the Shiites; if only Sunnis could drive the Americans out, then a weak Shiite regime would collapse without its US protectors and Sunnis could seize control. Hence fighting made sense for them. Shiites, by contrast, feared a Sunni restoration and saw warfare against Sunni insurgents as necessary to avert a takeover. Initially most Shiites were willing to let the government and its American allies wage this war for them. Eventually, however, they began to lose faith in either actor's ability to protect them, and thus turned to Shiite militias to wage war against the Sunnis on their behalf. Militia warfare offered Shiite civilians protection against Sunni violence. Fighting also offered Shiite militia leaders – and especially Muqtada al Sadr – a power base they could not obtain otherwise, and a possible route to political control via

military victory over the Sunnis, and eventually, over the Americans (who opposed Shiite warlord autocracy in favor of an unacceptable multisectarian compromise with the rival Sunnis). Shiites, too, thus preferred warfare.

Events in 2006 and early 2007, however, changed this strategic calculus fundamentally for both Sunni insurgents and Shiite militias. The key to this was the Sunni's military defeat in the sectarian Battle of Baghdad that followed the Askariya Mosque bombing of February 2006. Until that time, Shiite militias had fought mostly defensively and often stood on the sidelines in Sunni-US combat. But when AQI destroyed the shrine, the Shiite militias entered the war in force and on the offensive. The result was a yearlong wave of sectarian violence in Baghdad pitting Sunni insurgent factions and their AQI allies against, especially, Muqtada al Sadr's Jaish al Mahdi. At the time, this wave of bloodshed was seen as a disaster – and in humanitarian terms it clearly was. The United States tried to stop it. But in retrospect, it may prove to have been the critical enabler of a later wave of ceasefires by changing fundamentally the Sunni strategic calculus in Iraq.

Before the Mosque bombing, Sunnis could believe they were the stronger side and would win an eventual all-out war. The Battle of Baghdad, however, provided a window into what such a war would mean for Sunnis, and they did not like what they saw. To Sunnis' surprise and dismay, the battle produced a decisive Sunni defeat: what had once been a mixed-sect city became a predominantly Shiite one as the JAM progressively drove the Sunnis out and shrank their remaining strongholds in the capital. With the Americans playing no decisive role, Shiites overwhelmed Sunni combatants in neighborhood after neighborhood. Sunnis who had harbored fond hopes of ruling the country by defeating the Shia in open warfare were now unable to call relatives in traditional Sunni strongholds because the JAM had driven them from their homes and replaced them with Shiite squatters. Neighborhoods that had been Sunni homeland for generations were now off limits, populated with and defended by their rivals. In a head-to-head fight, the Sunnis had been beaten by Shiite militias they had assumed they could dominate.

A second major development was a series of strategic errors by AQI. Americans have no monopoly on error in Iraq, and AQI's leadership seriously overplayed their hand in 2006. Al Qaeda in Iraq is exceptionally violent, and not only against Shiites and Americans. Fellow Sunnis whom AQI's leadership felt were not sufficiently devout or committed were also targeted with extraordinary brutality – including delivery of children's severed heads to the doorsteps of Sunni sheiks who failed to follow AQI preferences. The smuggling networks that many Sunni sheiks in Anbar Province had relied upon for generations to fund tribal patronage networks were appropriated by AQI for its own use. Before the Battle of Baghdad, most Sunnis tolerated these costs on the assumption that AQI's combat value against Shiites and Americans outweighed their disadvantages. As defeat in Baghdad became clearer, however, it also became clear that AQI could not deliver real protection. By late 2006 AQI's inability to prevent defeat in Baghdad and the costs it imposed on coreligionists had thus convinced many Sunnis that they needed to look for new allies. And the only possible choice was the United States.

At the same time, the surge made this realignment with the United States much easier and safer. Americans had sought political accommodation with Sunni insurgents

for years; attempted openings to Sunni leaders had been a major component of US policy throughout Zalmay Khalilzad's tenure as Ambassador, when the US tried to broker compromise from both sides. These efforts made little headway, however, with a Sunni leadership that expected to rule Iraq if it instead held out and won the ensuing war. By 2007, however, Sunnis had become much more interested in American protection. And with the surge, Americans had more protection to offer. Any Sunni contemplating realignment against their nominal AQI allies surely realized that a massive AQI counterattack awaited them – no organization with AQI's reputation for brutality would stand back and watch while its allies changed sides and betrayed them. And in fact the initial wave of Sunni tribal disaffection in Anbar was met with an immediate campaign of bombings and assassinations from AQI against the leaders and foot soldiers of the rebel tribes. Previous rumblings of Sunni tribal disaffection with AQI in Anbar had been reversed by such counterattacks. Now, however, the rebel tribes approached American forces whose strength in Anbar and Baghdad was growing, and whose mission was changing to emphasize direct US provision of population security through aggressive patrolling and persistent combat presence (as opposed to the previous mission of limiting US exposure while training Iraqis to take over the fighting). After much initial wariness, the Americans decided to support this realignment and joined forces with the tribes against AQI in Anbar. With American firepower connected to Sunni tribal knowledge of who and where to strike, the ensuing campaign decimated AQI and led to their virtual eviction from Anbar Province. The result was a province-wide ceasefire under the auspices of the Anbar Awakening Council and the US military.

This outcome provided a model for similar ceasefires elsewhere. Sunnis outside Anbar understood their Baghdad defeat's military implications at least as well as the western sheiks had. As the arrival of US surge brigades and their extension of American security capabilities made it possible, more and more local Sunni leaders thus opted to stand down from combat against the Americans and to make common cause with them instead, enabling their new allies to hunt down AQI operatives, safe houses, and bomb factories. The result was a powerful synergy: the prospect of US security emboldened already-motivated Sunnis to realign with the US; Sunni realignment as CLCs enhanced US lethality against AQI; US defeat of local AQI cells protected realigned Sunni CLCs; local CLC ceasefires with the Americans reduced US casualties and freed US forces to venture outward from Baghdad into the surrounding areas to keep AQI off-balance and on the run.

Ceasefires with Sunnis in turn facilitated ceasefires with key Shiite militias. These militias began largely as self-defense mechanisms to protect Shiite civilians from Sunni attack. But as Sunni insurgents ceased offensive operations and as AQI weakened, the need for such defenders waned and the JAM in particular found its support base among Shiite civilians weakening. This loss of support was exacerbated by the growing criminality of many militia members, who had exploited their supporters' dependency by preying on them with gangland control of key commodities such as cooking fuel and gasoline for economic extortion. Rising criminality in turn created fissiparous tendencies within the militias, as factions with their own income sources grew increasingly independent of the leadership and Sadr in particular. Meanwhile the American military presence was strengthening with the arrival of the surge brigades in Sadr's home base of Baghdad, and those Americans were increasingly freed of the need to fight Sunnis by the

growth of local ceasefires, posing an increasing threat to JAM military control in the capital.

Taken together, this created multiple perils for Muqtada al Sadr. In previous firefights with the Americans, he had sustained heavy losses but easily made them up with new recruits given his popularity. But Shiites' growing disaffection with his increasingly wayward militia, coupled with declining fear of Sunni attack, threatened his ability to make up losses with new recruitment. At the same time, tensions with other Shiite militias, especially the Badr Brigade in southern Iraq where JAM was weaker but where much of Iraq's oil wealth was concentrated, posed a threat from a different direction, and his weakening control over rogue elements created a danger of the organization gradually slipping out of his hands. When Shiites were unified by a mortal threat from Sunni attack and the Americans were tied down with insurgents and AQI, these internal problems could be managed and Sadr could afford to keep the JAM in the field and killing Sunnis and Americans. But as the Sunni threat waned, Shiite support weakened, the JAM splintered, and the Americans strengthened, Sadr's ability to tolerate a new battle with the US Army was thus progressively diminished. Of course, Sadr is notoriously hard to read, and it is impossible to know exactly why he does what he does. But at least one plausible hypothesis is that the effect of Sunni ceasefires added to other mounting internal pressures to persuade Sadr that he had to stand down himself rather than taking another beating from the Americans. Hence the new circumstances drove the JAM, too, to observe a ceasefire.

The result was a major change in incentives for both the Sunni insurgency and the key Shiite militia. Of course, this decline in violence is still far from a nationwide ceasefire – hard fighting remains, especially in parts of Diyala, Salah ad Din, and Ninawa Provinces where AQI's remnants have taken refuge and where the CLC movement is still taking shape. But if the strategic logic described above holds, then there is at least a chance that the local ceasefires of January 2008 could continue to expand to cover the remaining holdouts. This does not mean sectarian harmony or brotherly affection in Iraq. But it does mean that cold, hard strategic reality increasingly makes acting on hatred too costly for most Sunni insurgents and Shiite militias – which has translated into a rapid spread of local ceasefires in accordance with the new interest calculus.

Yet this has not produced national reconciliation among Iraq's elected representatives in the capital. Why not?

In time it may. For now, however, the Maliki government's incentives differ from Muqtada al Sadr's. Sadr needs peace to avoid further deterioration in his internal position and to avert casualties he cannot replace in a costly battle with the Americans. Maliki, by contrast, is not fighting the Americans – the surge is no threat to him. On the contrary, US reinforcements and weaker Sunni opposition reduce the cost of continued warfare for Maliki's ISF. For Maliki, moreover, peace is politically and militarily riskier than war. Reconciliation along American lines requires dangerous and politically painful compromises with rival Sunnis: oil revenue sharing with Sunni provinces, hiring of former Baathists, Anbari political empowerment, and other initiatives that Maliki's Shiite allies dislike, and which Maliki fears will merely strengthen his sectarian enemies militarily. A predominantly Sunni CLC movement adds to these fears. *Sadr* needs peace because war now risks his political status; *Maliki*, conversely, runs greater risks by

compromising for peace than by standing fast and allowing the war to continue. Thus the Shiite government makes little progress toward peace even as Shiite militias stand down in ceasefires.

This is not to deny any progress by the government. It has been distributing revenue to Sunni provinces even without a Hydrocarbon Law to require this. It recently passed a new de-Baathification law making it easier to hire Sunnis into some government jobs, and had been doing such hiring anyway even without a legal mandate. To date this has resembled a form of toe-dipping: the Maliki government has been unwilling to pass laws requiring it to fund or empower Sunnis, but as the environment has gotten safer the regime has been willing to experiment tentatively with compromise as long as it retained the ability to back off again later if the results were unfavorable. The result has been a modest degree of grudging movement toward compromise. It could be that continued progress in local ceasefires could add a new incentive if it begins to look as though the Baghdad government is being left behind in a grass-roots process of bottom-up reconciliation conducted without it; perhaps the government would then move in order to avoid being rendered irrelevant.

But it is also entirely possible that the near to mid-term future could see a weak and sclerotic central government unable to do more than distribute oil revenue while the real dynamic of Iraqi security devolves to localities, where a patchwork quilt of local ceasefires in response to the shifting incentives of combatants in the field meanwhile produces an end to the fighting – for now.

What is to be Done?

This brings me to the second requirement needed for ceasefires to hold long enough to end communal civil wars. An outside party is typically needed to serve as a peacekeeper to enforce the deals.

This is because such deals are neither self-enforcing nor inherently stable. Even where peace is in the mutual self-interest of the majority on both sides, there will still be spoilers who will seek to overturn the ceasefire and renew the war. Rogue elements of Shiite militias, for example, profit from the fighting and will seek to restore the instability within which they flourish. And AQI has no interest whatever in stability. Though hurt badly and on the ropes in Iraq, AQI is not annihilated and even small numbers of committed terrorists can still bomb selected marketplaces or public gatherings.

Such spoilers hope to catalyze wider violence by spurring the victims to take matters into their own hands and retaliate against the historical rivals that many will blame for such attacks. In an environment of wary, tentative, edgy peace between well-armed and distrustful former combatants, even a few such attacks can lead to an escalatory spiral that quickly returns the country to mass violence and destroys any chance of stability.

Alternatively, the central parties to the ceasefire may try to expand their area of control at the expense of neighboring CLCs or militia districts. Ambitious Sunnis with dreams of Baathist restoration may use the lull to build strength, probe their rivals for weakness, then launch a new offensive if they discover a vulnerability. Shiite militia

leaders unsatisfied with a limited role in a weak government could push the limits of their accepted status at the expense of Sunnis or rival Shiite warlords.

In this context, outside peacekeepers play a crucial role in damping escalatory spirals and enforcing ceasefire terms. As long as the underlying strategic calculus favors peace, then an outside military presence allows victims of spoiler attacks to wait rather than retaliating – they can afford to delay and see whether the Americans will take action against the perpetrators rather than jumping to immediate violence themselves. This enables their historical rivals, in turn, to stand back from preempting them the first time a bombing takes place. The peacekeepers' ability to enable victims to wait and see thus reduces the virulence of the escalatory dynamic in the aftermath of the inevitable bombings and terrorist strikes.

Similarly, if CLC leaders and militia commanders know that a US combat brigade is going to enter their district and arrest any leader whose followers violate the terms of the agreed ceasefire – and if the provision of biometric data and locating information for all CLC members means that the Americans know who the violators are and where to find them – then the underlying mutual interest in ceasefire is less likely to be tested. And if the victims of a rival's expansion know they can call on a US combat brigade to penalize their assailants they will be less prone to retaliate themselves and incur the cost of unnecessary fighting and casualties to their own followers.

This is not war fighting. It does require troops who can fight if they have to. And some fighting would be needed, especially early on, to punish spoilers and ceasefire violators and thereby to discourage further violence. But success in this mission means that the parties quickly understand that continued wary tolerance suits their interests better than renewed warfare, making the foreigners' role one of maintaining a ceasefire rather than waging a war. Soldiers are needed – but the casualty toll of combat should not be.

Peacekeeping of this kind is, however, labor-intensive, long term, and would almost certainly have to be a US undertaking, especially in the early years of a ceasefire. We are the only plausible candidate for this role for now – no one else is lining up to don a blue helmet and serve in a UN mission in Iraq. We are not widely loved by Iraqis; among the few things all Iraqi subcommunities now share is a dislike for the American occupation. Yet we are the only party to today's conflict that no other party sees as a threat of genocide – we may not be loved, but we are tolerated across Iraq today in a way that is unique among the parties. Nor are Iraqi attitudes toward Americans fixed or permanent: Sunni views of the US role, for example, have changed dramatically in less than a year. Marine patrols in Falluja that would have been ambushed a year ago are now met with kids mugging for photos from Marines carrying lollipops along with their rifles. Of course, what goes up can come down; attitudes that change quickly for the better can change just as quickly for the worse. But it is at least possible that the United States could play this role, whereas it is very unlikely that any internal party within Iraq could. And it is just as unlikely that any international actor other than the United States will agree to do so any time soon.

Whoever does this is going to have to do so for a long time: perhaps 20 years – until a new generation, which has not been scarred by the experience of sectarian

bloodletting, rises to leadership age in Iraq. A US role will clearly be important for at least part of this time, but it may not be necessary for the United States to do this alone the entire time. If 2-3 years of apparent stability makes it clear that the Iraq mission really has become peacekeeping rather than war fighting then it is entirely plausible that others might be willing to step in and lighten the American load, especially if they can do so under a UN banner rather than a bilateral agreement with the United States or the government of Iraq. So we need not assume a 20-year US responsibility alone. But a long term presence by outsiders of some kind will be needed. And it would be imprudent to assume that we can turn this over to others immediately.

The number of troops required could be large. The social science of peacekeeping troop requirements is under-developed, but the common rules of thumb for troop adequacy in this role are similar to those used for counterinsurgency: around one capable combatant per 50 civilians. For a country the size of Iraq, that would mean an ideal force of around 500,000 peacekeepers – which is obviously impossible. But some such missions have been accomplished with much smaller forces. In Liberia, for example, 15,000 UN troops stabilized a ceasefire in a country of four million; in Sierra Leone, 20,000 UN troops sufficed in a country of 6 million; in Congo, 17,000 UN troops suffice for a country of 65 million. It would be a mistake to assume that such small forces can always succeed in a potentially very demanding mission; but it would also be a mistake to assume that because the United States cannot meet the rule-of-thumb troop count that the mission is hopeless.

Some now hope that lesser measures will suffice to stabilize Iraq's ceasefires. The US leadership in Baghdad, for example, hopes that it can create a financial incentive for CLCs to behave by making them Iraqi government employees with the Maliki regime paying their salaries. The regime, however, is resisting this, and it is far from clear that Sunni CLC leaders would trust Maliki to pay them if the US withdrew most of its troops. Nor would this solve the problem anyway: spoiler violence is inevitable even if the CLCs behave themselves, and without US troops in sufficient force to respond effectively such attacks would be dangerously destabilizing.

Perhaps financial incentives alone will suffice all the same; certainly they would help. But to rely on them in the absence of a robust peacekeeping presence would be very risky. The strongest assumption is thus that more is better when it comes to the post-surge US troop posture: the larger and the longer-term the peacekeeping presence, the greater the odds of success; the smaller and the shorter-term the presence, the weaker the odds. And this in turn means that if the United States reduces its troop levels in Iraq too quickly or too deeply, the result could be to endanger the stability prospects that have been bought at such cost in lives and treasure. We cannot afford to keep enough troops in Iraq to provide the ideal peacekeeping force. But to leave Iraq without an outside power to enforce the terms of the deals we have reached is to make it very likely that those deals will collapse in the face of inevitable spoiler violence, ambition, and fear. The right troop count depends on the technical details of just what the United States can sustain in Iraq given the demands of equipment repair, recapitalization, troop rest, retention, and recruitment. But the right number is the largest number that we can sustain given these constraints.

Conclusions and Implications

We may thus have an opportunity in Iraq that has not been available since 2003 to stabilize the country and avert the downside risks of failure for the region and for US interests. To realize this opportunity will not be cheap or easy. And it will not produce the kind of Iraq we had hoped for in 2003. A country stabilized via the means described above would hardly be a strong, internally unified, Jeffersonian democracy that could serve to spread liberty through the Mideast or stand in alliance with America as a counterweight to extremist or hegemonic threats in the region. The result would look much more like the Bosnia or Kosovo of today than like the Germany or Japan of the Cold War. Iraq would be a patchwork quilt of uneasy local ceasefires, with Sunni CLCs, Shiite CLCs, and Shiite militia governance adjoining one another in small, irregularly shaped districts; with most essential services provided locally by trusted co-religionists rather than by a weak central government whose functions could be limited to the distribution of oil revenue; and with a continuing need for outside peacekeepers to police the terms of the ceasefires, ensure against the resumption of mass violence, and deter interference from neighbors in a weak Iraqi state for many years to come.

Moreover there are many ways in which such a peace could fail even if the United States and the key Iraqi factions play the roles described above. Long term peacekeeping missions sometimes succeed, but peacekeepers can also become occupiers in the eyes of the population around them. If the US presence is not offset or replaced in time by other tolerable alternatives under a UN banner, nationalist resistance to foreign occupation could beget a new insurgency and a war of a different kind. If spoiler violence or early challenges to the peacekeepers' authority are not met forcefully and effectively, then the volume of challenges could overwhelm the availability of enforcement and the effort could collapse into renewed warfare. If ongoing operations do not keep AQI from regrouping, or if today's growth of negotiated ceasefires does not ultimately spread through the remainder of Iraq, then the US mission could remain that of war fighting without any peace to keep.

There are no guarantees in Iraq. And given the costs and the risks of pursuing stability, a case can still be made for cutting our losses now and withdrawing all US forces as soon as it is logistically practical.

But the case for cutting our losses in Iraq is much weaker today than it was as recently as six months ago. The rapid spread of negotiated ceasefires and the associated decline in violence since then has substantially improved the case for remaining in Iraq and paying the price needed to maximize our odds of stability. It will not be cheap, and it will not be risk-free. But neither is withdrawal. A US departure from an unstable Iraq risks the prospect of regional intervention and a much wider war engulfing the heart of the Mideast's oil production – any responsible proposal for troop withdrawals in Iraq must contend with their risks, which are substantial. All US options in Iraq remain unattractive. But the option of staying and trying to stabilize the country is now much less unattractive than it has been in a long time.

U.S. Strategy in Iraq

A "Third Way" Alternative

TESTIMONY

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Andrew F. Krepinevich

President

Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

January 23, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today, and to share my views on a possible "third way" strategy alternative to the two currently dominating the ongoing public debate.

Introduction

Insurgencies are protracted by nature. Thus COIN [counterinsurgency] operations always demand considerable expenditures of time and resources . . . . The population must have confidence in the staying power of both the counterinsurgents and the HN [host nation] government. Insurgents and local populations often believe that a few casualties or a few years will cause the United States to abandon a COIN effort . . . .

Executing COIN operations is complex, demanding, and tedious. There are no simple, quick solutions. Success often seems elusive.

Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*

After a year, the Surge in Iraq is about to come to an end. Plans have been announced to withdraw five U.S. combat brigades from Iraq in the coming months. While the Surge has achieved notable successes, victory is not yet in sight. More needs to be done. A strategy must be crafted that will guide our actions beyond this campaign, lest we fail to capitalize on its gains and neglect key outstanding issues the Surge did not address. I applaud this subcommittee for raising awareness of the importance of crafting such a strategy, whose success or failure will likely shape our national security for years, if not decades, to come.

I recently had the pleasure of discussing this issue with a senior British MP closely involved with defense matters. While unfailingly polite, he did finally work his way around to posing the question, "When will your presidential candidates come to a serious debate regarding your Iraq strategy?"

Indeed, when will we "come to a serious debate?" The dialogue so far seems divorced from the very definition of strategy, which involves how we go about employing the means available to us—soldiers, equipment, leaders, and other resources—to achieve the ends we seek.

Victory on the Cheap

The Bush Administration's initial strategy for Iraq might be dubbed "Victory on the Cheap." The hope was that, as in the Balkans and, early on, in Afghanistan, stability could be achieved relatively quickly and with a minor infusion of American ground forces. While the means employed were to be modest, the ends we sought were anything but—creating a functioning democracy in a multiethnic Arab state that had never known one. This imbalance of ends and means has led most strategists to seek more modest ends for Iraq: some form of power sharing and wealth (i.e., oil revenue) sharing among the three principal groups—Shi'ia Arabs, Sunni Arabs, and Kurds; an end to large-scale

sectarian violence; an Iraqi government opposed to militant Islamic terrorism; and a commitment not to pursue nuclear weapons.

Still, these objectives are modest only in relation to those the Bush Administration originally set out to achieve. Most would agree that, given the means at hand, they are formidable, indeed. Yet can we further reduce our war aims? Can we accept an Iraq that is a haven for radical Islamists? An Iraq that is pursuing weapons of mass destruction? An Iraq awash in violence that would draw in external powers and extend the conflict beyond its borders, with all this implies for the region's stability and the stability of already precarious global energy markets?

None of the major candidates in either party who seek the presidency are declaring their willingness to risk these outcomes in Iraq. But what strategies are they offering that will guide the U.S. effort in Iraq beyond the Surge?

Withdrawal Without Consequences

Some candidates are advocating a strategy that might be described as "Withdrawal without Consequences." This strategy notes that the American people are tired of a war in which victory seems just as elusive today as it did a year ago, or two years ago, or three years ago. They argue the United States simply lacks the means to achieve the ends it seeks, no matter how it employs them (i.e., no matter what strategy it chooses to pursue). Not only have the American people soured on the war, they assert, but our Army is perilously overstretched, and in danger of "breaking."

Thus the United States needs to withdraw and allow Iraqis to determine their own destiny. Some make a virtue of necessity, noting that as long as Americans are in Iraq providing security and helping keep the country together, the Iraqis are content to let them shoulder the burden. Put another way, the more the Americans put their shoulder to the wheel, the less the Iraqis are inclined to do so. By setting firm withdrawal dates, goes the argument, we are forcing the Iraqis to undertake the difficult steps on political reconciliation, security and wealth sharing that they have been ducking.

Some who advocate the Withdrawal Strategy seek to hedge against too precipitous a pullout by declaring that we might maintain some small number of military advisors in Iraq to assist indigenous security forces, and some special forces to hunt down terrorists operating in the country. We might also, they note, maintain an "overwatch" force in Kuwait or elsewhere in the Persian Gulf region in the event things go badly and we need to take action.

While attractive on its face—it offers a dramatic near-term reduction in the means currently being employed (over 150,000 troops and roughly $100 billion per year)—the strategy contains several major flawed assumptions that render its success a high-risk proposition.

First, setting a firm date for a U.S. withdrawal is far more likely to stimulate Iraq's main subgroups to begin preparing for all-out conflict with one another than to promote reconciliation. Prior to the surge, when the United States repeatedly attempted to assign the security mission to the Iraqis themselves (recall the mantra "As they stand up, we stand down"), the results were hardly encouraging. Indeed, one reason for the Surge's success in reducing violence was its realization that U.S. forces had to be involved in providing security. Simply stated, the Americans have been the moderating influence that has kept the Iraqis from descending into a full-scale civil war.

This should not be surprising. After centuries of rivalry, and decades of oppression under Sunni Arab rule following the creation of Iraq, there is little trust between the country's three major subgroups. Given this, it strains credulity to think that less than three years after the Iraqi people ratified their constitution—with several major issues left outstanding—they can easily put these old animosities behind them. By comparison, consider that 72 years after our constitution was ratified in 1789, many people—including men like Robert E. Lee—still saw themselves more as citizens of their respective states than as Americans. How long will it be, for example, before a Shi'ia Arab sees him/herself as an Iraqi first and a Shi'ia Arab second? It is a hard truth that achieving U.S. objectives in Iraq will require a sizeable long-term American military presence. The hard choice is either accepting this, or running the risks outlined above. There is no "Withdrawal Without Consequences."

Second, those advocating this strategy would do well to recall the axiom that "power abhors a vacuum." As the United States pulls its forces out, others with strong interests in the ultimate disposition of Iraq will be motivated to shape events as best they can. Iran has heavily infiltrated Iraq. Turkey has already taken minor military action against the Kurds. Several Sunni Arab states have supported the insurgents, directly or indirectly. It strains credulity to think that these states, whose security depends on how things sort out in Iraq, will refrain from attempting to influence events, to include supporting (or, in Turkey's case, suppressing) an Iraqi faction engaged in civil war.

Third, the idea that U.S. troops would be reintroduced into Iraq from their "overwatch" bases also is difficult to accept. If today America lacks the means to achieve its goals in Iraq, how could it do so under conditions far worse than those that exist at present? To be sure, one could imagine U.S. troops being deployed, but their mission would likely be to rescue American diplomats and Army advisors whose safety is endangered by the spreading disorder.

In sum, the "Withdraw Without Consequences" strategy is more a strategy of hope, which assumes a high level of risk to U.S. security interests in order to account for the inadequate means—both in terms of resources and national will—we have devoted to achieving our objective.

Stay the Course

Several candidates advocate a strategy of "Staying the Course" in Iraq. They note the Surge's success in enhancing security and reducing violence; exploiting the opportunity presented by the "tribal awakening" in Anbar province against al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI); enabling modest improvements in the Iraqi Army and even the police forces; and nudging the country's factions into some potentially significant steps toward reconciliation.

The problem with this strategy, as pointed out by those advocating "Withdrawal Without Consequences," is that the United States lacks the means to continue operating at Surge levels. To be sure, the American public has been encouraged by the Surge's success, and other issues, such as the state of the economy, have deflected their attention. Yet the Army remains overstretched. And the Surge's success is, to a great extent, the result of good fortune rather than careful design.

As reflected in the administration's belated decision to increase active Army end strength by 65,000 soldiers (and the Marine Corps by 27,000 marines), America's ground forces are not sufficiently large to sustain the current level of commitment to Iraq while maintaining readiness for other contingencies. Indeed, most of the brigades not currently deployed overseas lack the equipment necessary to be at full readiness should another crisis arise.

The administration is attempting to remedy this shortfall, in part, through the widespread use of commercial security contractors, who according to one senior Army official number in the tens of thousands. The problem, of course, is that these contractors may actually have produced more harm than good. As one Army general observes

> These guys run loose in this country and do stupid stuff. There's no authority over them, so you can't come down on them hard when they escalate force. They shoot people, and someone else has to deal with the aftermath. It happens all over the place.[1]

Attempts to increase the Army's size may prove too little, too late, given the glacial pace at which the Service is increasing its ranks. Why the apparent lack of urgency? It has nothing to do with sluggishness on the Army leadership's part, and everything to do with the limits on the ability to recruit volunteers to engage in hazardous duty.

There are very likely clear limits on the size of an all-volunteer ground force the Army and Marine Corps can achieve without dramatically increasing the pay and bonuses of soldiers and marines. The annual cost for American active duty personnel is already at historic highs. For example, between the start of the Second Gulf War and the end of last year, the Army had to increase the amount spent on retention bonuses by nearly an order

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[1] Jonathan Finer, "Security Contractors in Iraq Under Scrutiny After Shootings," *Washington Post*, September 10, 2005, p. 1. The observation was made by Brigadier General Karl R. Horst, Deputy Commanding General, 3rd U.S. Infantry Division.

of magnitude, from $85 million to $735 million.[2] At the same time, the cost to support each soldier, as measured by personnel costs, increased by well over 50 percent since 2001, from $75,000 to $120,000 per soldier in 2006.[3]

Moreover, despite these substantial increases in the financial incentives being offered to Americans to serve in the military, there are worrisome indicators that the quality of the force has declined, perhaps significantly. The Army granted some 8,500 moral waivers for recruits in 2006, more than triple the 2,260 granted a decade ago. Waivers for recruits who committed felonies were up 30 percent in 2006 over 2005. The Army is also accepting more high school dropouts. Last year roughly 82 percent of Army recruits had high school diplomas, compared to a benchmark of 90 percent. This is the lowest rate since 1981, when the Army was beginning to come out of the depths of the "hollow force" of the immediate post-Vietnam era.[4]

The Army's problems do not end there. Only 61 percent of Army recruits scored above average on the Service's aptitude test for recruits in 2006, the lowest scores since 1985. The Army has lowered its weight standards for recruits and increased the recruiting age to the point where it would not have met its recruiting targets in 2006 without those recruited who are over the age of 35.[5] It seems evident, then, that even the dramatic increases in financial incentives instituted in recent years are not, by themselves, sufficient to attract enough higher quality personnel to fill even its current force requirements, much less a substantially larger force.

Even more worrisome is the fact that, despite the lower quality of recruits being accepted in the Army, the Army's basic trainee graduation rate leaped from 82 percent in 2005 to 94 percent in 2006.[6] This result seems counter-intuitive. Why is it happening? Why are lower quality recruits graduating at a higher level than their more qualified predecessors? The likely answer: maintaining tough basic training programs increases the number of "washouts" while reducing the number of graduates ready to fill the ranks. Given the choice of sending units to combat zones at substantially less than full strength, or sending them with less than the best recruits, the Army, forced to make a difficult choice, is opting for the latter.

The Army is also having problems filling its officer requirements. For example, the Active Component was short some 3,000 officers in 2006. Meanwhile, the Guard and Reserve confront a shortfall of nearly 7,500 officers.[7] Recent declines in retention rates of West Point graduates are also a source of concern.[8]

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[2] Tom Vanden Brook, "Army Pays $1 Billion to Recruit and Retain Soldiers," *USA Today*, April 12, 2007, p. 8.
[3] Greg Jaffe, Despite a $168 Billion Budget, Army Faces Cash Crunch," *Wall Street Journal*, December 12, 2006.
[4] Tom Vanden Brook, "Older Recruits are Finding Less Success in Army," *USA Today*, February 19, 2007.
[5] Tom Vanden Brook, "Older Recruits are Finding Less Success in Army," *USA Today*, February 19, 2007; and Associated Press, "Lower Standards Help Army Meet Recruiting Goal," *USA Today*, October 9, 2006.
[6] Vanden Brook, "Older Recruits are Finding Less Success in Army," *USA Today*, February 19, 2007.
[7] Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Military Personnel: Strategic Plan Needed to Address Army's Emerging Officer Accession and Retention Challenges* (Washington, DC: GAO-07-224, January 2007), p.

Under these conditions, despite the Army's shortage of soldiers—both in quantity and quality—it may take five years to increase its ranks by 35,000. While the Marine Corps' problems do not appear to be as severe as the Army's, the Marines also plan to take up to five years to increase their ranks by 22,000.[9] Simply stated, we appear to be reaching the size limit on our ground force structure, unless we are willing to resort to extreme measures such as conscription, or, as some propose, offering citizenship to foreigners who are willing to fight Americans' battles for them.[10]

But the challenge of "Staying the Course" does not end with limits on the size of our ground forces. Much of the Surge's success can be attributed to the leadership of senior American commanders like General Petraeus and Lieutenant General Odierno, as well as Ambassador Crocker. Yet General Odierno is being replaced, and there are already rumors circulating regarding who might be tapped as General Petraeus' replacement.

Despite history's long chronicle of the importance of great commanders and civilian leaders to success in war, the administration and the military services persists in the belief that one general is just as good as another, and that diplomats are generally interchangeable as well. But as our history has shown, it makes a difference whether an army is commanded by a Washington rather than an Arnold, by a Grant rather than a McClellan, by an Abrams rather than a Westmoreland. Yet when we find exceptional commanders, they are typically rotated out so that the next general in line can have his "turn." As one senior Army officer remarked to me, "The Army would rather lose this war than change its personnel system." The practice of playing Russian roulette with our field commanders has finally produced serendipitous results with the current senior commanders. But "Staying the Course" must mean keeping proven commanders in the field.

Similarly, the Surge has succeeded in no small measure because General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker are both highly capable and willing to cooperate with one another. This is again the product of serendipity, as neither Petraeus nor Crocker is in charge in Iraq. In fact, the United States has no single person in charge in Iraq and, short of the president, no one in charge of the war in Washington on a day-to-day basis. This "business-as-usual" approach to the war violates the long-standing military principal of unity of command. As FM 3-24 declares

> Campaign design may *very well be the most important aspect of countering an insurgency* . . . . Design should reflect a *comprehensive approach* . . . . There *should be only one campaign and therefore one design*. The single campaign

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27; and Greg Jaffe, "Despite a $168B Budget, Army Faces Cash Crunch," *Wall Street Journal*, December 12, 2006.

[8] Bryan Bender, "West Point Grads Exit Service at High Rate," *Boston Globe*, April 11, 2007, p. 1.

[9] The Marine Corps has traditionally had less difficulty filling its ranks than the Army, in no small measure because while the Army is well over twice the size of the Marine Corps, both recruit from the same manpower pool.

[10] This latter option has gained some currency in some quarters across the political spectrum.

> should bring in all players, with particular attention placed on host nation participants. [emphasis added][11]

Yet how can unity of purpose and of action be achieved with the host nation if every senior U.S. official is free to pursue his/her own version of a strategy?

A Third Option

No strategy is without its risks, because no country has ever had unlimited means with which to achieve the end it seeks. Thus the test of any strategy is its ability to maximize the chances of achieving the goals set forth. (Or, if you prefer, to minimize the risk of failure.) The strategies of "Victory on the Cheap," "Withdrawal Without Consequences," and "Stay the Course" do not meet this test. They either are too ambitious for the means at hand, or run a very high risk of failure. What might we salvage from the ideas put forth from each in crafting a more effective strategy?

To begin, our leaders must live up to their charge: they must lead. This means confronting the American people with difficult truths. Simply put, for the United States to have a reasonable chance of achieving its minimal objectives in Iraq, it will likely require a significant, long-term residual military presence in that country—perhaps as many as 35-40,000 troops. To paraphrase the old rationale for the American military presence in Europe during the Cold War, this is necessary in order to "keep the Iraq's external predators out, and its internal factions down."[12] The American people must accept that there are no easy exits from Iraq that do not threaten their vital security interests. This will require entering into a security partnership with the Iraqis, something our earstwhile seem to be gradually accepting as they ponder the prospect of life without an American presence.

Yet even getting to a residual force level will not be easy, much less assured. As the Surge winds down, what elements of a successor strategy might we pursue? The following are key elements of a "Third Way" strategy intended, over time, to enable the United States to maintain a residual force in Iraq along the lines described above, with the consent of the Iraqi government, in an environment of minimal violence.

Reinforce Success. The adoption—at long last—of counterinsurgency operations by the U.S. military and its Iraq counterparts is enhancing security. This is necessary both to reassure the Iraqi people and to enable the reconstruction and the promise of a better life. As the newly formed Army counterinsurgency doctrine correctly notes

> The ultimate success in COIN is gained by protecting the populace, not the COIN [counterinsurgency] force . . . . . [The reason for this is that] [p]opular support allows counterinsurgents to develop the intelligence necessary to identify and defeat insurgents.[13]

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[11] U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, p. 4-9.
[12] During the Cold War, it was said the NATO was needed to "keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down."
[13] U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, pp. 1-27, 1-29.

The logic is simple. If American and Iraqi forces know who the insurgents are and where they are, they can easily be defeated. This intelligence is overwhelmingly the province of the Iraqi people. If they feel secure and if they see their lives improving, they will be more likely to provide this intelligence. Thus the fundamental aspects of the Surge must be sustained, even as our troop levels are reduced.

Help the Iraqis Help Themselves. With U.S. forces drawing down from Surge levels in the coming months, it will be important that the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) take on more responsibility, operate effectively, and do not fall prey to sectarian influences. One key to success here will be the efforts of American Army advisors embedded with the ISF. Yet despite the long-term nature of standing up the ISF and ensuring it becomes a capable force, the Army has yet to take steps to establish an advisory corps, or anything like it. This forces the Army to strip other units of officers and NCOs to perform the advisor mission, something for which they receive minimal training. For these reasons, advisor duty is something that up-and-coming officers and NCOs seek to avoid, even though success here is critical to the overall success of the war effort. This needs to be corrected through the establishment of an advisory corps of sufficient size to support the ISF and Afghan National Army (ANA).

Pursue Reconciliation from the "Bottom Up" as well as the "Top Down." Perhaps the greatest incentive for reconciliation at the national level—aside from the belief in an enduring U.S. military presence—comes from enabling reconciliation from the bottom-up, although this is not without its risks. As we have seen, inhabitants in some areas have shown a willingness to work with U.S. and Iraqi forces to provide for their own security. This can enable reconstruction to proceed with less fear of sabotage, and facilitate local elections as well. The prospect of "grass roots" leaders emerging may encourage the leaders of Iraq's principal factions to engage in reconciliation efforts on a national level, lest they become less relevant. Perhaps the recent Justice and Accountability law passed to supercede the 2003 de-Ba'athification decree is reflective of this.

Keep America's Best Commanders (and Diplomats) in the Fight. As noted above, some of our best military commanders are not in the fight, or are being reassigned out of the theater of war. Despite the use of "stop-losses" to prevent key personnel from being discharged from the Service, some officers, like LTG David Barno and MG Rick Olson, have been allowed to retire. It is long past time to stop relying on good fortune to insure that we have our best commanders in the field. Highly capable generals who have proven to have an exceptional ability to command in this different kind of war—men like LTGs Peter Chiarelli and James Mattis—should be assigned where they can put their experience to the best use.

Establish Unity of Command. Again, as noted above, we cannot rely on hope as a key element in our strategy. While General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker are a highly capable and effective team, one person must have responsibility for integrating the complex combination of security, intelligence, reconstruction and diplomatic elements

that comprise the means through which U.S. strategy is implemented. As Field Manual 3-24 notes

> Unity of effort must be present at every echelon of a COIN operation . . . . Ideally, a single counterinsurgent leader has authority over all government agencies involved in COIN operations.[14]

The same should apply to the U.S. effort in Afghanistan and, especially, in Washington. Despite his many talents, it is unreasonable to assume that LTG Douglas Lute can direct the actions of senior administration officials like Secretary of State Rice or Secretary of Defense Gates. In contrast, consider that in early stages of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam during the Kennedy Administration, the counterinsurgency effort was put under the authority of two men: General Maxwell Taylor (soon to become JCS chairman) and Robert Kennedy, the president's brother. There was no doubt regarding their political clout and ability to use it. We need similar senior leadership today.

Conclusion

The Third Way strategy offers no guarantees that we will achieve our minimal objectives in Iraq. Yet it does offer a better chance of doing so than the other strategies described above that have taken center stage in this election year. This is because it neither assumes resources that are not available nor argues that we can simply call it a day in Iraq and depart without consequences.

In the end, America's next administration will confront a dilemma. For us to succeed in Iraq, the Iraqi people need to hear that we will support their efforts for as long as it takes to establish a stable regime that is not at the mercy of terrorists or their predator neighbors. Yet, to many Americans, success has simply been reduced to leaving Iraq, as quickly as possible, with little consideration being given to the potential consequences.

The next administration must confront this dilemma. We must get beyond the notion that there is a strategy that promises an easy out, or success at low cost. What we have ahead of us—whether we remain in Iraq or not—is the "long, hard slog" that Defense Secretary Rumsfeld saw coming when the "dead enders" in Iraq proved to be the leading edge of an insurgent movement. But although the road ahead will be difficult, I believe the American people are up to the challenge. Indeed, it is the willingness to take on difficult challenges—not to defer them or seek to avoid them so that they will become the burden of the next generation—that sets the measure of a generation.

President Kennedy put it best, perhaps, when he spoke to the "Cold War Generation" that followed the "World War II" age group that some have described as the "Greatest Generation." The president noted the great—and difficult—challenges confronting America at that time, in particular the Soviet threat and the race to the moon. He encouraged his generation to take these challenges head-on:

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[14] U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, p. 2-22.

> We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too.[15]

Thus strategy is greatly influenced by the leaders who craft it and implement it. The "Third Way" strategy presumes an administration that is willing to confront hard truths, to share them with the American people, to ask for sacrifice, and to argue that it is unwilling to postpone or evade the difficult challenges we confront here at home, in Iraq, and elsewhere are around the world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[15] President John F. Kennedy, Address at Rice University, Houston, Texas, September 12, 1962. Cited at http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/Reference+Desk/Speeches/JFK/003POF03SpaceEffort09121962.htm, accessed on January 20, 2008.

Colonel Lawrence B. Wilkerson, USA (Ret)[1]

Iraq: Alternative Strategies in a Post-Surge Environment

Prepared Testimony to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services United States House of Representatives 23 January 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, for allowing me to testify on the future of Iraq—in particular, on alternative strategies for Iraq in a post-surge environment.

I've been watching Iraq closely since 1990 when I served as Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and we were all, I will have to admit, bowled over by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August of that year.

I recall vividly sitting up very late one night in the Pentagon, smoking a cigar with Colonel Tom White—later Secretary of the Army but then Executive Assistant to the Chairman—and pouring over the map of the "left-hook" that General Schwarzkopf was getting ready to execute in the western desert and, together, Tom and I trying to predict the number of U.S. casualties that would result. Thankfully, we were off by a considerable amount. Neither of us at the time realized how significantly the eight long, bloody and bitter years of war with Iran had decimated the Iraqi Army and the country's infrastructure.

I recount this short history simply to inform you that when, as chief of staff of the State Department in 2002-2003 when the U.S. once again contemplated war with Iraq, I was not exactly a newcomer to this business. In fact, in the intervening years, I had made a study of Iraq for educational purposes as I helped to lead the U.S. Marine Corps War College in its efforts to educate a new generation of joint leaders in our armed forces, and, later, as I continued to work for Colin Powell as an advisor and consultant.

It is enough to say that Saddam Hussein was a much-studied man. Perhaps too studied, as later some of us in this country came to believe that we knew him better than we did, particularly with regard to his possession of weapons of mass destruction.

Now he's gone from the scene in Iraq and many of us, including I expect you and the members of this committee, are trying to estimate what may follow him, for surely something or someone will and just as surely it will not be a continued American or

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coalition occupation. Note I said "estimate" and not "determine". One thing I've learned conclusively about Iraq is that the best we can do is estimate. In the vernacular, of course, that means "guess".

But before I add my guess to the pile, let me make a few brief comments about why we are in a slightly better position today in Iraq than prevailed in 2004, 2005 and 2006, or even early 2007. That better situation has come about largely in conjunction with the so-called surge and not because of it. To believe that the equivalent of two small divisions of troops—or five or six combat brigades in the new military lexicon—could make a significant difference in a country of some twenty-seven and a half million people, or even in the city of Baghdad or the province of al-Anbar, is to believe in pipe dreams.

Moreover, to recognize this reality and to acknowledge what actual confluence of circumstances has in fact caused the situation to improve, is essential to making a good guess about what may be coming in Iraq in the future.

One of the most significant reasons violence in Iraq has abated somewhat is that Moqtada al Sadr has gone to ground. The strongman most likely to have replaced Saddam Hussein had we left the country very soon after our invasion in 2003—what the Secretary of Defense at the time, Donald Rumsfeld and his cohorts wanted to do—was not Ahmad Chalabi as they wished and planned for. Chalabi may have lasted a few weeks or even months but eventually Moqtada al-Sadr, or someone who looked very much like him, would have risen to power. My pick would be the man himself, al-Sadr.

And today, his decision to more or less go to ground and to take his militia with him, the most powerful militia in Iraq, has been one of the significant factors leading to the reduction in violence and the modicum of stability that currently exists in Iraq. (Moqtada al-Sadr's recent statement that he may revisit this decision soon and re-enter the fray in Iraq is, therefore, very disquieting.)

Likewise, the decision of many Sunni leaders in key areas to place their operations and their support in line with coalition tactical objectives and to take arms and undergo training in order to do this, has contributed majorly to this improved situation.

In addition, the combat operations that started well before the surge, particularly in the most terrorist- and insurgent-infested areas, were remarkably successful in rooting out al-Qa'ida remnants and putting a high premium on continued insurgent operations, this latter particularly the case when Sunni tribal leaders began to realize that money, arms, and training could be had if they "changed their ways". As Andrew Bacevich suggested in the *Outlook Section* of Sunday's *Washington Post*, these Sunni leaders decided for the time being that money and arms and awaiting more propitious times was a better plan than continuing the current fight.

And we must not fail to mention the war-weariness of the general Iraqi population, as testified to most dramatically by the exodus of some two-plus million Iraqis into Jordan

and Syria primarily and the displacement within Iraq of an almost similar number of citizens without the wherewithal or means to escape.

And we must not forget that by the time of the surge, most of the significant ethnic cleansing that had been going on in Iraq had been completed and had accomplished the purposes of the largely Shiite groups that were perpetrating it.

So, we might say that Iraq had reached a sort of weird equilibrium when the surge occurred and that General Petraeus was astute enough to recognize this, as was Ambassador Ryan Crocker, and between the two of them, with a new and much more effective set of military tactics and a far better approach to letting the Iraqis do much of the heavy-lifting, they began to widen and expand the stability and reduction in violence that was already occurring. This is a good development, of course, but it has hardly proven its sustainability. Nor has it eliminated major violence or large numbers of deaths in Iraq, as the last few days have amply demonstrated.

What is has done is helped the current administration to implement what was its fundamental decision with regard to Iraq earlier in 2007, and that was to pass the problem of Iraq to the new administration. Admittedly, the Bush Administration wants to pass Iraq on with as many encumbrances as possible so that the new administration will be bound by certain restraints and will have to continue some of the old administration's policies; but the success or failure of that attempt will in large measure be decided here in the corridors of this Congress as much as on the battlefields of Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, I have had people in Iraq since the invasion—some of whom I put there, others who Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld put there but who communicated with me nonetheless, still others who Secretary of State Powell put there. These people have worked in the Iraqi ministries, in the Multi-National Security Transition Command (MINSTICI), in the U.S. embassy group, the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Army, and elsewhere. My son, a USAF captain, was just in Iraq, in Kirkuk, working with the Third Iraqi Air Force for six months. Such people have kept me fully apprised of what is happening there and I am infinitely grateful to them because in many cases they have been in grave danger on a number of occasions and my hat is off to their bravery, courage, and daring in trying to make some sense out of a situation and bring some coherence to U.S. operations when leadership from Washington was so utterly lacking.

At the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, it is somewhat unbelievable to me, a veteran of Vietnam and of three decades under the Pentagon's aegis, that Washington first so badly micro-managed the war in Iraq that we were doomed to fail and, then, as if in horrible recognition of this fact, completely relinquished control and allowed a vacuum of leadership to develop that was just as bad. General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker represent the first real leadership that America has exercised in its use of the military and diplomatic instruments to achieve political objectives in Iraq. That alone is reason to damn this administration a thousand times over.

In fact, it becomes clear that Ambassador Barbara Bodine—the "mayor of Baghdad", as she became known at the time—was correct when she intimated that, in the beginning, just after the toppling of the statue in Baghdad, experts such as she knew that there were 500 ways to get things wrong in post-invasion Iraq and perhaps two or three ways to get things right. What was not known was that the U.S. would try all 500 of the wrong ways before it would stumble onto one of the right ways.

Mr. Chairman, I've also remained in contact with Iraq's very capable ambassador to the U.S., Samir Sumayda'ie, who as you know was Minister of the Interior for Iraq early-on, and I have valued his counsel as well with regard to what is happening in his much-troubled country. Our most recent conversation took place as he visited the campus at William and Mary, where I teach, and was hosted to a dinner and a talk there.

Again, I relate these matters to you and to your committee members so that you are aware that what I am saying is not my punditry or surmise but what I have gleaned from some very talented people doing very difficult jobs.

What follows, however, is indeed my surmise for I'm not certain any of my contacts in Iraq—or perhaps even Ambassador Sumayda'ie—would be able to or want to make such characterizations and predictions as I am about to indulge in.

First, I want to talk geostrategically for a moment or two.

We—the United States—have major and abiding interests in the Middle East. These include, but are not limited to, the flow of oil through the region's pipelines and through the Strait of Hormuz and the security of the state of Israel. The latter is no longer a vital strategic interest in the sense that Israel is an unsinkable aircraft carrier in a region endangered by a superpower with an expansive strategy, but it is an important interest because America and Israel are joined at the hip—if for no other reason than Jewish Americans form a very powerful political lobby in this country. In my view there are other reasons than that one, not the least of which is that Israel is a democracy and that we and Israel have ideological connections as well.

In addition to oil and Israel, there are other very important U.S. interests. For example, there is Turkey and our strategic relationship with that potentially very powerful Muslim country—a relationship that was on the rocks until very recently because of the ineptitude of the Bush administration but lately has been recovering due to some hard work on the part of Secretaries Gates and Rice; there is Lebanon and what that country means to the stability of the eastern Mediterranean; and there are the relationships with Saudi Arabia, Egypt and others.

Currently with about 160,000 U.S. troops on Iraqi soil, we are poorly-positioned to protect these very important interests. Moreover, we are exacerbating the antagonisms that make our challenge to defeat the terrorists who wish us harm so difficult. For example, by having so many U.S. boots on Arab soil, we make it extremely difficult to

energize the moderate Muslim world—a world we seriously need if we are to defeat these terrorists.

We need to re-position our forces. We need them to be over-the-horizon in carrier battle groups and amphibious ready groups, in pre-positioned stocks in key areas, and participating in critical exercises with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and others in the region—not permanently deployed to and tied down in Iraq. This situation must cause Admiral William J. Fallon to pull out his hair nightly as he contemplates how badly deployed his forces are to protect America's real interests in the region. I served from 1984 to 1987 as Executive Assistant to Rear Admiral Stewart Ring who was then the J5 for, first, Admiral William Crowe and, later, Admiral Ron Hays as USCINCPACs—back when it was permissible to call these good men "commanders in chief." I know of what I speak.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let me relate this very brief geostrategic analysis to the purpose of this hearing—alternative strategies for Iraq in the post-surge environment. I think you can see where I'm headed.

We need to reposition our forces to protect our real interests in the Middle East and to better our position in the war against those terrorists such as al-Qa'ida who wish us harm.

And incidentally, when we are long gone from Iraq there will be no al-Qa'ida presence there, just as there was no al-Qa'ida presence there when we invaded. This is because the Iraqi people—Sunni, Shia, Kurd of either religious persuasion, Turcoman, Christian, or other ethnic or religious grouping—will not tolerate an al-Qa'ida presence in their country.

Because of this need to reposition our forces, it is imperative that we not remain embroiled in Iraq. It is also imperative that we remove substantial numbers of our ground forces from Iraq because our ground forces are on the verge of self-destructing. It is both a source of amusement and chagrin to me that, for example, while General George Casey was in Iraq he could not admit to this fact but now that he is Chief of Staff of my beloved Army he has discovered it. I fear that over the past seven years the uniformed leadership in our Army in many instances has proven itself very nearly as incompetent as the civilian leadership above and around it.

How do we accomplish this down-sizing and departure without jeopardizing the modicum of stability that has come to Iraq of late? In short, how do we leave Iraq in some semblance of order—particularly if what I've said about the Sunnis is true and they are simply waiting until we depart before they use our arms and our training to begin anew their struggle for a return to power against the Shiites?

It ain't gonna be easy—that's the first reality in my view.

But, that said and admitted, I believe it can be done; indeed, as I've highlighted it *must* be done.

Over the course of the next two years, starting as soon as possible but no later than this summer, we must start withdrawing our forces from Iraq. We need to do this carefully, slowly, and in accordance with a withdrawal plan that has what we in the military used to call "branches and sequels". In layman's terms you may refer to them as plan B's, offshoots, or on- and off-ramps. In essence, branches and sequels are designed to exploit a sudden and perhaps unexpected success or to hedge against a similarly sudden and unexpected failure or adverse development.

Of these possible developments, the most dire situation would be a planned withdrawal that, once the bulk of the troops were withdrawn, abruptly turned into what the military calls a withdrawal under pressure, i.e., a fighting withdrawal. I don't envision that happening but we should have a plan for it nonetheless. That plan would envision all remaining forces leaving Iraq in 60-90 days, executing non-combatant evacuation (NEO) operations from the over-built complex that is our embassy in Baghdad, as well as from elsewhere in Iraq, and leaving in Iraq—with the Iraqi military and police forces or destroyed in place—what remained of the heavy equipment and facilities that we have in typical American fashion built-up over the last few years in Iraq. An interesting wrinkle here would be how the thousands upon thousands of contractors in Iraq would escape. I don't believe we have given much thought to that, nor have the contractors themselves—just as we neglected giving any thought to a Status of Forces Agreement with the Iraqis that would cover contractor crimes and misadventures in Iraq. But, as I said, this planning for a withdrawal under pressure is just good contingency planning and not something I envision being necessary. Unlike Vietnam in 1975, in Iraq there is no large, capable and battle-hardened conventional army waiting to invade. But we must remember: in Iraq, anything is possible.

The most likely context for our withdrawal will be a relatively peaceful one because those who would most likely interfere with it—the Sunni insurgents—are largely co-opted at this point for whatever reason. And therein lies the rub.

If the Sunnis are indeed converts to the American way, if they are committed to a unified Iraq, however imperfectly conceived, and convinced that workable and acceptable power-sharing arrangements are in place and that their rights as the largest minority in Iraq will be reasonably looked after, then the withdrawal will not lead to an even more vigorous civil war than what we've witnessed so far. In short, a fair amount of security, stability, and in that context, economic progress, will be possible. Iraq will muddle through, U.S. forces will be largely repositioned, regional forces in Iraq will rise to the forefront of the power management structure—centered of course in the north, the center, and the south—and a largely feckless national government will be tolerated until another strong man comes along to challenge the status quo and consolidate power once again in Baghdad, the most likely ultimate result in Iraq. But the U.S. will be gone, our true interests in the region will be once again reasonably secure, and coalition troops and Iraqi citizens will not be dying in the high numbers of recent years.

On the other hand, if key Sunni leaders are just biding their time and undergoing the training, taking the arms, building the formal infrastructure to eventually—once coalition forces are gone—strike at the Shiites and recover what they believe to be their rightful place in Iraq (and with ample financial and even manpower support from the Saudis in the process), then we have the same outcome for the U.S. but a very different situation in Iraq. In fact, we have an even bloodier civil war than the one we've experienced for the past several years.

The salient question then becomes—as sometimes we forget was the same question in Vietnam in 1975—does the U.S., with whatever remnants of the coalition that can be mustered, go back in?

My answer to that question is a resounding "no."

Instead, we let one of the parties in the resulting civil war win.

Through diplomacy and an exquisite mixture of hard and soft power we then try to come to some accommodation with the new power structure in Iraq. At worst, due to the power dynamics in the Persian Gulf, we will have not a warm but a tolerable relationship. At best, we will have a reasonable if not warm relationship. More importantly, the U.S. will have returned to a far better strategic position with respect to its genuine interests in the region and will no longer be exacerbating its struggle with jihadist terrorists by having an enormous American presence on Arab soil.

Mr. Chairman, there are two other very vital components of these potential outcomes that I must mention: the Israeli-Palestinian situation and Iran. Let me close by briefly explaining why.

First, Iran.

Iran is the hegemon of the Persian Gulf. We recognized this when we helped orchestrate the overthrow of the first democratically-elected government in the history of Persia, led by Mohamad Mossadegh, in 1953. We installed the Shah and he was in power for 26 years and was, so to speak, our hegemon. When the oil crisis of 1973 struck and oil prices soared, then National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and his president, Richard Nixon, sold more than $20B worth of arms to the Shah to keep him "our hegemon" and to try to offset some of the huge transfer of wealth that was occurring in the direction of the oil-producing states of the Middle East.

The "our hegemon" part changed in 1979 when the Shah was overthrown. But the hegemon part stayed the same—as geography, demography, and military power tend to stay the same—though we have tried to deny it for almost 30 years. We tried to build up Iraq to counter Iran, but as the bloody Iraq-Iran war demonstrated, Iraq without our help could not stand up to Iran. The reason is clear: Iran is the regional hegemon because Iran is more powerful than any other country, period. Israel, were it in a different

geographical situation, could compete, particularly because Israel is a nuclear power (another reason why Iran wants a nuclear weapon of course), but we cannot simply slice Israel away from the Mediterranean and plop it down in Oman next to the Gulf.

Iran has more people, more territory, better organization, a more nationalistic people, and frankly far superior armed forces than any other Gulf power. Again, let me repeat the reality: for all the strategic, geographic, demographic, and power reasons one declares such things, **Iran is the hegemon in the Persian Gulf.**

Ironically, by invading Iraq in 2003 and introducing barely-controlled chaos onto its territory, we destroyed what balance of power there was in the Gulf, largely between Iran and Iraq, and we did so to the overwhelming advantage of the real regional hegemon, Iran. Today, our presence on the ground in Iraq is the only thing keeping the scales from tilting dramatically toward Iran.

So, when we withdraw from Iraq we need to get over our strategic myopia and passionate hatred for the government in Teheran, act more like George Washington than George Bush, and in parallel with our slow, careful withdrawal from Iraq negotiate a very much-improved and increasingly amicable relationship with the Gulf's true hegemon, Iran.

That would be the best of all possible solutions; however, if that proves impossible—and so far we have not even tried—we have even more urgent reason to reposition our forces in the region because they will remain the "balancer" of power in the Gulf and they must be far more flexible and agile to do that. They are anything but flexible and agile while they are largely stuck in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to an improved U.S.-Iran relationship, key to any realization of a more stable, more peaceful and ultimately more prosperous Middle East, is a final settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian situation. I had the pleasure of recently dining with a current member of the Israeli legislature, the Knesset. He asked me how it was that the present administration finally, after seven long and painful years, has apparently arrived at this epiphany. You don't want to hear the answer I gave him.

It is well beyond time that the entire leadership in this country, here in the Congress and over there in the White House, not only recognized this reality but put considerable energy, time, and power into bringing about a final solution that addresses borders, settlements, right of return, Jerusalem, and two states—two *politically, economically and security-wise viable states*—living side by side, Israel and Palestine.

All bets are off for any workable, effective, sustainable solution to a post-surge, post-withdrawal Iraq, if strong, parallel and ultimately successful efforts to resolve this issue of Israel and Palestine are not forthcoming. Moreover—and this is very crucial—if in the process of working toward a final solution the majority of the people on both sides, Israelis and Palestinians, do not believe that the U.S., Israel, and the Palestinians are genuinely serious and committed to a solution, all bets are off too. That is why what Dr. Rice and President Bush started at Annapolis in late November of last year is so

important and so connected to everything else in the Middle East, including post-surge Iraq. The least important aspect of this Annapolis process is lining up all the Arab states against Iran—which I fear may be the principal objective of the Bush administration. Let me say again: the most important aspect is bringing about a final solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem as speedily as possible.

Thank you and I will try to answer any questions you may have.

U.S. Post-Surge Options in Iraq

Michael Eisenstadt

Testimony before the House of Representatives, House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

January 23, 2008

Chairman Snyder, Mr. Akin, distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss U.S. post-surge options in Iraq.

There is no longer any doubt that the security environment in Iraq has improved dramatically in the past six months. Understanding how this came about is key to assessing U.S. post-surge options in Iraq.

Dramatically Improved Security. After violence in Iraq hit all-time highs in late 2006 and early 2007, attacks on and casualties among Iraqi civilians, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), and Coalition forces are down more than 60 percent. A combination of factors accounts for this dramatic development:

- *The Sunni Arab Tribal Awakening.* The extreme ideology and brutal tactics of al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI), and the threat it posed to more mainstream Islamo-nationalist insurgent groups, as well as to traditional tribal power structures and economic interests, eventually engendered a backlash in the form of an anti-AQI tribal uprising in the largely Sunni Arab regions of Iraq. The principal manifestation of this backlash was the creation of various tribal "Awakening Councils" in Anbar province and elsewhere. While this development predated the surge, the latter gave additional impetus to this trend, particularly after Coalition forces started working, in about June 2007, with local tribal elements to create armed Concerned Local Citizen (CLC) groups to fight AQI. Because many CLC members had worked previously with AQI as facilitators or co-belligerents, they knew the local AQI members, and were therefore able, with the help of Coalition forces, to root them out and roll up their networks.

- *The Surge.* The commitment of five additional Brigade Combat Teams to Iraq in tandem with a parallel surge by Iraqi Security Forces, enabled Coalition forces to not only "clear," but also to "hold" areas that they had been unable to hold previously due to the paucity of forces on the ground. Coalition forces set up 68 combat outposts and joint security stations throughout Baghdad, permitting them to maintain a 24 hour presence throughout the capital—conveying in the most dramatic way possible the U.S. commitment to protecting the civilian population. One of the benefits of this new approach was a torrent of fresh intelligence from the civilian population concerning AQI. Coalition forces have pursued AQI relentlessly, killing many, and forcing their remnants to go to ground, or to flee to Ninawa and Diyala provinces where they are attempting to regroup.

- *Taking on Shiite Militias.* Coalition forces have also taken on Iranian-supported "special groups" that targeted Coalition forces, and have sought to roll up Mahdi Army/Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) cells engaged in sectarian cleansing in various neighborhoods of Baghdad. After clashes between JAM cells and ISF units in Karbala in August 2007, Muqtada Sadr

stood down the JAM in order to clean house and consolidate control over an organization that was fragmenting, that was increasingly unresponsive to central direction, and that had alienated the movement's popular support base. Coalition forces have tried to exploit this growing alienation between JAM and its popular base by attempting to establish tribal "Awakening Councils" and CLC groups in largely Shiite regions of Iraq.

- *Diminished Flow of Foreign Fighters.* Syria and Iran have contributed greatly to the violence in Iraq: the former by serving as a conduit for foreign fighters, the latter as a training base for Shiite militias and as a supplier of arms and advanced IEDs for these groups. Though small in number, foreign fighters are a combat multiplier for the insurgents, as a significant proportion of them end up as suicide bombers. As a result, they have had had an impact out of all proportion to their numbers. Recently, however, the number of foreign jihadists entering Iraq from Syria has decreased, due at least in part to efforts by Syria and the countries of origin to stanch the flow of foreign fighters. There has also been some speculation that Iran has reduced the flow of EFP components and bombs to Iraq recently, though Coalition commanders are emphatic in asserting that Iran continues to train and fund the so-called "special groups" operating in Iraq.[1]

In sum, the improved security situation can be attributed to a sustained effort to neutralize the main drivers of the escalating civil violence in Iraq prior to the surge—AQI suicide bombings on the one hand, and JAM cells engaged in revenge killings and ethnic cleansing on the other. By capturing or killing the members of these organizations, and thereby disrupting their operations, the Coalition was able to break what previously appeared to be a self-sustaining cycle of civil violence. In this, the Coalition was assisted greatly by its new alliance of convenience with Sunni Arab tribal elements that included in their ranks former anti-Coalition insurgents, and the decision of the Sadr organization to temporarily halt military operations.

Several policy-relevant conclusions can be drawn from this experience: 1) while the U.S. presence may have stoked insurgent violence in Iraq between 2003-2006, the U.S. is, for now, a force for stability; 2) while some violence in Iraq is undoubtedly the product of random and revenge killings, it is for the most part, neither spontaneous nor self-sustaining; rather, violence is used in an instrumental fashion by armed groups whose activities can be disrupted and whose decision calculus can be influenced by various military and non-military means.

These conclusions have a direct bearing on the prospects for improving security and achieving local accommodations (if not national reconciliation) in Iraq. At the same time, it must be stressed, Iraq is still a fairly violent place; there are still large numbers of Iraqis committed to pursuing their goals by violent means. And needless to say, should the groups that have halted attacks on Coalition forces and the ISF decide to resume these operations, the security situation in Iraq could very quickly take a turn for the worse.

Preserving Recent Gains. The immediate challenge faced by Coalition forces in Iraq is how to preserve recent security gains in the face of a pending U.S. drawdown, as the surge comes to an end. Has the security environment changed in such a way that it is unlikely to be affected by the drawdown? Or is violence likely to spike as the surge comes to an end?

Ultimately, there is no way to answer this question with any degree of confidence. Iraq continues to confound even experienced observers, so it would be prudent to plan for both pleasant and unpleasant surprises. However, given continuing levels of violence, it is reasonable to assume that

[1] DoD News Briefing with Lt. Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, January 17, 2008.

groups still engaged in violence will seek, and likely find new opportunities to act, as the surge comes to an end. There are a number of other developments, moreover, that could complicate the security situation; it is vital to nip these developments in the bud (if possible), or to be prepared to deal with them should they come to pass. These include:

- The defeat of AQI leads to the collapse of the tribal coalitions underpinning the various "awakening" movements, leading to infighting among rival tribes, or a resumption of anti-Coalition violence by tribal and insurgent militias;
- Tensions over influence and access to resources between the various tribal awakening movements, and the Sunni Arab parliamentary parties erupts into violence;
- Muqtada Sadr opts not to renew his order to JAM to stand down, resulting in the resumption of attacks on Sunni Arab civilians and militias, Coalition forces, and rival Shiite parties and militias;
- Intermittent violence among various Shiite movements and parties or between various Shiite movements and the ISF expands in scope and intensity;
- Simmering tensions around Kirkuk deriving from Kurdish demands for a referendum over the city's future (as called for in Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution) explode into open violence involving Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, and other groups;
- Turkey and/or Iran intensify military operations against expatriate Kurdish separatist groups based in northern Iraq;
- Returning internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees resort to violence to evict squatters from their homes, or are met by violence upon their return, reigniting sectarian violence in previously "cleansed" neighborhoods or communities.

Some of these developments would have only local consequences. Others could have far-reaching implications for stability and security in large parts of Iraq. Dealing with these ongoing problems and potential challenges will require the active involvement of the Iraqi government, and the sustained engagement of U.S. military and diplomatic personnel, as well as the President of the United States.

In some cases, the political process already offers the means to deal with these problems (for instance, new provincial elections could reduce tensions between the de facto tribal leadership and established elected politicians in predominantly Sunni Arab regions of Arab). In others, new mechanisms will have to be devised to deal with the problem (such as that of returning IDPs and refugees). Much will depend on the success of the Iraqi Security Forces in taking up the slack as the U.S. draws down, and on the political savvy and negotiating skills of Iraqi politicians and U.S. diplomats.

A Growing Role for Coalition Air Power. The U.S. also has to prepare for the possibility that as it draws down, violence might flare up again. Under such circumstances, it will probably not be feasible, for political and/or military reasons, to recommit large numbers of ground forces. For this reason, the U.S. will likely become increasingly reliant on air power, in conjunction with residual U.S., and Iraqi ground forces, to respond to future contingencies.[2] Increased emphasis, therefore, need be put on improving U.S.-Iraqi air-ground coordination—if this is not being done already, and on employing tactics, techniques, and procedures developed for targeting terrorists from the air, against insurgents, sectarian militias, and warlords. While Coalition airpower can

[2] In fact, in the past year, the Coalition has carried out a surge in air operations, in tandem with its surge in ground forces. This aerial surge is, however, likely to continue into the future, and could even intensify, as Coalition forces draw down. Josh White, "U.S. Boosts its Use of Airstrikes in Iraq," *Washington Post*, January 17, 2008, A1.

backstop the ISF on a stopgap basis, it is ultimately not a substitute for effective Iraqi ground forces.

Toward a Political Solution. Assuming that security gains of recent months can be preserved, the next challenge is to translate these gains into political achievements. Experience elsewhere shows that the factors that make an inconclusive insurgency or civil war ripe for settlement often include: (1) a military stalemate that leads both sides to conclude that they cannot achieve their objectives by violent means; (2) an emerging consensus among the belligerents over the terms of a settlement; and (3) authoritative leaders capable of speaking and negotiating on behalf of their respective constituencies. These conditions are not currently present in Iraq, though there have been signs of progress toward fulfilling some of these conditions during the past year.

The Utility of Violence. Most Iraqis are weary of violence, though tactical adjustments by Sunni insurgent and Shiite militia leaders in the past year seems to derive more from the imperatives of organizational survival than from an assessment that they cannot achieve their goals by military means. Thus, many Sunni Arabs, fearing an AQI takeover of their communities and Iranian domination of Iraq, apparently concluded that they risked marginalization, or worse, if they did not cut a deal with the U.S. Doing so, however, has enabled them to weather the AQI challenge, and position themselves for possible future phases of conflict. Conversely, Muqtada Sadr, fearing the loss of control over his movement, ordered them to stand down in August while he sought to reassert control over his cadres. Recent news reports indicate that Sadr may be reconsidering his decision. It is not clear, however, how the arrest of hundreds of his followers in recent months have affected the military capabilities of JAM.[3]

Consensus On Terms of Settlement. The political gap at the national level between many Sunnis and Shiites remains broad and deep. Many Sunni Arabs reject negotiations with a government that is the product of a foreign occupation, and composed of Iran-affiliated Shiite parties committed to consolidating their own primacy, though there has recently been signs of growing willingness on both sides to engage (e.g., the willingness of many CLC members to join the ISF, and recent complements by 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Hakim of the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council [SIIC] concerning the CLCs). Major differences over key policy issues (e.g., oil, federalism, and implementation of the recently approved de-Baathification law) also remain. For instance, the Kurdish parties and SIIC support a loose form of federalism, while the Sadrists and most Sunni Arabs favor a strong unitary state.

Authoritative Leadership. While the Kurds seem to have transcended their internal divisions (at least for now), the Shiite and Sunni Arab communities remain bedeviled by internal divisions and lack authoritative leaders capable of speaking with a single voice or of negotiating on their behalf. If anything, the trend has been toward fragmentation of political and religious authority in both communities. In the Shiite camp, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has been largely ineffective, Ayatollah 'Ali Hussein al-Sistani proved unable to stem the slide toward sectarian violence, and Muqtada al-Sadr has not been able to control elements of JAM. Moreover, JAM and SIIC have been engaged in a bitter power struggle in the south (which sometimes has also involved the Fadhila Party); and in recent months, Coalition forces and ISF units (often police units associated with the SIIC) have detained or arrested hundreds of JAM members in Baghdad and the south, perhaps portending a shift in the balance of power in some parts of southern Iraq.[4]

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[3] Sudarsan Raghavan, "Shiite Contest Sharpens in Iraq: Sadr and U.S. Ally Refocus on South," *Washington Post*, December 26, 2007, A1.
[4] *Ibid.*

As for the Sunni Arabs, while many revile the current government, there is apparently growing support for joining the political process and for seeking employment by the ISF as a way of protecting the equities of the community. This has led to splits in the ranks of the Sunni Arab insurgency between those who embrace and reject politics (e.g., the reported split in the 1920 Revolution Brigades in March 2007), and splits in the broader community between de facto and elected leaders (e.g., the members of the various Awakening Councils, and the Iraqi Islamic Party).[5] At the same time, there are signs that the possibility of a precipitous U.S. withdrawal has caused some Sunni Arab insurgent groups to come together, in order to preclude a self-destructive power struggle in the aftermath of such a possible eventuality (e.g., the formation of the Political Council of the Iraqi Resistance in October 2007, made up of six Islamist and nationalist insurgent groups).[6]

Finally, events of recent months show that despite the trend toward fragmentation of authority at the national level, local leaders frequently retain sufficient influence to negotiate on behalf of their constituents.[7] Thus, local accommodations may be possible in parts of Iraq, even if national reconciliation remains a distant, unattainable goal at this time. The failure to achieve national reconciliation in such a short timeframe should, however, come as no surprise: national reconciliation remains an elusive goal in other deeply divided societies (e.g., Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Afghanistan), and may take years, if not decades to achieve—if it is achieved at all.

Conclusions. While Iraq remains a dangerous place, the security situation has improved greatly, creating the possibility of political and economic progress in the coming year.[8] Many challenges lay ahead, and there is no guarantee that recent security gains can be sustained. But for the first time in a long time, there is reason to believe that an acceptable outcome (defined as a reasonably stable Iraq that can offer its citizens the opportunity to live in peace and dignity) may be feasible. The key is continued U.S. military and diplomatic engagement.

An acceptable outcome in Iraq could, beyond its inherent benefits for the long-suffering people of Iraq, help rehabilitate America's reputation and reestablish its credentials in the Middle East and elsewhere as a reliable ally and force for stability—at a time when the region faces growing threats. For this reason, as long as there remains a reasonable prospect for success in Iraq, no matter how modestly defined, it is vital that the U.S. work toward such an outcome, and accept the risks and costs that a long-term commitment to the people and government of Iraq is likely to entail.

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[5] See, for instance, Lydia Khalil, "Divisions Within the Iraqi Insurgency," *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 7 (April 12, 2007), and Alexandra Zavis, "Sunnis Divided in Anbar Province," *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 2008.
[6] Ahmed Janabi, "Iraq's Armed Groups Formed an Alliance," *Aljazeera.net*, October 1, 2007, and "Iraqi Fighters Form Political Group," Aljazeera.net, October 13, 2007.
[7] See, for instance: Lieutenant Colonel Michael Eisenstadt, "Iraq: Tribal Engagement Lessons-Learned," *Military Review*, September-October 2007, 16-31.
[8] See, for instance, International Monetary Fund, *Iraq Country Report*, IMF Country Report No. 08/17, January 2008.

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